



SEATTLE ARTS COMMISSION
Minutes
Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, June 13, 2017
City Hall, Boards & Commissions Room

Commissioners present: Juan Alonso-Rodriguez, Jeff Benesi, Cassie Chinn, Dawn Chirwa, Jonathan Cunningham, Priya Frank, Steve Galatro, Terri Hiroshima (Co-Chair), Ana Lester (via phone), Quinton Morris, Vivian Phillips (Chair), Tracy Rector, S. Surface, Sharon Williams

Staff in attendance: Calandra Childers, Randy Engstrom, and Amber Rose Jimenez of the Office of Arts & Culture

Guests: Christina Bruce, Community Member; Newell Aldrich, Legislative Aide

Call to Order

Vivian Phillips called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m., with an acknowledgement that we are meeting on indigenous land, that of the Coastal Salish people. Phillips also stated that the SAC centers all its work within a racial equity lens. The Commission took a moment of silence.

Approval of the May Minutes

Juan Alonso-Rodriguez moved to approve the May Seattle Arts Commission meeting minutes. Priya Frank seconded the motion. All present approved.

Executive Committee Update

Vivian provided an overview of the changes underway to strengthen the leadership capacity of the SAC, namely, moving the advocacy, proclamations and letter writing work that the Community Development and Outreach Committee has led this year, into Executive Committee, and shared her plan to meet with each Commissioner individually over the summer. A recommendation to include King Street Station into the overall Commission workplan was identified, since most Commissioners have engaged in feedback, strategy and committee work related to the project, and may continue to do so over the next year.

Public Art Advisory Committee Report

Jeff provided an overview of the PAAC, including the development of the Municipal Art Plan, which PAAC reviews annually, in addition explaining that the advisory scope of work includes giving feedback to artists, recommending artist selections and potential funding increases to resource projects, and later offering guidance toward artists within concept design reviews. A brief example was shared of a recent artist project underway, which highlighted some of the challenges with navigating the Committee's role, especially when multiple stakeholders like other City Departments and their liaisons, the artists, the project managers and communities represented in a project may disagree, or when there are barriers to the successful completion of a project. Committee members also addressed the Commission's commitment to



racial equity and the guidance they offer to ensure the city has the best artwork, to ensure that the artist is successful, and that racial equity is advanced.

Committee members acknowledged the strong work of Public Art staff, and highlighted an upcoming leadership transition, with Steve Galatro and Juan Alonso-Rodriguez agreeing to co-chair PAAC, once Jeff Benesi completes his term on the Commission in December 2017. The SAC Executive Committee plans to discuss the strategy around jurisdiction and funding for the % For Art program at a later time.

Community Development and Outreach (CDO) Report

Priya Frank shared that Sharon Williams has agreed to co-chair the CDO Committee, and provided an overview of the 2017 Mayor's Arts Awards (MAA). Now in its 15th year, the MAA received 170 nominations from the community, within the following categories: Cultural Ambassador: Individual; Cultural Ambassador: Organization; Arts and Innovation; and Emerging Leader. At the program's height, over 500 nominations were received, while an average of 350 nominations had previously been received. Over its lifetime, 80 Seattle-based organizations have received an award. Despite the decrease in the number of nominations, we received the highest ratio of unique nominees this year, relative to the amount of nominations received.

Commissioners discussed reasons for the lower number of nominations, including the fact that the MAA historically occurs during the launch of Bumbershoot Music Festival, which has transitioned from its deep community focus; the recent scandal relating to the mayor; and the opportunity created by the opening of King Street Station during the late summer of 2018. The CDO will work to define goals and ways that the MAA could evolve over the next year. Reflections about the trend of lower public engagement and excitement about the arts, especially following the election and community fatigue, were emphasized, as well as the question of whether the award could become the "City of Seattle Arts Award."

Questions about how to depict or present previous recipients within King Street Station, and how to honor living artists in our communities, rather than emphasize individuals who have passed away, though others recommended a moment of silence.

Directors Report

CAP Report Launch: Copies of the newly released CAP Report: 30 Ideas for the Creation, Activation and Preservation of Cultural Space, were distributed, and Randy explored the concepts included in the report immediately following the SAC meeting. Randy asked Commissioners to email Cassie Chinn if they are interested in specific items included in the report, and shared that the FED Committee is planning a convening around ownership and displacement in partnership with Cultural Space Liaison, Matthew Richter.

King Street Station (KSS): Randy shared the upcoming, noncommercial BorderLands art show that ARTS staff are curating and producing this summer at KSS, which centers on themes of belonging and resistance, and which opens on August 3, 2017. ARTS Curator Deborah Paine is retiring this fall, so BorderLands will be her final show; programming will also include performances, and the space will be open during extended hours during the Seattle Art Fair weekend, and then between Fridays from 11am-



2pm, Saturdays from 12pm-6pm, and Sundays from 11am-2pm, through October. The space will also open on First Thursdays, on September 7th and October 5th from 5-8pm.

Percent for Art Funding | Guest Presenter Newell Aldrich, Legislative Aide to Councilmember Herbold

Former Councilmember Licata had presented a Statement of Legislative (SLI) intent before his term ended, which had put forth one potential change in the current Percent for Art program, and which had circulated to Commissioners for review. Councilmember Herbold would like the perspective of the Arts Commission so that any relevant improvements could be made in the Percent for Art program.

Aldrich wondered if the process could be improved so that the allocation could be accelerated in a better and more formal way, and the Commission shared that process is the biggest challenged, not the lack of funds. Citing a desire to work more efficiently and collaboratively, Commissioners emphasized a desire to strengthen and build authentic partnerships with other departments to ensure allocated resources are not delayed—in part, by reviewing the legislation to clarify roles, expectations and the jurisdictional authority of all who are involved.

The Commission supports future exploration of the 1% for Art expansion and recommends applying a equity lens on the work, and Vivian expressed SAC's interest in open conversation onward with Councilmember Herbold.

The meeting adjourned at 5:28