

BLOGS GREG KOT "Turn it Up" chicagotribune.com/gregkot and CHRIS JONES "The Theater Loop" chicagotribune.com/chrisjones

FRIDAY

ON THE TOWN

CHICAGOLAND'S BEST GUIDE TO THEATER, MUSIC, DANCE AND ART

In August, 2005, Jane Fulton Alt was a clinical social worker in New Orleans who aided survivors of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Her area was the Lower Ninth Ward, which suffered not only the weather but two breaks in the levee. She accompanied residents there back to their homes for the first time since they fled and, as she has written, has "been in mourning ever since."

The color images Alt presents at the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago are, therefore, examples of "concerned photography" that document the devastation.

All of the pictures on view are unpeopled.

They focus on wreckage, from a distance and close up. Various warning signs, official and not, underline the gravity. But buildings and objects found inside them are Alt's primary subjects, and she looks at things head-on, as a fairly straightforward reporter.

The single obvious sign that she is also concerned with art is a draining of color that emphasizes overall bleakness and makes isolated splashes of color dramatically stand out. It is as if everything is seen from within the fog of a nightmare, and it is both convincing and numbing.

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