

**AGENDA
PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE**

May 17, 2022 @ 4:00 PM
Next Meeting: June 21, 2022 @ 4:00 PM



PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE						
Carolyn Gora	Bettye Middlebrooks	David J. Meo	Ward Three Vacant	William Taylor	Victor Dotres	Leila Mesdaghi
Molly Deckart				Ava Roeder		

**OSCAR M. CORBIN, JR. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 2200 SECOND STREET
FORT MYERS, FLORIDA**

For full agenda Packet, please contact the City Clerk’s Office 239-321-7035

Please complete a “Request to Speak” form if you plan to address the Public Art Committee and submit to the recording secretary prior to the start of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

Roll Call

Public Comment

Regular Items

1. Approval of April 19, 2022, Minutes
2. Input from Councilmember Bochette, City Council Liaison, (Ward Four)
3. Update from Jose Parrilla, Parks & Beautification
4. Request to Deaccession Fountain Components in Uncommon Friends Public Art Installation
5. Status of Mickael Broth Rise Above Project

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6. Status of MLK/VSSB Gateway Artwork, Cecilia Lueza Journey of Hope Project
7. Status of Fire Station 17, Call to Artist
8. Report on Opening of Individual Artist Grant Recipient Show at Sidney and Burne Davis Art Center
9. Tom's take on FAPAP Annual Conference
10. Comments on FAPAP by other Committee members who attended
11. Extension of Tom Hall's Public Art Consultant Agreement and Request for 10 percent increase of Compensation
12. Upcoming Public Art Committee Meeting on Tuesday, June 21, 2022

Adjourn

If a person decides to appeal any decision made by Public Art Committee with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

Special Requirements: If you require special aid or services as addressed in the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (239) 321-7035 or for the hearing impaired, TDD telephone number (239) 332-2541.

ITEM NO. 1

MINUTES
CITY OF FORT MYERS
PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE
April 19, 2022

The Public Art Committee of the City of Fort Myers, Florida, met in regular session at Oscar M. Corbin Jr. City Hall, 2200 Second Street, its regular meeting place in the City of Fort Myers, FL, on Tuesday, April 19, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. Present were: Carolyn Gora, Chair, presiding, Committee Members, Bettye Middlebrooks, David Meo, William Taylor, Victor Dotres, and Ava Roeder. Also present were Councilmember Bochette (Arrived at 5:00 p.m.), Grant Alley, City Attorney, Tom Hall, Art Consultant, Donna Lovejoy, Assistant Director of Public Works, Jose Parrilla, Parks Interim Manager, and Reva Daly, Public Works Fiscal Coordinator. Absent: Leila Mesdaghi and Molly Deckart

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gora called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Gora led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL - Taken by Reva Daly.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

REGULAR ITEMS

1. Approval of March 15, 2022, Minutes

MOTION: Committee member Taylor moved to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2022, meeting; seconded by Committee member Meo; motion carried 5-0.

2. Input from Councilmember Bochette, City Council Liaison, (Ward Four)

Councilmember Bochette noted that at the recent City Council meeting they had a discussion about green space and that the amount needed in the city per the population is quite low. He said that they need to get the committees together and all endorse green space. He noted that the city owns quite a bit of property, but they can sell it now or they could use it as green space. Councilmember Bochette noted a meeting with the city manager about the land right next to the Caloosa Nature Center and why not make them stewards of it. He stated they don't have to deed it away and to at least put it to green use. Councilmember Bochette discussed Rachel at the Well. Tom Hall, Art Consultant noted that some repairs were done just earlier this year, the problem was there were conditions that were not anticipated by the original work order and so they need to come back at an additional cost to do the things that they didn't get to. Councilmen Bochette discussed the crumbling frogs at Tootie McGregor. Mr. Hall noted that Rosa Lowinger and Associates had to recast the frogs for

