

THOMAS MANN inFLUX

- NEWz from **the ROSE TATTOO***
- **ARTbiz** NEWz
- NEWz from **the BUBBLE***
- **VIRAL** NEWz

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NEWz from... THE ROSE TATTOO

I am writing this piece from the [Balcony Garden](#) & Painting Studio on an absolutely gorgeous Spring morning. It's a beautiful day in [the neighborhood](#) during my favorite time in New Orleans.

What am I doing all day, every day now for [62 days alone](#)? Well, I am busily banging about [The Rose Tattoo's 2 jewelry studios](#), 2 offices, [indoor kitchen/bar](#), the Garden Balcony & Painting Studio, [2 bedrooms](#), 2 backyard wood shops & [outdoor kitchen, the gallery](#), and working on beaucoup projects!

I've been attending to [building projects](#) that have been, waiting in the wings, for a moment like this, when everything SLOWs down, it's just that its so weird that this SLOW is being delivered by a micro-organism.

I've been writing madly; communicating intensely; strategizing, projecting and planning with staff on how we will

survive the SLOW and emerge from it when that seems possible; [cooking up a storm](#), experimenting with recipes, baking, grilling; refitting, reorganizing, sorting and purging; designing and making the [FTC Series](#) (Flatten the Curve); [exercising](#) (I run 2 miles around the Rouses Grocery store parking lot, just across the corner from the Tattoo, then do [pull-ups](#) and squats on an unused grocery cart station), doing some yoga, biking to Audubon Park to do the circuit; reading the Sunday New York Times all week, and in gen-eral, living in the [moment](#) and enjoy-ing [being human](#) as best one can.

Charlotte checks out...

So, one of the primary writing assignments I've been working on and finally completed is my mom Charlotte's obit. [Charlotte](#) passed on Saturday night, April 11. My brother and sister arrived in Allentown, PA on March 26th from Boise, ID and Boston, MA and evacuated Charlotte from the assisted living facility where she had been living since January, and where she was in hospice as well. They got her home to her house, just 3 miles away, and got

her comfortable in a hospital bed that they had acquired. My sister, Nancy is an oncology nurse who works for the VA in Boise and she and a childhood friend from the neighborhood, who is also a nurse, looked after her, along with the hospice nurse, until she expired at 98 years old! I'd spent the first 2 weeks of January with Mom while she was still at home before moving to Country Meadows, and had the unique opportunity to have an intimate personal one on one exchange with her. I made several video interviews with her, cooked for us, watched her favorite TV shows, drove around the city visiting old spots of family history, went to the farmers market where we loved to shop for clams and chicken pot pies, and in general had what we both knew, might be the last time we'd be able to do that. I was supposed to travel to meet my siblings on that March date, but other considerations pointed to the decision to cancel my flight plans, stay in New Orleans, and comply with the Stay at Home dictum. If you'd like to, please read/see [Charlotte's obit](#).

NEWz from... THE BUBBLE

Every day I spend a couple hours cleaning up my workbench, then thinking, planning, designing and making. Since the beginning of the Stay at Home mandate, which began shortly after my return from a show in Houston at [High Gloss](#), I finished the final pieces for my [Martini Miniatures](#) collection, designed and prototyped 7 pieces for the [FTC](#) (Flatten the Curve) collection and am now working on prototypes for a [Francis Pavy](#) collection. The Martini and Pavy collections are experimental licensing deals with artist friends, who have an iconography that can be portrayed as jewelry objects. I transform their images into wearable pieces, as closely as is possible to their original work. The artists, their gallery representative and Gallery I/O can each present the collections for sale. Sales are pretty nice so far, so we are interested in exploring opportunities with other artists. Do you know an artist that might want to collaborate?

ARTBIZ NEWz Then and Now

This June, I'll be celebrating a 50 year career as a self-employed professional artist. The primary reasons I have had such an enduring career is that I have been fortunate to have a talented and dedicated staff, (more than 600 of them since 1970), and the sup-

port we receive from an appreciative, enthusiastic and lovely, audience for the work. In the mid '90s there were 26 of us rockin' the crafts scene, now there are only 7 of us. And, of course we are wondering what comes next?

