

# MARIN COUNTY CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Via Zoom, Marin Center, San Rafael, California  
Minutes of Meeting of Wednesday, October 21, 2020

## ROLE CALL

**PRESENT:** Chair Donna Seager Liberatore, Commissioners Marge Bartolini, Helen Willms, Ann Dickson, Ernie Bergman, Chris Owen, Lauren Howard, Madeline Nieto Hope. Director Gabriella C. Calicchio, Marketing Manager Libby Garrison, Admin Assistant Elisa Seppa

**ABSENT:** Commissioners Al Boro, Jennifer Wechsler

## CALL TO ORDER

The Cultural Services Commission convened via Zoom Videoconference at 9:41 am.

## REVIEW AGENDA

The agenda was approved with the addition of a report by Commissioner Ann Dickson regarding an art installation about Breonna Taylor.

AYES: ALL

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the September 23, 2020 Commission Meeting were approved.

AYES: ALL

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Bill Hale was in attendance to address concerns regarding events in Lagoon Park. He requested there be more clarity and notice for the public regarding when and where closures are to occur on Marin Center campus.

## CHAIR'S REPORT

- Chair Seager Liberatore reported on the state of the arts in Marin County. The report detailed the status of art facilities in the area including Mill Valley Theater Co, YIA, O'Hanlon Center for the Arts, Mill Valley Fall Arts Festival, ELM, Marin MOCA, Artworks Downtown, and how each facility is coping through the COVID 19 crisis. The emphasis of the report was regarding the need for support of local arts & theater companies as well as distribution of ideas.
- Commissioner Dickson reported on San Rafael public arts committee established to address equity in the arts of San Rafael. The committee was developed in response to the vandalization of a mural in Terra Linda of Breonna Taylor. The need for transparency of social injustice equality in San Rafael and surrounding cities was discussed, the options of public art integration and implementation, as well as the necessity for and planned work toward equality.

## DIRECTORS REPORT

### MCA ART & CULTURE RECOVERY FUND

- The MCA Art & Culture Recovery Fund is an emergency fund / regranting program to support art organizations hardest hit by COVID 19.
- \$94,125 in funds have been raised to date.
- The long-term goal is to build a permanent fund and regrant the interest.
- Any/all nonprofits have been invited to apply for a grant via [Marincultural.org](http://Marincultural.org).

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE UPDATE**

- The Exhibit Hall building remains equipped as TEP (Temporary Evacuation Point) for fire evacuees and will likely be vacated by rain season.
- The Veterans' Memorial Auditorium continues to be held as an ACS (Alternative Care Site) and will likely be relocated after December.
- It is expected Marin County will reach Tier 3 of reopening by the end of the month.
- Ideally Marin Center facilities will become available for regular use by Spring 2021.
- The Marin Center did not receive any funds or allocations from the SB5 Bond Measure for facility response but is still eligible for the next round.

## **HALLOWEEN FAIR FOOD DRIVE-THRU**

- Marin Center is hosting a Halloween Fair Food Drive-Thru on the Fairgrounds October 23 - November 1 in partnership with Phil Delahoyde of Extreme Food & Beverage.
- The family-friendly event coincides with the County's message encouraging COVID19 safety practices for Halloween activities and celebrations.
- Entertainment elements to include Halloween themed décor, animatronic dinosaurs, games, candy, music, MC Free Library multi-lingual book giveaway, and performances by Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District Sewer Band.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **ART IN THE PARKS**

- Collaboration between Cultural Services, Marin County Parks, Marin MOCA, and artist Jeff Downing are ongoing to produce a site-specific sculpture in the Lagoon about sea level rise.
- There is a desire to provide the public more access to art by integrating in public parks in addition to inside spaces and museums.

### **ART EXHIBITS / FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT UPDATE – LIBBY GARRISON**

- Marin Center / Marin Civic Center remain unavailable for exhibitions. Exhibits may be able to resume January 2021 in the Marin Civic Center building.
- The Frank Lloyd Wright docent program continues to offer mini engagement / informational videos weekly online. Staff and Docents are hopeful tours may resume once restrictions are lifted.

