NOLA Inspired

I have always been enthralled by the City of New Orleans. For a reason, I cannot explain, I have an almost spiritual connection to this city, its charm, character, and vibrancy. It is my absolute favorite vacation destination and although I'm a Kalamazoo native, I feel absolutely back at home every time I am able to immerse myself in this amazing place. Part of the allure is the beautiful oak-lined streets and the absolutely beautiful flowers and gardens that create the magical feeling of its Garden District. My love of flowers and NOLA architecture are evident in this show and I'm beyond thrilled to share it with you. Recreating both NOLA architecture and the vibrancy of some of the area's greatest historical sites, like Oak Alley, have allowed me to further expand the breadth of my art and have afforded me the privilege of connecting my art to a part of the world I love. But my love of flowers goes even deeper. I am an avid gardener and painter of these beautiful objects. Beyond their physical splendor, it's about the anticipation of growth and new life. It's about the fleeting nature of beauty and our need to enjoy these magnificent blossoms as we should embrace all that life has to offer us while we can. As you look at the blue roses, consider how quickly and fleetingly time marches on and yet these mature blossoms strive to hold on to their beauty, their purpose, for as long as possible. As 2020 presents challenges like many of us have never experienced before, let's continue to observe and appreciate the world's beauty and cherish what you love.

> James Schlage Vieux Carré Studio September 28, 2020