

SEATTLE ARTS COMMISSION

Minutes

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, October 12th, 2021

Remote – Zoom Conference

Commissioners present: Vivian Hua (Co-Chair), James Miles (Co-Chair), Cassie Chinn, Kayla DeMonte, Holly Jacobson, Yeggy Michael, Steve Galatro, Vivian Hua, Rick Araluce, Vanessa Villalobos, Mikhael Williams, Chieko Phillips

Staff in attendance: royal alley-barnes, Calandra Childers, Allie Lee, Erika Lindsay, Kelly Davidson

Guests: Kitty Wu (Seattle Music Commission), Brenda Barnes (King FM)

Call to Order, Introduction, Land Acknowledgement (4:05)

Approval of Minutes:

Rick moved to approve the commission minutes from July, September, and the Special Meeting. Cassie seconded. Approved.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Welcome and Acknowledgements

- Vivian Hua and James Miles will serve as interim Co-Chairs of the Arts Commission.
- Welcome Kitty Wu, new Music Commission Chair. Kitty looks forward to bridging the work between the two commissions and welcomes SAC members to the Music Commission meetings (third Wednesdays 12 – 1:30pm)
 - Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81279924586?pwd=RFVCUEsyTEFHNjh6NmZZW9WQ2FpZz09> (Meeting ID: 812 7992 4586 Passcode: 287287)
- Group did round robin introductions.
- Acknowledgement and appreciation to Dawn Chirwa, who resigned at the end of September, for her 6 years of service and leadership on the commission.

Guest Presentation: Classical King FM

Briefing: Brenda Barnes

Prior to the pandemic King FM started new strategic planning and talked to diverse folks in community (age, ethnicity, etc.) to get a clear sense of how people view our region, the arts community, and King FM. Key things heard included the need for arts to do more to diversify and for King FM to diversify. They adopted the strategic plan last December and are looking at a 5–10-year plan to diversify their staffing, programming, board, etc. Some efforts in place include:

- Ensuring diversity in the pieces presented on air (regularly playing pieces composed by women or POC)
- “Unmute the Voices” program with Quinton Morris, featuring composers of color and women
- Hiring announcers of color; starting a new program to bring on announcer fellows for 1 year, then proceed to hire if things go well. Committing to employ 5-6 people.
 - Working in conjunction with the Symphony, Ballet, and Opera
 - Diversity trainings
- Doing qualitative and quantitative research with 3 colleagues in classical public radio nationwide – gathering information from BIPOC classical listeners who don’t listen to King FM and has a strong desire to work with community to change. Looking at 1.5 years process.
- Goal is to see audience of King FM to mirror demographics of community.

Brenda welcomes further conversations about this work and for more perspectives to transform practices and cultures that have been in place for a long time. You may contact: brendab@king.org

Co-Chairs Report

Briefing: Vivian Hua, James Miles

- Seattle Cultural Sector Forum on 10/4 with Council candidates, school board candidates, and Mayoral candidates <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zttx8TJ4aNA&t=2965s>
 - Reflections
 - Lots of dynamite questions from community; great to hear about arts from candidates
 - Surprised how some school board members didn’t know about Creative Advantage or talked about it. Curious where the disconnect is.
 - Appreciation to James for holding the partnership with the forum planning group
 - Venue change was great
 - Great how moderators were not afraid to ask questions/follow-up questions
 - As a commission what can we do?
 - Continue to advocate for the value of arts and culture, and tell folks to consider the content of the forum as they are voting
 - Gaining a sense of different peoples’ understanding of what ARTS does
- Council budget letter (SAC response to Mayor’s proposal)
 - Letter is being sent later in the week; Commissioners encouraged to take a final look for edits. Three priority asks of support are 1) \$2M financial support for ARTS to maintain programs in place; 2) \$2M rent forgiveness for arts organizations; and 3) \$5M seed funding for the Cultural Space Agency. The final letter can be viewed here: <https://www.seattle.gov/arts/about-us/seattle-arts-commission#correspondence>
- SAC Questions/Comments on budget letter:
 - There are arts organizations that pay rent on Seattle Center campus; maybe SAC can reach out to the Seattle Center Advisory Board and ask to add their advocacy voice to the rent forgiveness item.

- Holly is on the Seattle Center Advisory Board and can bring it forward. Will connect with Vivian and James too.
- Appreciation to Vivian for drafting the letter!
- What happens after the letter? Follow up with Councilmembers?
 - This is a very budget heavy season and Councilmembers have a hard time taking meetings, which is why we had the summer meetings with Council members to build bridges – having informed them this summer will help them make connections as they read the letter.
 - Legislative aids may be able to take meetings if commissioners reach out.
 - Steve has a meeting scheduled with CM Mosqueda and will bring our priorities forward.
 - City Council also holds public hearing sessions where they look for feedback from community on the whole budget – this is also an opportunity to advocate for changes in the budget proposal.
 - Cassie and Chieko will share letter with FED next Tuesday. Re: Cultural Space Agency, seeing which other councilmembers will support and come on board in addition to CM Herbold and CM Morales. We need 3 councilmembers to get the green sheet.
- With the money that we have received, a big portion is going to Hope Corps; can you define what Hope Corps is and if any of those funded projects are going to individual artists or how it's being distributed? In reading the letter, it sounds like we are asking for additional funding to cover artists, which implies that the bucket of money we are receiving is maybe not being allocated directly to artists.
 - Clarification – there are three different buckets of money:
 - 2022 budget (regular city budget process; 100% of admissions tax) goes to existing legacy programs – we are reduced here because admissions tax has been low since the pandemic. The 2M (first item on letter) would bring admissions tax back up to support the legacy programs at their original levels.
 - Tranche 1 of federal ARPA funds – Hope Corps pilot project for 250K that goes to funding a dozen artists, plus funds that will support organizations impacted by closure (partnership project with 4Culture).
 - Tranche 2 of federal ARPA funds – Mayor put in additional 1.5M for Hope Corps which represents our opportunity to connect under/unemployed artists with civic needs. This is where we will be creating living wage jobs for artists whose employment has been impacted over the past year and half.
- Currently in the letter it says “financial support for artists and arts organizations”, but maybe we should change that to “financial support for the ARTS office to carry forward legacy programs” for more clarity and for long term impact.
- This is a lot of money to put towards a bucket that will guide how an artist can take a job; this is different from providing creative funds to individuals and letting them create and do their own thing. Something to think about down the road – how can we fund the creativity, so the artist can innovate without having to appease a funder.

