



SYRACUSE PUBLIC ART COMMISSION

January 10, 2012 5:30 pm Syra-Stat Office, 215 City Hall

Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Present: Chris Capella-Peters, Karen Convertino, George Curry, Rick Destito, Bob Doucette, Corky Goss, Nancy Keefe Rhodes, London Ladd, Joanna Spitzner, Dan Ward, Bahar Zaker

Absent: ~

Staff: Kate Auwaerter

- I. Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.
The Commission reviewed the minutes from the December 13, 2011 meeting. D. Ward moved to approve the minutes and N. Keefe Rhodes seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

- II. New Applications
SPAC 12-1 Flo Flow, William Wegman (UVP). Anneka Herre presented the application for the William Wegman piece. It is a 2-minute looping video projection to be shown at the Everson Museum UVP site from March 1 through May 30. This projection was commissioned specifically for the UVP and the Everson Museum site and is the first of the artist's video art to be projected on this scale. K. Convertino made a motion to approve the application, which was seconded by N. Keefe Rhodes. The motion passed unanimously.

- III. Discussion
"There's a Sucker Born Every Minute": Recreating the Cardiff Giant. Ty Marshall presented a proposal for the permanent installation of his replica of the Cardiff Giant. He related the original story of the giant and of his re-creation, which involved an "unearthing" of the giant in Lipe Art Park in October 2011, as well as associated events that included the display of the giant in City Hall Commons. He explained his interest in the folklore and mythology surrounding the giant's story and noted the participation from the community, which included close to a 1,000 people attending over the course of the two-week exhibit.

The application calls for the installation of the sculpture on the Creekwalk near Maltbie and Spencer Street intersection. T. Marshall explained that this location would give the viewer a feeling of having stumbled upon the giant, which is a sense of surprise that he hoped to create. He noted that this location would provide a "bookend" for the Creekwalk with the giant to the north and Brendan Rose's "serpent" installation on south end of the walk, and he also compared the references to folklore of the giant and the serpent. His goal is to reinstall the giant in a permanent location by June 2012. The installation will include a standalone interpretive sign.

K. Auwaerter explained that the Mayor's office had not approved the proposed location of the sculpture. The City will be initiating a process to review the entire Creekwalk in terms of public art installations, way finding and interpretative signage. As explained by Andy Maxwell from the Mayor's office, it was too early to be able to make a decision about this artwork in the proposed location.

The Commission in general was supportive of the installation, however, it was noted that because of the timing issues, it would be worth seeking out alternative sites. N. Keefe Rhodes suggested that a location on the City's west side might be appropriate because the original artist – C. F. Otto – lived on Holland Street.

In regard to the sculpture's material, T. Marshall noted that it was made of hypertufa which is a mixture of Portland cement, peat moss and perlite. He is planning to coat the sculpture in a hard resin that he believes will guarantee its durability for 25-30 years. The sculpture will be staked to the ground. G. Curry questioned whether the resin would stand up to weed-whacking and recommended that the artist experiment to find out. T. Marshall said he would also consider low-maintenance plantings or ground cover around the giant that would limit the possibility of damage. K. Convertino also recommended that he find a resin that was graffiti resistant.

In regard to location, C. Capella-Peters noted that if the artist were considering municipal parkland for the installation that any location within a historic park would need careful consideration.

In summary, C. Capella-Peters said that to complete the application, the artist will need to supply his resume, an approved location, the text and design of the proposed plaque, the final coating detail and answer to maintenance questions, and final site design and treatments.

Syracuse Public Artist in Residence, Second Installation. Brendan Rose presented the concepts for the second installation of his residency. He noted that his position had been extended until the end of May 2012.

The proposal consists of a series of objects that explore different forms of love and provide ways for people to build relationships with each other and connections with places within the City. The installations include a "Kissing Bench", reflective of newly found love between people, proposed for the small garden in front of St. Paul's Cathedral. Another piece is a viewing device to be located at the corner of E. Fayette and Montgomery Streets with holes that the viewer will look through. Next to each of the view holes will be statements such as "there she is" or "something could happen here." Part of the artist's goal is to create traditions around the pieces and the written slogans will help illicit the responses that the artist is hoping to inspire. A third piece is an archway that is proposed for Powelson building site in Columbus Circle that people can walk through. There will be eyelets on the arch through which people can tie ribbons to symbolize a bond between individuals. The final two pieces will function as "shrines" for letting love go. Both will have bells or clappers that will produce a sound. These are also proposed for Columbus Circle.

B. Doucette brought up his concern about the way that Connective Corridor funding is being spent on public art. He reminded the Commission that he and a number of individuals had sat on a Connective Corridor subcommittee charged with devising a plan to address how the

Corridor's substantial public art funds would be spent. The committee recommendations were specific about a RFQ and/or RFP process that would open and that would garner the widest possible participation. His chief concern was not with the artwork now being proposed, but with the fact that the Connective Corridor was not following any apparent process or plan. The Commission agreed that it would be appropriate to ask the Connective Corridor to provide information regarding its plan for public art. This information will help the Commission understand the context in which the pieces are being considered for possible permanent installation. K. Auwaerter will contact Marilyn Higgins to set up a meeting to discuss this issue.

In regard to B. Rose's proposal, the Commission members were generally very supportive of the concept. He confirmed that the pieces would be in steel and wood. K. Convertino recommended experimenting in color and/or texture so that the works won't fade into the grey background of the surrounding streetscapes. B. Zaker noted that the pieces appeared all to relate to romantic love rather than the other types of love relationships. B. Rose stated that he was using romantic love as the starting point for a discussion of how people interact with each other.

The Commission discussed location at length. B. Rose stated that the locations were selected to be within the Connective Corridor and in proximity to each other, but were otherwise mostly randomly placed. C. Capella-Peters noted that she was opposed to the Powelson site for the arched piece because it is a development site and the more that the public views it as parkland, the more difficult it will become for the City to revert it to developable space. B. Doucette also noted that any installations in Columbus Circle must be carefully considered as this is one of the City's iconic locations.

In summary, C. Capella-Peters suggested that the timeline for providing a complete application for the February meeting was tight and recommended moving it out a bit so that careful consideration can be given to all that was discussed. She also noted that in order to move on the application, all of the material and design issues will need to be finalized.

VII. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.