



MEETING OF THE VISUAL ARTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, November 15, 2023

3 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

Minutes

Commissioner Ferras called the meeting to order at 3:05pm.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Agenda Changes, Land Acknowledgment

Commissioners Present:

Suzie Ferras, Chair

JD Beltran

Yiying Lu

Jeanne McCoy

Nabiel Musleh

Abby Sadin Schnair

Commissioners Absent:

Mahsa Hakimi

Commissioner Ferras called for changes to the agenda. She announced the following changes, item 4, 2530 18th Street, was tabled.

Item 9, San Francisco International Airport Harvey Milk Terminal Underpass Lighting project has a typo. The correct motion is: **Discussion and Possible Action:** to approve an increase of Lite Brite Neon Studio LLC's design-only contract from \$144,864 to \$1,630,907 (an increase of \$1,486,043) to include additional scope for fabrication, transportation, and consultation during installation of an artwork by Andrea Bowers (DBA Radical Patience Inc.) for the San Francisco International Airport: Harvey

Milk Terminal 1 Underpass Lighting Project.

Additionally, Chair Ferras announced that due to time constraints items will be taken out of order.

2. General Public Comment

(0:07:56)

There was no public comment.

3. Consent Calendar

(0:09:13)

1. Motion to retroactively approve and accept into the Civic Art Collection *The Author & Her Story (Final Design)*, 2018, by Jason Jagel. Oil on canvas painting; measures 75 3/16 in. x 184 3/8 in. This is the study for the mosaic mural *The Author & Her Story* at the San Francisco International Airport, Harvey Milk Terminal 1, Boarding Area B. The painting purchase was approved under Res. No. 0909-19-260.
2. Motion to retroactively approve and accept into the Civic Art Collection the Final Design Cartoon for *Hyper-Natural Bay Area*, 2018, by Robert Minervini. Oil on canvas painting; measures 54 in. x 186 in. x 1 1/2 in. This is the study for the mosaic mural *Hyper-Natural Bay Area* at the San Francisco International Airport, Harvey Milk Terminal 1, Boarding Area B. The painting purchase was approved under Res. No. 0909-19-259.
3. Motion to retroactively approve and accept into the Civic Art Collection *The Color of Horizons*, 2020, by Dana Hemenway. The suspended light sculpture is comprised of wood, steel, rope, extension cords, glazed ceramics, and LED lights. It measures

336 in. x 336 in. x 240 in. and is installed at the San Francisco International Airport, Harvey Milk Terminal 1, Departure Lobby. The artwork was approved as installed under Res. No. 0706-20-088.

4. Motion to retroactively approve and accept into the Civic Art Collection *Bird Plane House; Intersection; Shell*, 2020 by Gay Outlaw. The three sculptures are installed at the San Francisco International Airport, Harvey Milk Terminal 1, South Courtyard. The artwork consists of *Bird Plane House*, 2020, aluminum, paint, measuring 110 in. x 97 in. x 94 in.; *Intersection*, 2020, concrete, terrazzo, measuring 110 in. x 110 in. x 110 in.; and *Shell*, 2020, steel, concrete, paint, measuring 84 in. x 84 in. x 47 in. The artwork was approved as installed under Res. No. 1207-20-200.

5. Motion to retroactively approve and accept into the Civic Art Collection *Time, Turn, and Light*, 2019, by Woody De Othello. A group of three sculptures made of bronze and installed at the San Francisco International Airport, International Terminal, Boarding Area G, Outdoor Terrace Observation Deck; Time measures 7ft. x 4 ft. x 4ft, Light measures 6 ft. x 4 ft. x 2 ft. and Turn measures 6 ft. x 4ft. x 2 ft. The artwork was approved as installed under Res. No. 0304-19-077.

There was no public comment.

Moved: Beltran/Schnair

The motion unanimously carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Ferras, Beltran, Lu, McCoy, Musleh, Schnair

THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS TABLED

**4. 2530 18th Street
(00:10:48)**

Discussion and Possible Action: to approve the design of the artwork *Horizon Effect* by Design Girl Magic to be installed at 2530 18th Street. The artwork is funded by MOHCD. Mercy Housing will be responsible for ongoing maintenance. The work will not become part of the Civic Art Collection.

