



# Maryland Public Art Commission

## QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 19, 2024, 9:00-10:30 am

### Virtual Meeting

#### Commissioners in Attendance:

Jerome Gray

Laura Gutierrez (on behalf of Ben Siegl)

Jamie Heater

Elizabeth Hughes

Judy Kwon, *Commission Chair*

Catherine Leggett

Rebecca Massie Lane

Brittany McGowen

Flannery Winchester

#### Staff in Attendance:

Ryan Patterson, Program Director, Public Art

Nora Howell, Public Art Project Manager

Steven Skerritt-Davis, MSAC Executive Director

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was called to order at 9:06 am by Commission Chair Judy Kwon.

The prior meeting minutes from the June 2024 Annual Meeting were approved with the following amendments:

- Recognizing prior Program Director Liesel Fenner's service with a Governor's citation.
- Noting that Commissioner Rebecca Massie Lane has volunteered to serve on the forthcoming Conservation Committee.

**Motion to Approve:** Rebecca Massie Lane

**Seconded:** Jamie Heater

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.



## **2. MSAC UPDATES:**

MSAC Executive Director Steven Skerritt Davis provided an update that included the following:

- MSAC Staffing Updates
  - Leslie Gillard was hired as Executive Assistant
  - Brad Bittner hired as Fiscal Officer
  - Jess Porter was hired as Senior Program Director
  - Lisel Fenner Officially retired
  - Ryan Patterson, Promoted to Program Director, Public Art
  - The Arts Capital position was reclassified as a Program Director level position.
  - Currently hiring for a Special Projects and Grants Associate.
  - Administrative priority to build a more equitable state workforce by transitioning contractual positions to full time positions.
- Overview of State budget cuts
  - \$150 Million in cuts state-wide, \$437,000 reduction to MSAC
  - Budgeted was shifted to reduce general admin, CAD and GFO funds. The 40 largest organizations took the majority of the cut in GFO funds.
- Additional Updates
  - Currently processing \$24.5 Million in grant awards
  - Establishment of Arts Incubator Workgroup
  - Lady Brion named 11th State Poet Laureate
  - Release of MSAC's Annual Report
  - MSAC's Land Acknowledgement Project named as the recipient of the National Association of State Arts Agencies Diversity Equity and Inclusion Award

## **Discussion:**

- Commissioner Rebecca Massie Lane offered congratulations and kudos. The land acknowledgment project is a step forward for the state.

## **3. PROGRAM DIRECTORS REPORT:**

Ryan Patterson is now MSAC's Program Director of Public Art. He thanked the Commission for their support and congratulations.

Key elements of the Commission's Bylaws noting that:

- The legislation and bylaws acknowledge the responsibility of the Commission to
  - Manage and conserve the collection of public artwork the body commissions. (which leads to the creation of the Conservation Committee)
  - And to annually review the list of the state capital projects eligible to receive public artwork commissions; and advise on the



investment in public artwork at these projects based on the following criteria: Geographic location, population, budget, and public accessibility.

- The Commission ByLaws require the Commission to establish and Executive Committee and describe how additional Ad Hoc committees can be formed.
  - Current Committees:
    - Special Project: Maryland Black Patriot Monument
    - Conservation
    - Ryan plans to work with the Executive Committee on 1) Identifying a Vice Chair, and 2) Approving the role of Chair and membership of other ad-hoc Committees.

### **Discussion:**

- Q: Commissioner Rebecca Massie Lane asked how state capital projects are selected to receive commissions. A: We will review this process further down the agenda.
- Q: Commissioner Elizabeth Hughes asked if the Executive Committee is only two people. A: The bylaws state the executive committee comprises the Commission Chair, Vice Chair, and two additional Commissioners (who may be the chair of other committees).
- Q: Commissioner Catherine Leggett asked if public art was included at Montgomery College. A: Ryan explained that Regional/County Colleges had asked for an exemption from the original MPAI legislation and are not required to include public art as part of campus capital projects.
- Ryan Described two upcoming program goals will be to:
  - Commission a Conservation report on the works currently in the collection
  - Re-establish the MD Public Artist Roster for FY26
    - The Roster has been in place for a little over 12 months and has been an incredibly useful tool for the staff and MSAC's constituents.
    - The current contract is coming up for renewal, and the time frame of 2 years will be up in the Summer of 2025.
    - Staff will present a list of recommended improvements and a timeline for renewing/continuing the roster at a future Commission meeting.