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Uncommon Friends and they have the cast at their offices in Miami, so if more frogs are needed there is already a cast that's made and they can produce those frogs. Mr. Hall told Councilmember Bochette that if there is ever an art question to put him on speed dial. Councilmember Bochette noted that he has got a discretionary fund that he can't exhaust it all on one line, but possibly could cover replacing a couple of frogs. He noted they also discussed at Council the sidewalk ordinances particularly to carve out the historical neighborhoods. Councilmember Bochette and Mr. Hall discussed Otocast. Councilmember Bochette noted he called the new superintendent who is not in office yet and ran over some issues with meeting in front of the school board. The superintendent would like to meet with us, but his contract doesn't start until May. He asked if the committee had any questions. Committee member Roeder mentioned the importance of green space and air quality. She noted that Fort Myers at one point had the cleanest air in the country and in the past couple of years it has moved to a moderate quality, so the question was what makes it different. Chair Gora noted more people more cars. Committee member Roeder noted that green space, public art and public spaces go hand in hand. Councilmember Bochette spoke on his concern with the developers, because there is this feeling that they all come from out of town, pour lots of concrete and make lots of money. They stack everybody in here and leave. He noted that we need them to step up to the arts and the culture more and more. Councilmember Bochette noted that there's talk about reexamining the Parks and Recreation master plan and asked what the Council can help provide you with. Donna Lovejoy, Assistant Director of Public Works noted that they needed funding. She spoke on an update of the master plan, and they feel doing it at this time would be very appropriate, because of the growth and they're getting closer to the cap in our plan for the green space that is currently within the city. Councilmember Bochette noted he brought to Council to try and take five points; the bridge to the Edison Estates and put it in a historic district, so we can't get that excessive growth in that historic area. He noted that they are going to try to get Lee trust to come convince us that's a good idea, because mid-town is never going to grow unless we tighten up over there. Councilmember Bochette spoke on the Yacht Basin and protecting the charm that makes Fort Myers. Committee member Taylor inquired about Montage at midtown and if they would not pay anything to public art. Ms. Lovejoy noted they don't have to pay anything. Committee member Taylor asked if that could be changed. Ms. Lovejoy stated no, and explained the original public art ordinance and that the committee chose not to stay with that ordinance. She continued that the committee wanted the ordinance to be mandatory, but legally we could only impose mandatory fee's for public art on City or municipal projects, so that changed the wording in the ordinance that had us having the ability to negotiate on the PUD's. She noted that we can ask for a voluntary contribution, but they are not mandatory or required. Grant Alley, City Attorney spoke on PUD's and mandatory contributions, but that there was no case law to prove that you can make it mandatory. He noted that at that time we gave an opinion you can't make it mandatory, because it was thought that we would end up with a class action lawsuit and have to reimburse. He noted that subsequently the

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law's clear now and you can't make it mandatory, because there has been a case on it. He stated that they did make it mandatory on city construction, but that it's been inefficient, because it's hard enough to get the city project funded in itself and then you add the art component. Mr. Alley noted another way to get funding for public art is a budget allocation, but with the ordinance in place when someone comes for PUD like the project you're mentioning the ordinance says that we will encourage them to get public art, but it is difficult for staff to request and negotiate that and it may even slow the process down. He noted it is difficult, because you could go too far, for example, if you don't give me public art then I'm not going to approve the landscaping. He noted that you can't do that. He assured that we've never been challenged on our process for requesting public art, but you certainly can ask when someone comes to the city for a zoning change for a PUD, you can ask them for a contribution. Councilmember Bochette noted that Mr. Hall did a great job with First Street apartments and that he sat down with them and gave them options of lighting, light as art and mosaic's. Mr. Hall noted that they are talking about doing a mosaic project at the entrance into that building. The committee continued to discuss development of the city. Mr. Hall stated that developers are really receptive to the idea of public art if you catch them early enough. Councilmember Bochette noted that there's a lot coming out of the ground, and as Mr. Hall said catch them early and when they need you they'll work with you. If you are late to the race, they don't need you anymore they got their permits they got everything. Chair Gora noted that it's two ways, and we have to be notified that's actually happening. She continued that sometimes we are late to it, because we didn't know about it. Committee member Dotres asked Mr. Hall if he checks on a regular basis for building permits. Mr. Hall said no, in these two instances it was Councilmen Bochette who brought him into the discussion. Committee member Dotres asked how do we keep Mr. Hall in the loop. Councilmember Bochette noted that council at best are only 50 percent informed and all of a sudden it appears at Council or CRA, it's just we could do better with communications. He stated that coordination means information and your committee needs to know everything going on, but, unfortunately, our PIO officer doesn't have staff to cover the bases. Councilmember Bochette spoke on budget and said they need new sources of revenue. He thought that when the committee redistributed the Carmona sculptures around the city, that was a good sign, showing everybody is part of this. The committee spoke on putting art at low-income housing. Councilmember Bochette thought the art industry is what ties the thread together between all the socioeconomic classes. He spoke on inflation and that the rate of inflation is going up more than the rate of income. He spoke on having a chairs meeting.

