

# Syracuse Public Art Commission

## REGULAR MEETING

January 14, 2020

Room 215 City Hall

5:30 p.m.

### I. Attendance

Present: Ellen Blalock, Emanuel Carter, Corky Goss, Jimmy Monto, Nadiya Nacorda, Dan Ward and Tina Zagya.

Absent: Lauren Boldon, Elizabeth Bryson and Takarra Smith

Staff: Kate Auwaerter

### II. Regular Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

The Commission reviewed the minutes of September 10, 2019. E. Blalock made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted, which was seconded by T. Zagya. The motion passed unanimously.

The Commission reviewed the minutes of December 10, 2019. T. Zagya made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted, which was seconded by J. Monto. The motion passed unanimously.

### III. New Business

SPAC 20-01: *A Use for Rope or String*, Dionne Lee. Anneke Herre (Light Work) presented the application for the screening of *A Use for Rope or String* by Dionne Lee. This is a short exhibition that will take place in conjunction with a reception for her exhibit *Trap and Lean-to* at Light Work. The screening will take place January 30 through February 1 at the Everson Museum UVP site. The commission reviewed the approximately 8-minute video while A. Herre discussed the work and the artist's biography. E. Blalock made a motion to approve the application as submitted, which was seconded by T. Zagya. The motion was approved unanimously.

SPAC 20-02: *Walled Unwalled*, Lawrence Abu Hamden. A. Herre also presented *Walled Unwalled* by Lawrence Abu Hamden, which will be screened at the Everson UVP site from February 6 through March 28, 2020. It is a 20 minute, looping video that includes monologues, projected images, moving walls and performance of various sounds. A. Herre described the work and reviewed the artist's biography with the commission. T. Zagya made a motion to approve the application as submitted, which was seconded by E. Blalock. The motion passed unanimously.

#### IV. Discussion

SPAC Planning Update and discussion.

D. Ward and E. Carter reported that on January 8, they had met with Jan Miller (senior philanthropy officer) and Jim Howe (executive director) of the Nature Conservatory in Rochester. E. Carter explained that he is on the board of the Nature Conservatory and that J. Miller and J. Howe had agreed to provide initial guidance to SPAC as it looks to launch a fundraising campaign. K. Auwaerter was unable to attend the meeting in person but participated via conference call. Key takeaways from the meeting were that the commission needs a mission statement that clearly and “crispily” explains the purpose of the public art program. In addition, the commission needs a one-page case statement that describes further why people should want to support the public art program. D. Ward and E. Carter offered to assist with drafting the mission and case statements.

In discussion, K. Auwaerter noted the novelty and potential difficulty of a city agency seeking to raise funds on behalf of a city program. She suggested that the creation of a not-for-profit, “friends of public art” organization that could raise funds and work closely with the public art commission would be a logical step forward. She said that this is a common model in other communities. E. Carter noted that one of the important functions of a friends group would be to develop a “stable” of donors that could be relied on to contribute to specific projects and to the sustainability of the program. J. Monto asked how much the commission was hoping to raise. It was suggested that K. Auwaerter look into the budgets of other public art programs in order to establish a baseline for SPAC’s efforts.

J. Monto encouraged SPAC to consider partnering with existing organizations that have similar goals, rather than creating a new organization. He and T. Zagyva agreed that TNT would be a willing partner and noted that each sector has funding that could be used for public art in the neighborhoods. They also noted that TNT could act as a fiscal sponsor. This led to a discussion of existing funding programs, chiefly CNY Arts’ grant program. N. Nacorda said that she knew of many artists who would be eager to participate in the public art program. However, she noted that there are multiple real and perceived barriers to these funding opportunities, especially for artists of color. K. Auwaerter suggested that it should be a goal of SPAC to match up funding opportunities with local artists and to seek to break down those barriers that are holding back a much wider range of participants.

T. Zagyva noted that the TNT special project grant round was open and that submissions are due on January 31. She suggested that SPAC consider partnering with the Downtown TNT on a project. K. Auwaerter said that she would get in touch with the Downtown TNT facilitator to determine if there was an interest in partnering.

#### V. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.