

Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture
Minutes
May 27, 2009

Commissioners Present: Melonie Buchanan Don Meyers
 Gisela Flanigan Vera Mulder
 Jeanine Howe Lora Quesenberry
 Jeanne Killgore Katherine Rhein
 Lancer Livermont Tanya Smith
 Pam McLaughlin

Others: Connie Robbins-Brady (Mesa Co. Valley School District 51 Visual Arts Coordinator)

The regular meeting of the Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture was held on the above date. Chair Kat Rhein called the meeting to order at 4pm. A motion was made by Jeanine Howe, seconded by Lancer Livermont, to approve the minutes of the Commission's meeting on April 22, 2009. The motion carried unanimously.

COMMISSION GRANT SUPPORTED EVENTS: Jeanine Howe reported that Two Chairs Theater Company's "Acts of Brevity" (one-act plays) had sold out audiences on May 14 and 15 and gave the Commission sponsorship credit, but she noted that it was a very poor selection of plays. Kat Rhein reported that a friend of hers who attended the production said it was not a good performance. Howe said she talked to one of the artistic personnel and they plan to look at doing a selection of One Acts next year that have already been produced, which might solve the issue. Howe said Two Chairs has decided to go on hiatus for the next year until "Acts of Brevity" begins rehearsals. Pam McLaughlin and others reported having been to the Art & Jazz Festival, which was very good overall, and Howe noted that there was much better advertisement this year of the Hazel Miller vocal master classes, which the Commission helped fund.

ARTS EDUCATION: Connie Robbins-Brady reported that she and ten other School District 51 staff and volunteers, including one high school student, had attended the Colorado Arts Education Summit in Denver on April 25. The Summit was to discuss how arts education in Colorado is growing and how best to further this growth through arts advocacy. The idea behind the Summit was to encourage people to create local advocacy campaigns to promote the benefit of a strong education in the arts.

Brady is applying for a \$500 grant to market the value of arts education with hand-outs which would include statistics about how many people are employed in artistic fields, photos of art by local professional artists, and information about how to access arts and culture in the community. The Commission offered to partner with Brady and help with this effort.

Commissioners also discussed with Brady the new Commission grant program to fund regionally or nationally prominent artists to come to local schools and do artists-in-residence programs and the challenge of encouraging schools not to simply request funding for their existing artist-in-residence programs, which the district funds, and of only allowing schools within Grand Junction city limits to apply, since others want the opportunity, too.

A letter was read from Cherlyn Crawford, a volunteer at Tope Elementary School, who had submitted a grant to the Commission for the purchase of a large piece of outdoor musical

equipment, but which was denied funding at the Commission's last meeting. Crawford thanked the Commission for their support of arts education and asked if there was another source of funding that the Commission might offer. The Coordinator had called her to tell her there is not.

The Coordinator also mentioned some feedback from Pomona Elementary School, another school whose artist-in-residence application was turned down by the Commission because it did not meet the criteria for the arts education grants. According to Pomona, they are not interested in bringing in a regionally or nationally prominent artist, they simply want more money to expand their existing and popular artist-in-residence program, for which the school district allocates \$500 but which they feel is not enough.

Don Meyers reported having watched the painting of and attending the unveiling of the recently completed Commission funded Tony Ortega mural at Riverside's Dual Emersion School. He noted that the mural turned out well and that the kids he saw were all working very diligently and learning good techniques from Ortega. Kat Rhein suggested that perhaps the Commission could find an artist or arts education program and make it available to the schools.

Gisela Flanigan suggested the possibility of bringing to Grand Junction the New York City Lincoln Center's aesthetic institute (educational workshop) training for teachers and anyone else who might be interested. Flanigan noted that Mesa State College would donate space for the workshop, and Tanya Smith noted that teachers who belong to the teachers union could apply for a scholarship to attend. Flanigan is researching the cost and benefits of bringing the Lincoln Center aesthetic institute to Grand Junction and will update the Commission.

A meeting on April 2 with representatives from the School District, the Commission, and Mesa State professors Sean Flanigan and Deborah Snider was briefly discussed, the aim of which was to investigate providing a teacher training workshop in Grand Junction by either Think 360 from Denver or the Lincoln Center. It was learned at the meeting that bringing Think 360 to Grand Junction would cost a prohibitive \$30,000-\$40,000. Both college professors had then suggested doing a multi-disciplinary arts workshop for teachers through Mesa State. It was mentioned that the Commission might invite Flanigan and Snider to come talk about their plans for a summer 2010 teacher training workshop. [Note: It was also suggested at the April 2 meeting that the Commission fund a prominent keynote speaker on the value of arts education, and Daniel Pink, author of *A Whole New Mind*, was recommended. It was later learned, however, that Pink's speaking fee is \$35,000, much more than the Commission can afford.]

CORRESPONDENCE: Thank you letters were acknowledged for Commission grant support from Artspace for their Open Studios Tour, from Rocky Mountain PBS-KRMJ for their Western Bounty arts segments, from the Messiah Choral Society for their performance of *The Messiah*, and from the Bookcliff Barbershop Harmony Chorus for their Youth in Harmony project.

KIDS TILE PAINTING PROJECT: The Lincoln Park Moyer Pool Kids Tile Painting will take place this year on June 13 at 2pm and Commissioners Flanigan and Mulder volunteered to do the project. As there was no further business, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Cowan Sarmo
Cultural Arts Coordinator