3. Update from Jose Parrilla, Parks & Beautification

Jose Parrilla, Parks Interim Manager noted that everything was good, and all the routine maintenance was being done. He noted that a new filtration system was purchased for Tootie McGregor and that it will be installed, that way it will have clean

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water. He noted there was going to be a meeting at Rachel at the Well sometime this week to go over what needs to be fixed.

4. Consideration of Deaccession Fountain Features Associated with Uncommon Friends

Tom Hall, Art Consultant noted that Uncommon Friends was just serviced by Rosa Lowinger and Associates and the maintenance costs on it were about \$4,500 plus per diem, but unfortunately they weren't able to do all of the work that was required, because there was more breakage than they had anticipated. He said that they need to return in order to finish repairing some of the creatures that are in the pool. He spoke on the damages to the water feature. Mr. Hall stated that they have a proposal from RLA for another several thousand dollars of expense in order to complete the repairs on that sculpture. He asked the committee if it was time to deaccession the component pieces inside the pool. He said they would keep the three inventors and they would keep the island, certain of the otters around the bank would remain, but the fish, the manatees, the alligators that are in the pool would all be removed and they would be replaced with sawgrass or something like that would be more natural to the environment. Mr. Hall reviewed the deaccessioning process which would entail a signed deaccessioning report, applying for a certificate of review with the Historic Preservation Commission and then City Councils approval. Chair Gora thought that it's a brilliant move and that they are literally pouring money into it, and she would prefer to spend money on something else. Mr. Hall noted that part of his report would be to go back and trace how much money we've spent over the life of that art piece. Chair Gora thought that it would easily justify it and that parks and recreation would support this. Committee member Dotres asked if it requires a motion. Mr. Hall stated no, it simply requires one of you to sign the formal letter asking for deaccessioning and then the committee will simply consider it at the next meeting. Chair Gora volunteered to sign it. Mr. Hall noted that they will put it on the agenda for next month and then at that point they can consider it and make a motion then. Mr. Hall just really wanted to put the committee on notice and make sure that was the right path to proceed.

5. Art Hub Tracker

Tom Hall, Art Consultant noted that he has no comments to make on the art hub tracker and that he can answer any questions that they may have after looking it over.

6. Status of Mickael Broth Rise Above Project

Tom Hall, Art Consultant asked Ms. Lovejoy if she spoke with Mr. Moulton about when the Forum Park would be built and what they should do with the contract with Mr. Broth. He asked do we go back and renegotiate a longer period. He explained that the issue is that once the contract is approved by City Council, the city is obligated to provide him with a completed site within six months of the first payment that he receives or we're in breach of contract and at this point they haven't started that phase

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of the park. Donna Lovejoy, Assistant Director of Public Works noted that they have money in the budget right now to go out for a design consultant to develop that portion of the park, but the discussion that is going on is should they design the three parcels or just this one parcel that would have the public art and the pickle ball courts. She continued that once that decision is made, the request for our proposal will go out and we'll get a design consultant on board. She said they generally take somewhere between 8 and 18 months to complete a design depending on how complicated it is. Ms. Lovejoy noted that they were not looking at this being implemented probably until 2024 and that's if funding is allocated to that park to construct it and right now there are a lot of demands on general fund money. Committee member Taylor stated so we've got the cart before the horse type of thing. Ms. Lovejoy replied without a doubt. She didn't want to discourage the committee for meeting so early with these people, but that's part of what the problem is, you end up issuing a call to artist without having a final location, without having a final look at what it's looking like. So now we have a piece of art that's ready to go into Forum park that's not built. You have a piece of art that doesn't necessarily match the fire station. She thought that maybe we need to put the breaks on a little bit and take it a little slower going forward. She concluded that obviously, we all want to see brand new art in the city, but maybe we concentrate on fixing what we have, as opposed to building all new right now. Chair Gora stated that we under the understanding that we were doing it in a timely manner. Committee member Taylor stated that there were designs for the park. Ms. Lovejoy noted that they were conceptual. Chair Gora stated that we were not told this is not the right timing either, we could have waited, well we're learning. She said we never had the situation where we had so many projects that were a possibility. Mr. Hall noted he would call Mr. Broth and discuss with him and see what he's amenable to doing. Ms. Lovejoy thought the smartest thing would be to negotiate that into the contract. She thought that we have to do a better job of keeping the committee informed of things that we know what you are working on and apologized. She thought that when the initial project was dreamed up and it was conceptual the thought was that it would get funded quicker and it really comes down to dollars, cents and choices.

