



We attended the "Statue Garden" presentation yesterday at Louis Armstrong Park. My intentions were to record the event for our archives. The first thing I saw was the landscaping around the palm trees at the main entrance...it was quite inviting and had an open arms kind of feel.

Right inside the gate is the "**Brass Band Sculpture**", which is actually quite good, and has nice movement in the overall look.

The next sculpture was of "**Tootie Montana**" has to be my favorite so far. If you saw the photo a few months back, please disregard that image and be sure to see this sculpture. The artist has captured the meaning of being the "Chief of all the Indians".

The only other sculpture I saw was of "**Buddy Bolden**". It is placed near the pond where Louis Armstrong used to be (they've moved him to another great location.) I met the artist posing with her family, and I have to say that they should be proud of her workmanship. It is a great piece of art and brings honor to the life of Buddy Bolden.

The French Opera and Congo Square sculptures are not quite ready for the public.

I'm not an art critic, nor do I profess to be one, I can only tell you what I think.

While they are not quite finished with the landscaping, I think that, so far, they have gone a very nice job. They've added some magnolias, palms and oak trees. They've installed about 8 more historic light standards (like the ones on North Rampart) from the pond in front of Mahalia Jackson Theatre all the way to the front entrance on North Rampart. They are working on a paved walkway from the Mahalia Jackson Theatre to the main park area, so theatre goers will not have to walk through rocks or grassy areas to reach the main entrance to make their way to North Rampart Street.

AND, the fountain is working in Congo Square!

Although, there are many reasons to not agree with the way this garden and the improvements were handled, it's here to stay.

I have to say that I was pleasantly surprised! I think it's worth your time to take a stroll, when it's re-opened to the public, and see it for yourself.

Laurie Toups
Executive Director

*NRMSI is a non-profit organization dedicated to revitalizing North Rampart Street between Canal Street and Esplanade Avenue.
It is a certified "Urban Main Street" through Louisiana Main Street and National Trust for Historic Preservation.*

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