Over the years, we have [adapted to changes](#) in the economy due to recessions and bubbles and natural disasters with an ongoing series of business karate moves, that have allowed us to continue in a downsized, but relatively fragile condition.

*No French Quarter,
Jazz or Essence Fest*

Now we are faced with the most monumental challenge of the business' 30 year history. This year we won't have income to the city from the French Quarter Fest (Economic benefit \$190M), Essence fest (Economic benefit \$280M) or Jazz Fest (Economic benefit \$300M), the sales from which always, for 47 years now, floats us through the summer. BTW, I am one of the two [oldest Contemporary Craft artist exhibitors](#). Gallery I/O has always enjoyed the spillover audience from these three major festivals...so what do we do now?

VIRAL NEWz New Orleans

New Orleans is a foodie city, Pre-Katrina, the city, which is Orleans Parish, had 800 restaurants and a population of 450K. Post-Katrina and pre-Corona we had 1600 with a population of only 390K! So, this means that a significant portion of our hospitality industry (essentially the major employer in New Orleans since the Turn of the Century), are out of work. A very interesting development here is the coalition of the restaurants worker supporting the front line medical workers in a cooperative, supportive effort. [Feedthefrontline.org](#) is a funding organization that supports the restau-

rants to provide a catering service to the hospital staffs throughout the city. We are launching our own [support system](#) to support theirs. When you donate to [feedthefrontline.org](#) and provide us with proof of that donation, we will reward you with a [Food for Thought pin](#), shipped to you free of charge from Thomas Mann Design.

PoP-Up Crawfish and Friday Fish Fry stands abound in the city, along with the long established Taco Trucks, which arrived post-Katrina to feed the Mexican workers who arrived, worked to save us and have remained to this day, so getting your dose of New Orleans comfort food is easily accomplished. Just drive around the neighborhoods and you see a popup canopy with a sign announcing [their offering!](#)

* FYI

[THE ROSE TATTOO](#) is the name of the old bar that I attended in the late '70s. The bar closed in the early '80s and I purchased the property in 1993 for a mere \$25K! The location is famous amongst New Orleanians because it is right across the street from Tiptina's, the music venue famous for reviving and launching the careers of Professor Longhair and the Neville Brothers. For several years, the Tattoo, was under renovation to save it from being demolished by the city and while it has seen service as a rental property, alternative studio and storage space, it is now the home of Third Mann LLC (formerly Thomas Mann Design Inc.) and Gallery I/O in Exile and ME!

[THE BUBBLE](#) is the 4' diameter space that all jewelry artists spend the bulk of their work day in. It is designed and structured so that all the tools and materials needed are within arms reach to minimize the need to get up to get whatever. I've made a number of personal adaptations to maximize efficiency of my work space and these, we hope (we is my staff and me), will become part of a how-to jewelry making series that we've been planning for a while but couldn't get to because we were so busy making and marketing the work, but now "in the time of corona" it seems absolutely INDICATED!

TECHNOROMANCE IN THE TIME OF CORONA

We are launching a [facebook group](#) where I hope we can have a dialogue with friends, fellow artists and patrons about the effect that the COVID-19 virus is having on the arts, science and humanity.

This is the conversation I'd like to have with ALL of YOU, based on the concept of Techno-Romantic. So, I am inviting you to post, along with your thoughts, things you see happening of note and ideas of what the world will be like as we emerge from this current dreamstate and the world returns to what? Will this experience teach us a lesson? Will we continue to allow technology to flourish and sideline human-beingness even more than it already has... or has it? Do we really need driverless cars? We'll be using that space (provided by the amazing connecting technology that IS the internet) to SHARE & DOCUMENT our thoughts about the twists and turns and new developments that will most certainly occur in societies, culture and ART, in the coming months. We'll DISCUSS the creative short and long term responses and tactics that ALL small businesses must make in order survive, especially those of artists. I HOPE that you find this group useful in keeping your SPIRITs alive READY and PREPARED to adapt to a rapidly changing WORLD!

