

Museum and Cultural Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes

The Museum and Cultural Advisory Board met in a regular meeting at the Mesa Arts Center, 1 East Main Street, third floor, south Studios conference room, on October 11, 2006.

Members Present:

John Hohmann
Hector Benetiz
Amanda Buscas
Peter Cook

Crista Cloutier
Andrea Soto
Laurent Teichman
Ramona Tecumseh

Members Absent:

Lennee Eller
Douglas Brimhall
Daniel Harper

Staff Present:

Gerry Fathauer
Tom Wilson
Carrie Brown

Rob Schultz
Sunnee Spencer
Jean Kaminski

Guests Present:

John Hohmann, Chair, was delayed, Peter Cook, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:42 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Laurent Teichman made a motion, Ramona Tecumseh seconded, and all Board members present unanimously approved the minutes of September 13. The approved minutes are posted on the Web page.

Discuss and Take Action – Consider Approval of Artist Mary Consie’s Proposal for the Third Temporary Public Art Project at Mesa Arts Center – Carrie Brown

A narrative of Mary Consie’s proposal was distributed. Ms. Brown brought a prototype of her work. The proposed piece will contain at least two figures that appear to move and look to be alive as they migrate through the space. While the forms represent no animal, item, or structure, they draw from the real world in a simplified manner. The structures are made from a steel armature composed of square steel tubing that is Mig welded into the basic shape. Each foot bottom will be anchored with a concrete weight and base. The entire steel and concrete form will be encased in Styrofoam, which will be attached to the metal with a permanent adhesive. The Styrofoam will then be shaped and subsequently encased in layers of polymer stucco reinforced with fiberglass mesh. Over the stucco will be an external coat of waterproofing cementitious material, which will give the forms an appearance of smooth concrete/stone. The external coating can be dyed; however, Ms. Consie is looking at a more natural look to blend with the environment. The overall dimension would be approximately four to five feet high by three to four feet wide by four to five feet long. The base will be reinforced with a steel rod. The structures require little to no maintenance and will be placed on the grass terrace north of the Wells Fargo Garden. De-installation will include removing the concrete bases and ensuring that all landscaping has been returned to its original form.

Crista Cloutier commented that she found the proposal to be beautiful, whimsical, and a draw to families.

Crista Cloutier made a motion, Andrea Soto seconded, and all Board members present unanimously approved artist Mary Consie’s proposal for the third Temporary Public Art Project at Mesa Arts Center.

Discuss and Provide Direction – Present Materials to be Included in Information Packet – Dr. John Hohmann

Daniel Harper was taking the lead on preparing materials for the information packet for the Board members. Mr. Harper was unexpectedly called out of the country and was not able to complete his work on the packet, nor able to attend the meeting. The item for discussion has been tabled until next month.

Staff Reports

Arizona Museum for Youth – Sunnee Spencer

- The new upcoming exhibit is "On a Roll: Art on Wheels," sponsored by *The Arizona Republic's "Mesa Republic."* Exhibition Partners are: Space Age Paint Store, Inc., Mesa; Chester's Harley Davidson, Mesa; Nancy Morris's Build-A-Bike, Glendale; Scott Jochim of Custom Theater Solutions, Phoenix; Bob Bondurant of School of High Performance Driving, Chandler; JL Audio, Mirmar, FL; and Soundwerks, Scottsdale. The exhibit will feature bicycles, motorcycles (as well as an antique motorcycle), skateboards, and different cars that include an art car by Harold Davis and an Indi car. Members preview is November 10 from 10:00 a.m. to noon. The public opening will be on November 11 and run through February 16, 2007.
- January 20, 2007, will offer a "Wheely Whild" block party – a family day car show event. The street will be blocked off for the event.
- The Museum was chosen as the charitable recipient of the proceeds from the House of Tricks Wine Fiesta event. Proceeds will support the new audio/visual equipment for the Museum's exhibit program, and the Museum is expecting to receive between \$3,000 and \$5,000 from the event.
- September brought \$12,188.50 in revenue, an increase of approximately 5% compared to last year; however, participation numbers were down by close to 1,800 due to the reduction in hours and special event classes.

