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# S. Florida artist creates new look for utility boxes

By: Richard Yager | June 24, 2015



A noted South Florida artist has created a new look for conventionally drab utility boxes that line streets in West Kendall and other areas countywide.



Michelle Weinberg's art enlivens utility box at Miller Road and 147th Avenue.

To add a new focus to District 11 that Commissioner Juan C. Zapata calls the "West End," visual artist Michelle Weinberg of Miami Beach and New York has provided conceptual designs to brighten streetscapes at main intersections.

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Her striking art motifs for West Kendall have been transferred to wrap the chunky boxes better known by FPL as “switch cabinets,” installed in many cases adjacent to main thoroughfares.

“We’re working to test the wrapping designs on other non-connected boxes elsewhere in the county,” noted FPL spokesperson Bill Orlove, an indication they may pop up in other Miami-Dade locations.

“It’s been a tremendous hit,” said Eduardo Marrero, aide to Zapata. “We’ve received an outpouring of support for art in public places and we look forward to continuing to integrate art into our West End. Be on the lookout for a new installations in our parks.”

Weinberg’s utility box concepts reflect an imagery of a “Pretend Dimension” in which elastic perspectives, personalized geometries, and fictitious architectures elaborate stage-set like narratives. Works in all media are conceived as “vivid backdrops for human activity,” according to her biographical statement.

Her artistic efforts already have brought eye-catching art from crosswalks and sidewalks to buildings throughout Miami and elsewhere in Florida.

Widely known for creating works in painting and collage; designs for rugs, tiles, mosaic and paint murals, she has produced art for architecture and public spaces.

Public and other large-scale projects include a recent mural for the Miami offices of Facebook, a mural inspired by dazzle camouflage painting of WWI warships for the exterior of the Wolfsonian Museum-FIU in Miami Beach and a terrazzo floor for a new-construction fire station commissioned by Miami-Dade County Art In Public Places.

A project consultant to museums and non-profits, she develops curricula, artist residencies, workshops and mentorship programs for teens, including Brick x Brick, an after-school program of the Miami Art Museum.



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Residents who receive Zapata's website "West End Newsletter" were asked to take their photos by the newly decorated boxes and send them to the commissioner's district office.

While no specific use is currently planned for them, the activity has served as an informational tool and stimulant of community engagement, Marrero added.



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