

## Inspired by Nottoway, Henry and Pat Shane recreate the famous plantation home in Kenner

By Keith Marshall



A bedroom showcasing the artwork of Hunt Slonem at the home of Henry and Pat Shane in Kenner.

In the aftermath of the Civil War, owners of plantation houses were determined, like Scarlett O'Hara in "Gone with the Wind," that their homesteads would survive, even if they could barely afford to keep the roofs intact.

More than a century later, one of those mansions along the Mississippi River inspired the design of a Kenner home that replicates its grandeur but without the need for the constant upkeep a historic structure demands.

For Henry and Pat Shane, the decision to recreate the style of Nottoway -- the state's largest surviving plantation mansion -- came after living for years in houses with contemporary flair.

In 1999, the couple built their 12,000-plus-square-foot incarnation of Nottoway, adding modern amenities that antebellum owners scarcely could have imagined.

Henry, an architect and developer, and Pat, a real estate investor and management professional, might well agree with Scarlett's father, Gerald O'Hara, that "land is the only thing in the world worth working for...because it's the only thing that lasts."



Since moving into the house, the Shanes have filled it with various collections -- one following another, as their fascination with an ever-growing array of artists and objets d'art has increased to warp speed.

"We buy what we like, and we don't worry about matching things in a room," Henry said. "We place things wherever we want."

The myriad pieces -- including an extensive art collection with hundreds of paintings -- could fill a block of antique stores and galleries.

**Indeed, in 2011, the Shanes transformed the home's 2,500-square-foot third floor, a former attic space, into a gallery to rival any upscale showroom. There -- and throughout the house -- the couple displays one of the largest collections of artist George Rodrigue's Blue Dog paintings, as well as artwork by James Michalopoulos, Clementine Hunter, Robert Rucker and Al Federico.**

**Among the couple's particular favorites are paintings by New York artist Hunt Slonem, a personal friend.**

**Slonem -- who owns two Louisiana plantation houses, Albania on Bayou Teche, and Lakeside north of Baton Rouge -- is another inveterate collector, with treasures of his own treasures filling those historic mansions.**

**In the Shanes' house, Slonem can claim his own bedroom, decorated with a three-piece Victorian bedroom suite and filled with his paintings the owners have collected.**

**It was Slonem's totemic Toucan sculpture, along with a similarly impressive Rodrigue Blue Dog sculpture, that the Shanes donated to Jefferson Parish in 2009 to enliven the neutral ground along Veterans Boulevard.**

Besides the mansion, the Shanes have created other monuments. Their private car museum, which, like every other collection, started with just one, now houses about 100 vehicles. For a while, Henry drove a different vehicle to work each day, both for pleasure and to keep them in running order.

And then there's the couple's final resting place, a glistening stone mausoleum in Metairie Cemetery, also designed by Shane.

Open to the sky through the airy center corridor of the monument, it could be an elaborate Southern dog-trot home for the dearly departed.

Scarlett would have loved it.

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