Discussion and Possible Action: to approve the design of the artwork *An Embrace :: Un Abrazo* by Leah Tumerman to be installed at 2530 18th Street. The artwork is funded by MOHCD. Mercy Housing will be responsible for ongoing maintenance. The work will not become part of the Civic Art Collection.

Discussion and Possible Action: to approve the design of the artwork *Growing Together :: Creciendo Juntos* by Design Girl Magic to be installed at 2530 18th Street. The artwork is funded by MOHCD. Mercy Housing will be responsible for ongoing maintenance. The work will not become part of the Civic Art Collection.

**6. Chinatown Public Health Center – Dragon Sculpture
(0:11:06)**

Civic Art Collection and Public Art Program Director Mary Chou and Senior Registrar Allison Cummings presented options of relocation or removal of the sculpture *Dragon Relief* at the Chinatown Public Health Center due to upcoming renovations of the Center that include the replacement of the eastern wall of the building where the sculpture is currently sited with windows.

Dragon Relief was commissioned in 1969 and installed on the eastern façade of the Chinatown Public Health Center (CPHC) in 1970. The lead architect of CPHC Clarence Mayhew recommended artist Patti Bowler to the Arts Commission for this project. Patti Bowler's design proposal for the artwork was approved by unanimous resolution at the September 2, 1969 public meeting of the Arts Commission. The budget was set at \$27,500 for design, fabrication, and installation. The sculpture is hollow. The scales are

brass and the body bronze, to which a matte, dark brown patina has been applied. At the time, the artist was directed not to make the sculpture a “shiny bronze” because there was concern that the reflection of the sun off the sculpture would distract the drivers passing into the tunnel below. The sculpture is made up of 23 individual sections and together the piece is 56 feet long, 9 feet 6 inches tall, and 2 feet 6 inches in depth. Dragon Relief was fabricated in Santa Rosa by Lux Metals. The sculpture, including a tile mosaic patterned background, was installed by the artist. After the artwork was completed in the summer of 1970, the Arts Commission approved the artwork as installed and accepted it into the Civic Art Collection by resolution at their September 8, 1970 public meeting.

Arts Commission staff worked closely with PW architects to research a number of options for the return of the sculpture to the building, including reorienting the layout of the sculpture and changing its patina. Staff conferred with the City Attorney who advised that there is no known legal barrier to the proposed alterations, and after further review by SFAC and PW staff, the options deemed most viable were presented to the community for review and input both through a survey and an in-person community meeting.

SFAC worked with InterEthnica, a local marketing and community engagement consultant, to seek feedback on the dragon sculpture. This process included a survey conducted in both Chinese and English and a community outreach meeting conducted in both Cantonese and English. The survey was conducted over a period of 39 days from August 4 to September 11, 2023 and included in-person surveys conducted in English and Chinese languages at Self Help for the Elderly, Portsmouth Square and Willie “Woo Woo” Wong Playground as well online surveys sent to the Chinatown Public Health Center staff and the broader community including the SFAC newsletter.

A total of 455 responses were received. Of the 455 responses, 261 live and work in Chinatown (about 57%), and 18 staff from CPHC. The data from the survey shows that when presented with the two options of either the roof or the side of the building, the preference is for the roof. When presented with the option between preserving the current patina and

changing to a golden color, the majority prefer the gold finish. The data also shows that when presented with the two options of keeping the artwork on the building or removing it from the building, the majority support keeping the dragon on the building.

In addition to the survey, staff also received feedback during the community meeting as well in other outreach meetings that demonstrated strong opinions against the reinstallation of the dragon at CPHC. Ms. Chou presented a summary of pros and cons for the three options under consideration by the Commissioners on this item.

