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### Why Stay?

**New Orleanians tell CityBusiness why they're not giving up on the city**

by April Capochino  
02/27/2006

Furniture and lighting designer Karyl Pierce Paxton draws inspiration for her pieces from New Orleans.

Paxton, who has been nominated for design awards, is originally from El Paso, Texas. She moved to New Orleans 11 years ago and opened her own studio. She sells her furniture and lighting designs to Savoy House, a home décor store based in Lawrenceville, Ga. Her pieces sell for anywhere from less than \$100 to \$20,000.

Afternoon strolls through the French Quarter influenced Paxton's fleur-de-lis lamp designs, banana-leaf ceiling fans and wrought-iron painted furniture. She even designed a chandelier complete with a Mardi Gras crown adorned at the top.



Karyl Pierce Paxton

After the storm, Savoy House urged Paxton to relocate to Atlanta.

Paxton said thanks but no thanks.

"Almost everything I do is influenced by the city," said Paxton, 47. "I can't even imagine being creative anywhere other than New Orleans for what I do. There isn't any other city in the country where I can be influenced by this rich of a culture.

"New Orleans won my heart."•

— April Capochino