- Veronica Ochoa was hired as the new Gallery Shop Manager. The Museum shop will re-open by November 10.
- Three new Gallery Educators have been hired: Nikki Bunnell, Linda Keith, and Heather O'Donnoughue. The Museum Friends are funding the Gallery Educator positions.
- The Museum has hired a Community Arts Coordinator, Michelle Martinez. Ms. Martinez holds a B.A. in International Relations from St. Edwards University and a M.A. in Mass Communications/Journalism from ASU. Her start date is October 23.
- Interviews are set for the final two positions to fill: Museum Educator and Museum Curator.
- The "Cats" exhibit will be de-installed at 4:00 p.m. on October 20.

Mesa Southwest Museum – Tom Wilson

- The Collaboration Steering Committee made up of members from the Boards of the three Mesa Museum's (Mesa Southwest Museum, Arizona Museum for Youth, and Mesa Historical Museum) and representatives from the Mesa Arts Center met and sent out a schedule of meetings that goes through next spring. The Steering Committee have identified two levels of what they want to accomplish: 1) easy and inexpensive things that can be done, such as a common brochure, etc.; and 2) more expensive and more difficult things to accomplish, such as common membership, etc.
- Staff is currently working on three new installations: "Crocodiles," opening in October; "Grand Canyon," opening in November; and "Paradise Lost," which will open in December. The highlight of the croc show is a 15 foot stuffed alligator and "Elvis," the Museum's live alligator who will have a new space for the exhibition, as he continues to grow feasting on rats and outgrowing his current space. The "Grand Canyon" show will be a visually exciting show. "Paradise Lost" will look at Arizona from three million years ago to approximately 10,000 years ago. This is the time of the extinction of the great North American Megafauna: A time when we lost mammoths and mastodons, the giant sloth, the big American lion, and the dier wolf.
- The Museum's newsletter, *Southwest Quest*, is at press and will be coming out soon.

Mesa Arts Center/Mesa Contemporary Arts – Rob Schultz

- "Molten," an exhibition of illuminated glass artwork, and "Out There: Unconventional Landscapes by Melissa Martinez and Mary Shindell" opens November 3 at Mesa Contemporary Arts, with a public reception from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Members preview is from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.
- A kiln court cover has been installed in the ceramics courtyard. The cover protects the kilns and provides shade for students and instructors during the hot months.
- Mesa Arts Center identified funds to begin construction of a wood kiln. Mesa Arts Center had a wood-burning kiln at the old facility, which was the only one in central Arizona. The same master kiln builder that constructed the one at the old facility will be building the new one.
- A newly formed Division Collaboration Team has been looking at ways the two Museums and the Art Center can collaborate, focusing on events and exhibitions. A Spring Break Camp is being planned for children ages six to 12, which will consist of activities at all three venues.
- In September, the volunteer program had 338 volunteers, with a contribution of approximately 4,000 hours, for a total value of approximately \$70,000.
- Stageworks will have their closing of "There's a Boy in the Girl's Bathroom" this weekend. They have had 15 performances with three remaining. Tickets sales have gone well, much better than any other year. Staff is working diligently to step up marketing efforts to reach the 100% cost recovery goal.
- Another collaboration with Mesa Community College (MCC) is the "Empty Bowl" annual event that began at the Mesa Arts Center in the early 1990's and eventually moved to MCC. This year's event will be Wednesday, October 25, from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the MCC downtown campus. An additional date was added this year, November 1, and will be at MCC's Red Mountain campus. The Mesa Arts Center has provided approximately 1,000 bowls made by our students. The proceeds go to charity.
- This year's "Art on the Move" event will take place on November 11 at the Broadway Palm Dinner Theater. This is the major fundraising event of the year for the Mesa Arts Center Foundation.
- The "Mesa Arts Center & KYOT Holiday Art & Music Festival" will take place on Saturday, November 18, from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on the Shadow Walk, a great opportunity for holiday gift shopping.
- Andrea Robinson is the new Store Manager. Ms. Robinson came to the Mesa Arts Center from the Heard Museum store.

Public Art Program – Carrie Brown

- The Desert Pergola at Arizona Museum for Youth has been de-accessioned. Some of the materials are being bought back by one of the artists, and the remainder will go to the City for re-use or sale.
- Valley Forward awards take place on Friday, October 13. Ned Kahn's "Fragmented Landscape" at the Mesa Arts Center is a finalist in the "Art in Public Places" category.

