Alumna's business celebrates one of NOLA's greatest resources

September 30, 2019

Collin Ferguson (BSM '04), founder of Where Y'Art.

Collin Ferguson (BSM ’04) considers the arts community to be the greatest natural resource that New Orleans possesses. Ferguson’s company, Where Y’Art, co-founded in 2014 with her business partner Catherine Todd, is dedicated to promoting the work of local artists and building a stronger, more expansive New Orleans.

This love of the city began when Ferguson, from Lake Martin, Alabama, was a student at Tulane. “I toured some other schools, but once I set foot on the Tulane campus, I knew there was no other place that I was going to attend college … I wouldn’t have been in New Orleans without Tulane, and both are an integral part of everything that I’ve done since then.”

Following a post-grad year in New Orleans, in which Ferguson further explored the arts and music scene of the city, she decided to travel abroad. What was intended to be a one-year stint teaching English turned into more than six years of travel and study of art in Thailand and Latin America. Upon her return to New Orleans, Ferguson realized that her business education, combined with her love of art, could be used to contribute to the revitalization of the city following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

Where Y'Art sprang from the inspiration of its founders to create an alliance of New Orleans artists and build an online directory that would showcase the diverse creativity across the entire city. Since its original inception, Where Y'Art has grown to include a primary gallery space on Royal Street in the Marigny and three satellite galleries, as well as a robust art-consulting business.

Looking toward the future, Ferguson and Todd are working to grow their art consulting and plan to expand the online gallery to include other cities such as Nashville, Tennessee; Austin, Texas; and Portland, Oregon. The new online galleries would be stand-alone communities that are networked under the Where Y'Art brand and would further Ferguson's mission of supporting and sustaining local artists and growing art communities.

"We have generated almost $2 million in revenue in the city of New Orleans since we launched and more than 50% of that has gone to creatives … even as we grow, we are committed to making an impact in the local communities."

This story originally appeared in the September 2019 issue of Tulanian.