### **4. Commissions Report**

Public Art Project Manager Nora Howell provided a report on active Artwork Commission Projects.

- Staff are currently managing 16 active projects across 14 State buildings/facilities. The combined value of these projects is \$4,625,624.



- Active Projects by phase of work:
  - Planning phase: 1, Artist Selection: 5, Procurement & Contracting: 1, Design: 2, Fabrication: 3, Installation and Dedication: 4.
  - Marc Archambault (NC) was recently selected for UMBC, Sherman Hall, (Commission Budget: \$371,972)
  - Po Shu Wang (CA) was recently selected for the USMSM Autonomous Research and Technology Center. Commission Budget: \$339,614
  - Stacia Goodman (MN), and David Hess (MD) both completed the installation of their works at Frostburg State University's Education & Health Sciences Center, dedication date TBD.
  - Wesley Clark (MD) recently installed his painting on the second floor of the Maryland District Court's Catonsville Courthouse, the lobby piece by Jackson Jarvis Studios is forthcoming
- Incoming Projects- Nora presented on 8 new incoming public art eligible projects that the Department of Budget Management has provided. The Commission is asked to approve these projects to be added to the queue of capital projects receiving public art commissions.
  - The eight projects are spread across five Maryland counties and have a combined budget value of \$5995,823
  - The Projects and the Public Art Premium (Commission budget) provided by DBM are:
    - Maryland State Police Forestville Barracks (\$64,682)
    - Maryland State Police College Park Barracks (\$62,449)
    - Therapeutic Treatment Center (\$3,790,825)
    - Supreme Court of Maryland (\$774,930)
    - Maryland School for the Deaf, High School Boys and Girls Middle School Residencies (\$213,092)
    - Baltimore City Community College, Learning Commons Renovation and Addition (\$95,483)
    - William Donald Schaefer Tower Renovation (\$422,729)
    - Towson University, Smith Hall (\$571,633)

**Motion to Approve:** Rebecca Massie Lane, makes a motion that the Commission supports pursuing the inclusion of public art at the eight projects presented and that the new list of commission projects will be added to a queue until becoming "active". Staff will provide ongoing updates as projects advance.

**Seconded:** Jamie Heater

**Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.

Program Director Ryan Patterson noted that this is a very large workload for two staff members and applauded Nora for her work in managing so many.



He noted that the goal is to gain additional project management support by gaining team members. He expressed that in the future, he hopes to measure the success of the program by the quality of the artworks and their impact locally rather than continuing to focus on the number of projects we are managing.

Commission Chair Judy Kwon seconded the note on the workload, noting that the Commission was discussing staff capacity for over a year, the onboarding of eight new projects is a 70% increase to the current workload and asked what the plans are to onboard additional staff.

Steven Skerritt-Davis noted that while he cannot discuss specific HR decisions, he is looking to add members to the public team and looking at funding available to help relieve staff capacity.

Commissioner Catherine Leggett said that she was also concerned about staff capacity. She assumed the staff would not recommend onboarding the additional projects unless capacity was being addressed. She noted that if there were not additional staff support, the addition of these projects would be a burden.

Steven acknowledged these notes and said he would inform the commission if there was an opportunity for additional advocacy on this topics.

## **5. Collection & Conservation Report**

Program Director Ryan Patterson noted that while there has not been a consistent collection management program of the existing Artwork Commissions collection, conservation and maintenance is a regular topic that comes up in the staff's work and MSAC supports financially through grants and in other ad-hoc ways.