### **VETERANS' AFFAIRS REPORT – ERNIE BERGMAN**

- All Marin County veterans' meetings have been on hold or occurring online.
- Plans are underway for the Veterans' Day celebration to take place at the American Legion in Larkspur with underwritten support of Ghilotti Construction.

### **POET LAUREATE**

- Commissioner Lauren Howard is preparing to distribute a flyer and video to high schools and any relevant educational organizations regarding opportunities for underserved students to submit poetry to Marin Poetry Center High School Anthology.


## **IDENTIFY AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

- Non-profit Reports from Commissioners Lauren Howard and Ann Dickson

## **ADJOURN:**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 am.

1 **The next Commission meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 18 (via Zoom),**  
2 **beginning at 9:30 am.**

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8 Gabriella C. Calicchio, Director

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## Report on Non-profit Arts Organizations for Marin Cultural Commission

Mill Theater Company  
Mill Valley CA

From Jasson Minadakis

Our 24 member FT staff has been reduced to 8 FT and 3 PT so we absolutely need support.

Right now we really need people to buy a membership or subscription to the new Season we just announced to support the work we're creating to ensure we make it through the pandemic. The first three offerings are virtual with the first starting Nov 10. The fourth will be announced soon. Both the 5th and 6th will hopefully be live in the theatre if conditions allow with a digital option for people who are not ready to come back inside the theatre. So there is something for everyone. All of the work is new American writing and the first three productions were made specifically for the virtual medium.

We are also offering virtual classes for kids and adults.

Additionally, we will be starting a fundraising campaign soon to help support the company and our educational programs as we are still doing work with schools in Marin City and the Canal District.

We are looking at 70% reduction in income so we need all the support Marin can give us to make it through.

We could use a registered Nurse or a doctor who can volunteer time to be our Covid resource to help us with our safety plans.

<https://vimeo.com/404336469>

## **Youth in Arts**

San Rafael, CA

I spoke to Morgan Schauffler who was interesting and engaged and so refreshing in these times

They have managed to fulfill all of their contracts for teaching in the schools. Through their Sip and Bid online fundraising auction in July, they raised over \$25,000 which allowed them to purchase a learning management platform that is better than google learning which a lot of schools are using.

In addition to their classes for the schools, they offer free 8 minute art and dance lessons that parents can engage their kids in and they have ongoing programs that they can sign up for.

The current program is with Suzanne Joyal and they are making “Get out the Vote” Posters

They have programs that offer scaffolded learning in the arts, which means that they can progress through skill levels and still remain challenged.

Morgan is sending a link to one of the online classes so that you can see what they are doing and maybe even make a piece of art yourself!

Here are some links sent to us from Morgan Schauffler

Here is the link to our new virtual learning platform: <https://youthinarts.learnworlds.com/>.

If you can, please join us at this link on Friday, October 23rd at 6 for the Board Hosted Launch Party. You can RSVP at this link: <https://youthinarts.tofinoauctions.com/boardopenhouse/>.

Here is the invite to the event that we sent to our mailing list: <https://conta.cc/3k0n27E>.

If you're interested in learning more about what we're up to, we regularly post info to our blog: <http://www.youthinarts.org/blog/>.

# O'Hanlon Center for the Arts

Mill Valley CA

The COVID Crisis has been a mixture of good and bad:

We have been successful pivoting from in-person to online offerings of classes, art talks and gallery shows.

Our online gallery shows have been very successful in submission numbers and we have increased our outreach considerably. Our annual Women's show was our first INTERNATIONAL show! Our other online shows have attracted artists from all over the country. Having Zoom Roundtable discussions has made it possible for more people to attend than if in person.

Our online classes are fewer and we are offering many for free so income from these programs are down but people are active.

Our membership renewals are down about 20% as some artists prefer to wait until we are "Back to Normal" before committing funds. Many artists are like other sectors of the community suffering financial strain.

Fundraising income is lower than usual too.

BUT we are saving \$ on other pre cover expenses.

