

In 1784 an edict of good government was dictated by the Spanish in New Orleans: The Tignon Law.

Organized to subjugate affluent women of African descent, the Tignon law forced Creole women to cover their hair with the intent to oppress their beauty, intelligence, and mobility. It reads, “The distinction which exists in the hairdressing of the colored people, from the others, is necessary for same to subsist and order the quadroon and negro women, wear feathers, nor curls in the hair, combing same flat or covering it with a handkerchief if it is combed high as was formerly the custom.”

The women rebelled, decorating their headwraps with strong colors, elaborate folds, rich textures, and exuberant objects including feathers, jewelry, and ribbons.

Chesley Antoinette reflects on the creativity of the 18th Century Creole women by creating decadent headwraps. Over 50 unique designs are on display at the Duluth Art Institute. Contemporary photographs referencing historical artworks feature Antoinette’s tignons and include essays providing context to the edict and Creole society. Together, Antoinette’s headwraps and photographs create dialogue around the ideas of liberty, private property, and government policies that affect individual choices.

To hear artist Chelsey Antoinette read essays accompanying the photographs, visit the Duluth Art Institute’s platform on Smartify.

Download the app for free or visit <https://smartify.org/tours/tignon>



Chesley Antoinette (MFA, University of North Texas) is the creator and designer of Cantoinette Studios. She focuses on sustainable practices of sculptural installations, wearable art, and curatorial projects.

cantoinettestudios.com
[@cantoinettestudios](https://www.instagram.com/cantoinettestudios)



Funded in part by the Depot Foundation and the John T. & Elizabeth C. Adams Arts Fund and the Wirtatent Family Fund of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation.

Front Image credit: Chesley Antoinette, “Lafayette,” satin, silk, 2018.

TIGNON

Chesley Antoinette
John Steffl Gallery
May 24-September 6, 2021



[‘tēyôN]

noun

1. a cloth or handkerchief; used to describe the headwraps of Creole women.

THE ART OF THE HEADWRAP

Caddo \$225
Harahan \$225
Palmetto \$225
Ouachita \$225

Coushatta \$225
Ponchatoula \$225
Tangipahoa \$225
LaFourche \$225
Lillie \$225

Concordia \$225
Catahoula \$225
Delcambre \$225
Avoyelles \$185

Evangeline \$225
Lafayette NFS
Athens \$225

Creola \$225
Rouge \$225
Cheneyville \$225
Atlanta NFS
Iberia \$225
Anacoco \$185

Pearl River \$225
Florien \$225
Goldonna \$325

Vidalia \$225
Madison \$225
Ida \$225
Sabine \$225


Cottonport \$225
Calcasieu \$225
Eunice \$225
Addis \$185
Acadia Lafayette \$325

Natchez \$185
Delhi \$185
Alexandira \$225
Vacherie NFS

Abita Spring \$225
Urania \$185
Feliciana \$225

Glenmora \$285
Natchitoches NFS
Bienville \$225
Chataignier \$225
Jeanerette \$225
Independence \$185

Livonia \$225
Coteau \$185
Angie \$185

 Chesley Antoinette provides information about these headwraps on Smartify

SMARTIFY