- The Public Art Across Maryland Conservation Grant- created in FY2021, is a model program for providing grant funding to community-initiated projects to conserve and maintain public art.
  - The Garret County Arts Council used conservation funding to restore "Buckwheat Harvest," the WPA era US Post Office mural in Oakland, MD.
  - In Baltimore, the Friends of Public Art (Cindy Kelly, Mary Ann Mears, and Linda DePalma) have successfully applied PAAM Conservation funding to conduct conservation treatments and literally save public artworks at city public schools. These grants also include educational videos that tell the story of the artists behind the works. Two notable examples are Peely Wheely by Jim Paulson at Wolf Street Academy and an Untitled relief by James Lewis at Cherry Hill Elementary.

**Discussion:**

Q: Commissioner Jerome Gray asked if there had been any attempt to obtain a value for these works. A: Ryan replied No, but that it can be difficult to get an accurate valuation for public works unless you can identify a comparable work that has been sold commercially.

Q: Commission Chair Judy Kwon asked who carried insurance for the pieces?

A: Ryan replied that for the works at Baltimore City Public Schools they are owned by the City of Baltimore and should be included in their fine arts insurance policy.

Ryan Patterson went on to describe how sometimes situations may arise that fall out of the purview of the Staff but carry a weight of artistic or cultural significance that they try to intervene or provide support where they can.

- An example was a collection of severely damaged artworks and paper archives of sculpture by James Earl Reid. Since the artists passed the studio was foreclosed upon and then purchased by an (artist-friendly) private developer. Working closely with the new owner and the artist's family, Ryan Patterson, reached out to multiple institutions that could help retrieve and stabilize the works. Fortunately, this emergency need found support from the administrative staff of the Gallery and the Driskoll Center at the University of Maryland College Park. The Gallery contracted Bonsai Fine Art to retrieve the works from the dangerous conditions at the studio, and they are now being cleaned and studied at UMD facilities. The University plans to work with the family to formally acquire a selection of the work

There are also examples of works that the State Arts Council had a hand in commissioning that are now lost.

- When she was the public art administrator for the Maryland State Arts Council, Cindy Kelly commissioned a work by Andrew Leicester for Frostburg State University titled "Prospect V-III". While there is documentation of the work, it is removed without notification or record and is no longer present at the campus.
- Cindy also helped relocate a piece by Paul Daniel to the Perkins Hospital campus in the 1980s. That piece was removed without notification or record and is no longer present.
- Artworks commissioned for Baltimore Metro Link The Maryland Transit Administration, both the MTA and individual artists are coming to MSAC for support in maintaining works that collection.

Ryan laid out a timeline and goals for a Conservation Committee to conduct its work, beginning in the Fall of 2024 and ending with a report issued in the summer of 2025. The report may contain recommendations for revising the legislation or program regulations.



### **Discussion:**

Commission Chair Judy Kwon recommended that it would be beneficial to provide a resource guide of best practices in tandem with the conservation report and that a collection management system is warranted to manage the (growing) collection of works, and encouraged staff to start researching CMS options.

### **6. Special Projects Update**

Nora Howell reported on progress for the Maryland Monument to Black Patriots.

- Four semi-finalist teams were selected by the Artist Selection Committee:
  - Branly Cadet (CA)
  - Wesley Clark and Nehemiah Dixon (MD)
  - Devane Kojzar (MD)
  - Jerome Meadows (GA)
- The Semi-finalist teams will attend an informational site visit to the State House grounds in October 2024
- The four teams will return to present full project concept proposals to the Artist Selection Committee in January 2025.

### **7. New Business**

Commissioner Elizabeth Hughes shared the Maryland Military Monuments Commission storymap, "*Testemonies They Bear*," created by Governor's Summer Intern, Evelyn Yuen, under the guidance of Nancy Kurtz and recommended that this format lends itself well to sharing information about specific works and the artists behind them.

- <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/5f2893465ebd4a30891d611b42506ed6>

Ryan Patterson replied that currently, MSAC lists completed commissioned artworks on the website. He is aware of the storymap, and admires the work. He would like to follow a similar example to promote the Commission's collection.

Commissioner Hughes Thanked the staff for their work and congratulated them on what they had accomplished with a team of two.

### **8. Adjourn**

The meeting was Adjourned at 10:21 am