Ms. Chou then proceeded to review cost considerations. For capital improvement projects with existing artwork, SFAC guidelines state that the larger capital improvement project budget covers the cost of deinstallation, storage and reinstallation of the artwork, with SFAC being responsible only for the cost of its conservation. SFAC is responsible for conserving the artwork regardless of if it is returned to the building or not.

For relocation onto the building, SFAC would propose investigating the option to change the patina; the cost of this is unknown and would be assessed through testing after the artwork is removed from the building.

For relocation on top of the building, PW has assessed the design and structural needs and has determined that the installation is feasible and straightforward. PW has not assessed relocation to the south-facing Mason Street façade and has indicated that this will require additional structural evaluation and may result in replacement of the existing precast concrete panels due to the number of penetrations; PW adds that this will have an impact on cost and possibly delay the schedule. If permanently removed from building, the cost to store the artwork is estimated at approximately \$600 per month.

Ms. Cummings and Ms. Chou concluded that the location of *Dragon Relief* needs resolution so that the design can be incorporated into the building's construction documents. The funding for the renovation of the CPHC is on the ballot for November 2024. If the bond measure passes and funding is secured, construction is anticipated to start in Spring 2025 with a duration

of two years.

Colin Mosher, Department of Public Works architect on the project, spoke briefly about the two locations on the new design for the Chinatown Public Health Center and shared two 3D models of the current relocation options on the building. Mr. Mosher shared that Public Health has recently offered a space for storage for the sculpture in their system, potentially offsetting the storage costs of removal.

Commissioner Schnair asked Mr. Mosher about a sense of costs for putting the sculpture on the side of the building. Mr. Mosher said that it hadn't been investigated yet so he couldn't guesstimate on costs other than the design would be highly impacted.

Commissioner Musleh asked about the opinion of the Chinese Culture Center. Commissioner McCoy asked if the community groups who submitted a letter in support of removal of the sculpture were included in the survey. Ms. Chou confirmed that the survey was forwarded to these community groups and that it was part of the newsletter. The collection of responses are anonymous so she cannot confirm if those community groups responded to the survey.

Commissioner Beltran stated that the survey results do appear to be significant in the option of re-location on the building and changing the color and asked for Ms. Chou to share her thoughts.

Ms. Chou stated that the survey appears to be getting one type of result while a number of Chinatown-based community groups prefer removal as stated in their letter to the Arts Commission. Additionally, some community group representatives had issue with how the survey was conducted.

McCoy asked if there was a fourth option for creating a new artwork. Ms. Chou stated that there will be new artwork at the site and there is an art enrichment budget of \$691,461 that will be allotted if the bond passes for the renovation of the Center. The project plan for the new art to be

commissioned for the building will be presented to the Commission for review and approval in early 2024 if the bond passes and the renovation moves forward. The new art is not dependent on the disposition of the *Dragon Relief* sculpture.

There was a discussion about the letters submitted to the Commissioners before the meeting, particularly the group letter from Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco, Chinatown Community Development Center, Self Help for the Elderly, Community Tenants Association, Ping Yuen Residents Improvement Association, API Council, and SRO Families United Collaborative in support of removing *Dragon Relief* to storage and not reinstalling in a different location on the Chinatown Public Health Center. The letter included a petition with 59 signatures representing two different addresses near the Health Center. Commissioner Musleh stated he understood the community groups' issue with the survey in that people may not understand there are more options than the two presented on the survey.

Commissioners pointed out there are multiple positives and negatives to all available options. The survey results show one clear preference, and the community groups letters and petitions show a different one, including that the current sculpture does not engender pride in the community or reflect the community. Multiple commissioners made indication that the community should make the decision.

Director Remington stated that the Commissioners are the representatives for the public and they have to make the decision based on the information presented today, including a survey, meetings, letters, and public comment; there is not a right answer but there needs to be a definitive answer.

Public Comment:

In person:

Peter Ng, retired pediatrician from CPHC of 29 + years and current volunteer, spoke in support of removing the *Dragon Relief* sculpture to

storage and not reinstalling in a different location on the Chinatown Public Health Center.