Director's Report – Gerry Fathauer

- Staff has interviewed for the Fiscal Analyst position. A candidate has been selected; details are being finalized.
- Dinners for the Performing Live series are going well. The Tango Fire dinner is sold out. Sodexo, Mesa Arts Center's Concessionaire, is providing the catering.
- This week Performing Live has Tango Fire in the Ikeda; Stageworks' final performance of "There's a Boy in the Girl's Bathroom;" and Southwest Shakespeare's "The Tempest." Mesa Encore Theatre opens "Star Spangled Girl" on October 13 through October 19.
- The Los Tucanes performance scheduled for October 14 was canceled due to a breach of contract.
- Sound in the Ground opens with their first event Thursday, October 12, with "Audio/Visual" from 9:00 p.m. to midnight in the Mesa Contemporary Arts Courtyard. Tickets are \$6 in advance or \$8 at the door. This event is geared toward the 18 – 35 age group. There will be a cash bar, free appetizers, entertainment, art, and conversation.
- Kate Crowley, Marketing Assistant, will travel with Shelly Allen, Town Center Development Director, to attend the Urban Land Institute's (ULI) World Cities Expo in Denver on October 17 – October 20. Kate will be attending workshops and manning a booth for the Mesa Arts Center at the expo. The Mesa Arts Center was given a booth because of being an award recipient of ULI. Mesa Arts Center will be sharing a booth with BOORA Architects, one of the Mesa Arts Center architects, and Martha Schwartz Landscaping, the landscape designer for the Mesa Arts Center. ULI has international exposure, and this is a wonderful opportunity for the Mesa Arts Center to be represented at this event.
- The Arizona Arts Action Summit took place on Thursday, September 26 at the Herberger. It was an afternoon for arts and cultural organizations to meet their legislators and celebrate the \$7M ArtShare victory with other arts advocates; honor state legislator "All-Stars" for their support of the arts; and get a sneak peak of the advocacy agenda for the Arizona Commission on the Arts budget. The Summit honored Senator Carolyn Allen and Senator Barbara Leff. If not a member of Arizona Citizens/Action for the Arts, Ms. Fathauer encouraged the Board to become a member. It provides excellent opportunities to network with other arts advocates and receive first hand the latest information on arts issues.
- Last month, Carrie Brown announced that Mary Lucking's prototype design for the transit shelter that was approved by the Board had been shelved. Ms. Fathauer spoke with Jack Friedline, Development Services Director, regarding Council's Transportation Committee meeting, who said that there was no discussion regarding the art element of the shelters. They were denied strictly due to the cost involved. The artist design shelters would cost approximately \$13,000, where the City normally pays \$11,000. The Councilmembers who sit on the Transportation Committee felt strongly that the City needs to keep the cost as low as possible, as a large number of shelters are needed. They also want to pursue the possibility of purchasing transit shelters along with several other cities hoping to reduce the price even further, the goal being getting the cost to approximately \$10,000. The artist-designed shelters are not being scrapped, but are off the table for now.
- Staff continues to work on data and cost recovery reports for FY05-06.

John Hohmann asked to discuss the issue of "Free Sundays" that was on the agenda last month. Ms. Fathauer reported that staff was given the direction from the City Manager's office that Council is not reconsidering the issue of "Free Sundays," but rather, it is a housekeeping issue to change the resolution to reflect the current practice of no longer offering free Sundays at the Museums and Mesa Contemporary Arts. It was originally thought that the Board would have to approve a recommendation to Council to make the change; however, that is not the case. The distinction lies in that it is not a fee change, but a housekeeping issue. Ms. Fathauer also stated that the next review cycle for fees and charges begins in January and goes to Council in February/March. If the Board feels they would like to look at proposing a way to offer a "free" option at the Museums, they could consider a recommendation at that time.

Update Events – Board Members

Crista Cloutier shared that she will be leaving Segura Publishing Company at the end of the year.

Peter Cook shared that he attended the Stageworks play, "There's a Boy in the Girl's Bathroom," last weekend. He found the play charming. He was impressed by the staging in the way they took the audience from one scene to another by a quick, simple transformation of the stage, and the audience felt completely in another space and scene.

Mr. Cook also took part in the Museum's collaborative meeting to discuss how Mesa's three Museums can work together. One inexpensive idea was to share other venue information at the main desk areas at each venue. The committee is looking at many ways to share resources and information that will help the City and the Museums save money.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerry Fathauer, Director
Arts and Cultural Division