- SAC can leverage and use voice to advocate for this. SAC can help change the momentum of the conversation and bring new ideation around what constitutes workforce.
- Are there other legacy programs put on pause other than Cultural Facilities Fund that can be named?
 - No others are on pause. The rest of the office has taken reductions on programming dollars.
- Rent forgiveness section has vague points – we have data but compared to other two priorities it's weak.
 - Clarification on City quantifying the value of rent – they are using the fair market value, which isn't what the arts organizations are paying to the City. Arts orgs are paying a reduced rate in exchange for public benefit/free programs to community which have a value associated with them, so the loss of revenue to the City is much less than the numbers they are stating are, which is the fair market value.
 - Feels like a weak argument without those actual numbers. Perhaps reframe the language so it doesn't rely on the numbers.
- Will venues that didn't get funded thru SVOG be served through ARPA funds?
 - Yes, that is how we are seeing funding with ARPA – who is left out of SVOG and PPP.
- Thinking about how art can support across sectors and co-exist in competing priorities – a benefit-based rather than transactional-based approach.

Director's Report

Briefing: royal alley-barnes, Calandra Childers

- Public Art Boot Camp Class 2020-21 Culmination and Artwork Celebration: Artists [Amanda Lee](#), [Baso Fibonacci](#), [Damon Brown](#), [Fumi Amano](#), [Jacques Trautman](#), [Jovita Mercado](#), [Kamla Kakaria](#), [Lynn Yarne](#), [Micah Lawton McCarty](#), [Nate Clark](#), and [Sabina Haque](#) currently have work on view and invite you to explore the two neighborhoods:
 - [Art Interruptions in Lake City](#)
 - [Sculpture Walk at Seattle Center](#)

(Art Interruptions is funded by SDOT 1% for Arts and the Seattle Center temporary installations is funded by the Seattle Center 1% for Arts.)
- Budget is with Council now. They will hold open sessions for public comment. SAC's letter is important as changes are made to the Mayor's proposal. The budget will be finalized the Monday before Thanksgiving, and there will be no hard and fast plans on programs before the budget gets passed.
 - SAC Question – Will it be helpful to send letter to forum candidates?
 - Yes. You can think of it as a public letter. This presents the values SAC is advocating for.
- SAC Recruitment – Open Nominations Process
 - Overview of draft application call:
 - Adopted BASE application

- Low barrier
 - Can nominate yourself or others
 - Question around background – categories come from our SAC matrix
 - Questions around what applicants bring to this room and take away from this room
 - Question around populations we are lacking representation on the commission and how applicants relate/support – helps us think about how we are filling gaps and how we are making sure we are being as representative as possible within this body
 - Standard/optional demographic information
 - SAC Feedback
 - Will there be criteria for the scoring? Thinking about the questions and how they relate to the evaluation of applicants.
 - Need solidified language around criteria for the specific questions, but the standard criteria would be they need to represent the city, need to support arts and culture, and need to embody our commitment to racial equity. SAC can edit/add.
 - Can we include info on the work done in each of the committees?
 - Yes, we can add the purpose statements for each committee at the front of the application.
 - Can we ask for applicants' interest in committees? This will help fill committees faster.
 - Yes, will add that question.
 - Criteria used for BASE cohort members may be helpful for the Commission criteria. BASE application questions and criteria align.
 - Need SAC volunteers for the selection panel
 - Chieko, Holly, Kayla, Steve
 - Allie will incorporate the above edits in the application and follow up with SAC to see if there are any last edits and additional folks who would like to be part of the selection panel.
- Arts are Open Campaign

[The Arts Are Open](#) is a digital welcome back campaign created by ARTS to amplify the region's arts and culture sector. With the devastating effects COVID-19 continues to have on our creative communities, this campaign aims to create a simple, fun, and collaborative way for our arts organizations to collectively promote our programs and call the greater community to support the arts economy. We have an [accessible digital toolkit](#) for arts organizations and artists to use and integrate into their upcoming event/program promotions. ARTS and our partners will actively share and amplify events/programs that use the campaign elements.

Any and all artists, arts organizations, and arts-related individuals/collectives are invited to participate in this digital campaign. **How you can get involved:**

- 1) **Use this [Toolkit](#):** Use the digital toolkit and incorporate the branded graphics and hashtag (#TheArtsAreOpen) to your upcoming program or event's digital promotions.

- 2) **Your Events = Amplified:** ARTS and our partners will be actively following the hashtag and amplify posts from the community.
- 3) **Support Fellow Arts Orgs:** We also encourage you to support your fellow artists and arts organizations by sharing their upcoming programs and events.

Meeting adjourned at 5:40pm.