Kit Chen, retired Nurse Manager from CPHC after 27 years and current volunteer, spoke in support of removing the Dragon Relief sculpture to storage and not reinstalling in a different location on the Chinatown Public Health Center.

Amy Zhou from the Chinatown Community Development Center spoke in support of removing the Dragon Relief sculpture to storage and not reinstalling it in a different location on the Chinatown Public Health Center.

Remote Comment:

Hoi Leung a curator from the Chinese Culture Center spoke in support of removing the Dragon Relief sculpture to storage and not reinstalling in a different location on the Chinatown Public Health Center.

Calvin Yan from Supervisor Aaron Peskin's office spoke in support of the joint community letter submitted by the Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco, Chinatown Community Development Center, Self Help for the Elderly, Community Tenants Association, Ping Yuen Residents Improvement Association, API Council, and SRO Families United Collaborative. These groups represent a variety of community members many of which are monolingual, not used to a public process like this, and often don't know how to advocate for themselves. Surveys and newsletters are often not the best method for feedback from this community.

There were two motions up for discussion and possible action that were either/or and not both motions. Chair Ferras took the second motion first with the plan to take the first motion second if the former did not pass.

Motion: to remove and place in storage the sculpture Dragon Relief, 1970, by Patti Bowler, located on the east side building façade of the Chinatown Public Health Center, over the Broadway Tunnel. This action is taken after

completion of the process described in Section 7 of the Guidelines of the Civic Art Collection of the City and County of San Francisco, regarding “Collections Management: Removal, Alteration, Destruction and Deaccession Policies and Procedures,” upon determination that removal of the artwork is appropriate under the criterion that the work “No suitable site for the work is available, or significant changes in the use or character of design of the site affect the integrity of the work.”

Moved: Beltran/Schnair

The motions unanimously carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Ferras, Beltran, Lu, McCoy, Musleh, Schnair

Commissioner Ferras left the meeting at 4:29pm.

Commissioner Schnair left the meeting at 4:30pm.

Commissioner Beltran took over as chair once Commissioner Ferras left the meeting.

5. Gift Of Mayor Ed Lee Bust

(1:22:14)

Ms. Chou introduced project manager Dorka Keehn to present the Mayor Ed Lee Bust design. ArtCare is an arts organization that has been fundraising money for the design, fabrication and installation of a bust of former Mayor Lee to donate to the City for display in City Hall. ArtCare has been working with Mayor Ed Lee’s family on the selection of artist, Jonah Hendrickson, and design of the bust. In describing the bust, Ms. Keehn stated that the family wants Mayor Lee to be portrayed as a man of the people and not towering above people. As a result, Mayor Lee is portrayed looking down from the plinth, as if viewers are in conversation with him. Ms. Keehn pointed out that the existing busts in City Hall have a diversity of styles and plinths.

The new Mayor Lee bust will be installed on the James Phelan plinth. The Lee bust is the same height but two inches wider than the Phelan bust. The installation will include a stone plaque on the face of the existing plinth

with the text in English and Chinese.

There was a slight delay in the meeting as audio difficulties were encountered.

There was no public comment.

Motion: to approve the design of a sculptural bust of former Mayor Ed Lee and proposed text for installation on the pedestal for City Hall.

Moved: McCoy/Musleh

The motions unanimously carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Beltran, Lu, McCoy, Musleh

Motion: to authorize the Director of Cultural Affairs to enter into an agreement with ArtCare for their proposed gift to the City of a bust of former Mayor Ed Lee (valued at \$96,500) and accompanying maintenance endowment (estimated at \$2,000) and other associated costs.

