



Burlington City Arts
Exhibitions Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 22, 2022, 5-6:30 PM
Held Via Zoom

Committee Members Present:

Carolyn Bauer, Mildred Beltré, Rachel Kahn-Fogel, Milton Rosa-Ortiz, Staff: Heather Ferrell, Colin Storrs

Absent: Barbara Perry (Chair), Brian Collier, Peter Gallo, Lisa Lillibridge, Sarah Rogers

Public Forum – no attendees.

Gallery Insight: BCA Applications Process

Heather reviewed how BCA selects artists through a variety of means including proposals, studio and residency visits (in person and virtual), recommendations from community, board, or exhibition committee members, and curator research. BCA has guidelines for applications posted on the Resource page of the website. The BCA curator reviews and responds to 8-10 proposals (avg.) per month. While not all museums do this, it is an important aspect of BCA's role in accessibility and supporting artists. Despite the application and guidelines being available during tenure of several curators, BCA board members were not aware of this application process, and recommended it be communicated with the entire board.

Intro to Spring Shows and programming: *Eric Aho: Headwater* and *Sarah Trad: What Still Remains*

Update on the final attendance of fall 2021 exhibitions *Unbound* and *Objects of Empire* at 2,600. While this is low compared to BCA's non-Covid years, it is consistent with last fall's attendance during the pandemic.

New shows opened last Friday, Feb. 18 at Noon. *Eric Aho: Headwater* features a new series of monumental and intimately scaled paintings that feature captivating scenes of the natural world surrounding the artist's home in Saxtons River, Vermont. In *What Still Remains*, Arab American artist, Sarah Trad, explores complex themes of personal and cultural identity through her film and textile installation. Both artists received support from BCA for the creation of new work for their shows.

Programming: Sarah Trad will give a virtual artist talk on Wednesday, March 16 at 6pm. Eric Aho will offer a virtual artist talk on Wednesday, April 6 at 6pm. A closing reception for the exhibition will be held on Wednesday, May 25 from 5-7pm. Committee members are invited to participate and help share these events with their community.

Discussion of upcoming summer exhibit *More than an Object: Contemporary Still Life*

Featuring a group of 6-8 regional and national artists, *More than an Object* presents the creative possibilities of the often overlooked still life genre. The exhibit explores the vitality and inventiveness of the still life tradition through a multiplicity of innovative approaches and media including painting, photography, computer animation, and sculpture. During discussion of the title, it was suggested "Beyond the Object," as more engaging to the public. Confirmed artists (with a few to be finalized in next weeks): Vermont: William Ransom, Zachary Stephens, Libby Paloma. National: Christina Erives, Ori Gersht, Mike Pelletier

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Update on Diane Gabriel Visual Artist Award

Colin updated the committee on the status of the award applications, which included 8 completed applications and approximately 40 in process. The next step is to activate and engage an outreach group for the award to try and reach new communities. Several Committee members suggested creating posters promoting the award, and posting them in non-traditional spaces such as laundromats or the library, in addition to social media. Other recommendations: BCA should connect with last year's awardee, Crystal Stokes, to share opportunity; add into future award agreements that awardee helps promote/share award opportunity with their community.

Discussion of requests for exhibitions featuring older, ailing generation Vermont artists

Heather updated committee on recent requests made to BCA's Director for exhibitions to feature older, Vermont artists, some who are ailing, or who have recently passed away.

The question to address is 1) what is the criteria and guidelines BCA uses to select artists and exhibitions to serve its mission, and 2) are there other opportunities other than a solo exhibition that BCA can provide to recognize artists?

Heather reviewed general guidelines currently used for considering artists:

1. BCA exhibits living artists and work created as late as seven to ten years of the exhibition dates (this is approximate and may vary; most work is typically recent and created in the last few years).
2. BCA emphasizes Vermont-based artists (goal of 50-60% artists featured)
3. BCA searches for the potential to support the commission of new work as part of the show in addition to a stipend.
4. Overall goals: work is thought-provoking, exemplary in its ideas and media, supports a diversity of experiences and viewpoints, and relevant to community.

**One exception was the Diane Gabriel exhibition in 2021 – this exhibit was in connection to a development agreement to launch the Diane Gabriel Visual Artists award.*

BCA has prioritized exhibiting older artists work including exhibits of artists such as Ed Owre or Dusty Boynton (in their 80s). Often, challenges of exhibiting ailing artists is that they have not created a recent body of work, cannot be commissioned to create new work, and are in ill health to work with gallery staff.

With discussion, committee members suggested that in addition to solo exhibitions, alternative venues such as the airport, library, city hall, or the hospital could be considered for artists (and smaller shows). Alternative formats could include virtual exhibitions and programs (with BCA staff assistance), a program series that focuses on older generation of artists, a book or video project, or a yearly gathering paired with a virtual program so that artists could celebrate the work with community.

After some discussion of timing and schedules, next meeting was set for **Tuesday, May 24, 2022 at 6pm**. The format is TBD closer to the date and pandemic status with recommendation of zoom or hybrid presentation.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25pm.