We have created an O'Hanlon From Home Facebook page where people can post the creative things they are working on.

This helps with the isolation somewhat. Our main demographic is older adults and many are sad to not be able to meet in person and some won't or can't participate in our virtual offerings.

Our Center facilities, classrooms and gallery have been transformed into individual studio spaces offering income to offset that lost by fewer and less expensive in person events and classes. These will remain studio spaces until at least February 2021.

We were able to use the downtime to complete a long needed but expensive sewer system overhaul.

Overall we are doing pretty well but miss our in-person community.

The community can support us by becoming members and participating in our events!



## **Mill Valley Fall Arts Festival**

Mill Valley CA

The Festival for 2020 was of course canceled. This has been a financial strain as the 64 year old event runs year to year with about a one year financial buffer.

Income comes from the gate and the artists booth space fees of which we had none this year.

Expenses were lower, but the bulk, our two staff who were under contract plus insurance, storage, website etc were still due and were important to keep going.

The volunteer committee, staff and board were very creative in creating a “Beyond the Park” event the weekend that would have been the festival. 18 local artists many who would have been in the show, were able to show work in the window of local merchants. We also created a lantern and chimes display in the Depot Plaza and had a table presentation to gather email and gave away vintage festival t-shirts for a donation. This was a fun and creative event much enjoyed by the people who saw it. It kept the festival in the minds of the community but didn’t raise any real funds.

Ironically, the festival has a very small email database as until 2 years ago we didn’t do any advanced ticket sales to gather email addresses. This unfortunately translates to fewer people to tap for fundraising appeal. We were hopeful to raise \$ with a GoFundMe but of the \$25K we were hoping to get only \$3K was raised so far.

**Where we can use help is in outreach to appeal to the community that if they want the festival to continue we will need financial support.**

We really hope we can pull off at 65th event next fall!!!

## Elm

San Rafael, CA

Because Elm serves so many in the Latino Community, they could see that there were needs that went further than just the music instruction which they have actually adapted pretty well on the virtual platforms. From Jane, “To our delight, our distance learning capabilities have enabled us to grow and unite the program in surprising and unique ways. “

They also acted quickly to

- Raise and distribute \$75,000 in cash gifts and food to all of their families
- Design and implement a one-to-one tutoring and reading buddy program upon request for every child. The kids are suffering academically so Jane and her staff recruited private tutors in math and English to help the kids.
- Partner with the Agricultural Institute of Marin to provide up to 100 weekly farmers’ market “bounty boxes” to their families
- Applied for and received a coveted national *Lewis Prize for Music* grant for our work of going above and beyond the music to support their community during these unprecedented times.
- Donor Jan Goldberg’s catering company “Delicious!” delivers 60 meals for families of 4 every Saturday night go Elm families

## **Marin Museum of Contemporary Art**

Novato, CA

Nancy Rehkopf

Their income is down about \$100,000 this year.

They have been managing by cutting expenses in programs. They are “not going out of business but they certainly not whole.”

With attendance low, people are not making donations and museum memberships are down.

Their virtual online altered book show was a great success, however, which really shored them up at a difficult time and their online talks and programs have been well-organized and interesting.

Wishes that the county had some kind of rebuilding fund or grant that might enable organizations to go forward with development.

## **Artworks Downtown**

San Rafael, CA

Elisabeth Setten

Artworks Downtown as part of its initial plan makes much of their money from rentals of the studios and apartments above and they have not lost any tenants and are doing well on that front.

Their exhibition schedule had been shut down, but they are opening the gallery soon on weekends from 11 to 5:00 pm

Thanks to a donation from one of their board members, an amazing mural going on in their back alleyway and they are also involved in a public mural that is being created in the Canal District. Cultural Arts District Funding helped pay for that effort.

\$600,000 electrical upgrade to the building is happening now which has been needed for a long time.

Online virtual events:

2<sup>nd</sup> Friday Virtual Artwalk

Collaboration with Marin Multicultural for Dia de los Muertos. Over 30 altars will be on display along 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

Four page arts and culture plan for the City of San Rafael 2040 plan.