Moved: McCoy/Lu

The motions unanimously carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Beltran, Lu, McCoy, Musleh

8. Entwined Meadow 2023-24 Installation in Golden Gate Park (1:37:14)

Project Manager Rebeka Rodriguez Mondragón introduced artist Charles Gadeken. Mr. Gadeken presented a new version of Entwined Meadow to be installed in a new location, in the middle of JFK Drive. The installation consists of a new element called *Elder Mother*, a 30ft. tall Weeping Willow tree with 33,200 illuminated cubes and a sound component that plays 3,000 fairy tales in 23 languages. 80 ft of benches line the *Elder Mother* installation with seating logs at either end to direct the flow of traffic around the installation but still maintain room for emergency vehicles to pass on the street if necessary. *Elder Mother* will be combined with elements from previous iterations of *Entwined Meadow* including two saplings, two king

shrubs, two regular shrubs and 24 regular shrubs. The sculptural components will have QR codes throughout the installation to allow the public to control the color of the light.

There was a slight delay in the meeting as audio difficulties were encountered.

Commissioner Beltran inquired about the layout, waterproof design of the sculpture and power access. Mr. Gadeken confirmed that the proposed layout is the maximum number of sculptural components that can be safely displayed in the middle of the street, that the sculptures are waterproof, and that the Recreation and Park Department is choosing one of two options for power access to the site.

There was no public comment.

Motion: to approve Charles Gadeken’s artwork, *Entwined Meadow*, a temporary sculptural light installation, to be located in Golden Gate Park on John F Kennedy Drive, at the intersection of Conservatory Drive East. The artwork will be on display from December 7, 2023 – April 28, 2024 with funding from the Office of Economic and Workforce Development and the Parks Alliance.

Moved: Musleh/Lu

The motions unanimously carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Beltran, Lu, McCoy, Musleh

9. San Francisco International Airport Harvey Milk Terminal 1 Underpass Lighting Project (01:50:57)

Program Manager Jackie von Treskow presented on the design and history of the underpass lighting project. Ms. von Treskow explained in detail the need for an increase of Lite Brite Neon Studio LLC’s design-only contract from \$144,864 to \$1,630,907 (an increase of \$1,486,043) to include

additional scope for fabrication, transportation, and consultation during installation of "We've Got to Give Them Hope", an artwork by Andrea Bowers for the San Francisco International Airport: Harvey Milk Terminal 1 Underpass Lighting Project.

In December of 2022, Lite Brite provided a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) cost for their additional scope for the fabrication, transportation, and consultation during installation of the artwork that ranged from \$1.7 - \$1.9 million, citing myriad, unanticipated factors and challenges effecting their earlier, lower cost estimates for this work. These factors included: ongoing design revisions requested by SFAC and SFO and resultant production delays; additional scope for the coordination and administration of UL certification and SFO permitting; additional scope for the coordination and administration of the artwork structural and electrical engineering; across the board price increases on materials and labor resulting from the pandemic and inflation as well as the skyrocketing price of inert gases and other materials required for neon production due to the ongoing war and occupation of Ukraine

Upon receiving their final cost proposal, SFAC sought comparative pricing from two alternative neon production companies. Based on these costs, SFAC staff believe the \$1,486,043 cost provided by Lite Brite for their additional scope for fabrication, transportation, and consultation during installation to be fair and reasonable, and are seeking Commission approval to increase the contract in this amount so that fabrication may proceed.

Commissioners expressed concern about the large amount of money in the contract and were worried about costs increasing beyond this adjustment. Ms. Treskow confirmed that the new budget includes line items costs that are locked in for several months, that the payment schedule is tied to specific milestones, and that some contingency is built into this adjusted budget. Ms. Treskow confirmed that maintenance and conservation costs are built into the greater project budget and is not included in this part of the contract and that ongoing electrical costs will be borne by the Airport.

There was no public comment.

Motion: to approve an increase of Lite Brite Neon Studio LLC's design-only contract from \$144,864 to \$1,630,907 (an increase of \$1,486,043) to include additional scope for fabrication, transportation, and consultation during installation of an artwork by Andrea Bowers (DBA Radical Patience Inc.) for the San Francisco International Airport: Harvey Milk Terminal 1 Underpass Lighting Project.

Moved: McCoy/Musleh

The motions unanimously carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Beltran, Lu, McCoy, Musleh

10. Traffic Company and Forensic Services Division (02:14:47)

Civic Art Collection and Public Art Program Director May Chou presented the status and history of the Traffic Company and Forensic Services Division project. Ms. Chou explained in detail the need for an increase of Narduli Studio's existing contract for fabrication, transportation, and consultation during installation phases of the Traffic Company and Forensic Services Division Project. Approval will increase the artist contract from a not to exceed amount of \$1,150,000 to a not to exceed amount of \$1,417,195 (an increase of up to \$267,195).

The artwork was planned for installation in the beginning of 2023, however, challenges in communication between the Studio and one of the Studio's fabrication subcontractors has resulted in delays in the fabrication and delivery of the artwork for installation. It was determined that a portion of the fabrication, consisting of the fabrication of interior acrylic elements and assembly of the structure, could not be completed by one of the subcontractors, and the Studio needed to find an alternate fabricator. A different existing subcontractor of the Studio, Ignition Arts, submitted a competitive bid and plans to modify their contract with Narduli Studio for the

artwork fabrication. After researching other fabricators, SFAC staff believe this bid to be fair and reasonable and propose the increase in the Studios' contract in this amount so that fabrication may proceed.

Ms. Chou stated that the new budget includes a healthy contingency, and that staff will review and approve each cost proposed for use by the Studio prior to use. If the contingency is not used, it reverts to the project and not to the artist.

The Commissioners were concerned about the increase in costs. Ms. Chou stated that staff have been working closely with the City Attorney regarding the subcontractor's inability to meet the terms of the contract. This artwork is partially fabricated right now with elements that are sitting accruing storage costs while waiting for another contractor to finish the project. The client is very invested in moving the project forward and the building has been completed for a year already. SFAC staff feel confident in this new budget and plan.

There was no public comment.

Motion: to approve an increase of Narduli Studio's contract from \$1,150,000 to \$1,417,195 (an increase of \$267,195) for fabrication, transportation, and consultation during installation of an artwork by Susan Narduli for the Traffic Company and Forensic Services Division Project.

Moved: McCoy/Musleh

The motions unanimously carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Beltran, Lu, McCoy, Musleh

7. 49 South Van Ness Project (02:31:16)

The committee took a quick break from 5:38pm – 4:42pm and then restarted the meeting.

Project manager Aleta Lee presented the Two-Dimensional Artwork Program as installed for the 49 South Van Ness Project. 49 South Van Ness, a new permit center and office building for the City, is an 18-story tower on Van Ness between Market and Mission and 11th Streets.

The program features 66 individual artworks by 38 artists and is installed in the building's common areas throughout Floors 2 through 16. The first round of 2D artwork installations occurred April 2021: 32 artworks by 15 artists. Due to the success and popularity of the 2D Artwork program at the 49 South Van Ness building, along with additional project funds, a second round of 2D artwork purchases was implemented and installed October 2023, with an additional 34 works by 23 artists. All artists are either Bay Area based or have a meaningful connection to the Bay Area. The artwork range in media and include painting, drawing, fabric (quilt), photography, collage, and mixed media.

There was no public comment.

Motion: to approve as installed the Two-Dimensional Artwork Program for the 49 South Van Ness Project. The program features 66 individual artworks by 38 artists and is installed in the Office Building's 2nd through 16th floors.

Moved: Lu/Musleh

The motions unanimously carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Beltran, Lu, McCoy, Musleh

11. Staff Report

(2:51:43)

Mary Chou, Civic Art Collection and Public Art Program Director, shared the open RFQ for Potrero Modernization Yard and thanked the collections staff for a fast mobilization to clean artwork in the Civic Art Collection before APEC.

There was no public comment.

8. New Business and Announcements (2:53:36)

Commissioner Musleh thanked SFAC staff for all their hard work and Commissioner Beltran seconded the sentiment. There were no other announcements.

There was no public comment.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00pm.

Posted 12/1/2023, 4:06PM TP
Approved 12/4/2023

Archives Available

A recording of this meeting will be available online after the meeting at the following address:

Language Accessibility

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