7. Status of MLK/VSSB Gateway Artwork, Cecilia Lueza Journey of Hope Project

Tom Hall, Art Consultant noted that Mr. Alley's department has created a contract for Ms. Lueza, but the contract recites that it will be between the city of Fort Myers and the artist. Mr. Hall was informed by the CRA that contract should be between the CRA and the artist, and asked Mr. Alley which is it. Grant Alley, City Attorney noted that he would have to check on that, but it's a quick easy fix, whether it's the CRA or whether it's the city. Mr. Hall noted that the contract has been completed, it has been sent to Ms. Lueza and her attorneys are reviewing it, so if we just have to make a substitution of the CRA for the city of Fort Myers like Mr. Alley said it's a quick fix. He stated that shouldn't delay the process. Mr. Hall said to keep in mind once she signs the contract

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and it comes back then it would go before the CRA for approval or if it's the city then it would go before the city.

8. Status of Fire Station 17, HaiYing Wu Artwork

Tom Hall, Art Consultant noted that yesterday the City Council unanimously resolved to return the award of the Fire station 17 to our committee for further discussion and consideration and Council has based this decision on staff's argument that two of the voting members were not included in the vote and had different opinions about who should have received the commission. He posed the question of what we do next. Grant Alley, City Attorney noted that the committee went through a competitive procurement process. One option is that you move to number two, but the city has a bid protest process, so that could trigger a bid protest from number one. He explained a bid protest and that we don't have one right now, but very well could and that it would stop everything and then it would go before a bid protest committee that would need to be created with a goal to try to resolve it in a way where the protester is satisfied if they can be. Once the bid protest committee makes a ruling then it would go to the attorney and the manager. The next option would be you could go to number three and that could trigger a bid protest. He stated that the committee shouldn't make their decision based on whether you get a bid protest, but it can guide you as to what is coming. Another option is to throw it out and do it over again. Mr. Alley stated that he is reviewing the ordinance if they could get the art and put it someplace else, as he does not have his ordinance in front of him and would like to review it. He noted that Mr. Hall explained that the federal and state require it to be on site, but he didn't think we have that in the ordinance, but it may be that it could be waived by the mayor and council, but not by this board. Another option is a payment of money where it goes into the public art fund, but again he would like to review that and confirm it. Committee member Roeder asked if they started over again would that wipe the bid protest away. Mr. Alley noted he didn't review the RFP before it went out, but there is language in the standard RFP's where you can reject every one of the bids, you can accept them, or you can change in the middle of the process and that there is some flexibility there. He said if we got a bid protest we would be in a position to defend it and nothing would prevent them from applying again or they may walk. Mr. Hall noted that he thought it best for the committee to hear about the bid protest concern first. Committee member Taylor asked Mr. Alley if it was conceivable instead of going back to square one we just go back to these three artists who we've selected and say try again. Mr. Alley noted that it is a possibility, and it depends on the extent of what you change. Donna Lovejoy, Assistant Director of Public Works thought that Council's intention was to return it to the committee to make an evaluation of what you thought the next step should be. She thought that the committee just needed to come up with a process and as long as it's legal then they can move forward with that. Tracy McMillion, Fire Chief for the City of Fort Myers noted that he appreciated the art committee and apologized for coming to the committee with complaints. He stated that there were some challenges as far as not understanding that if you are on Zoom you

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don't have a vote. Chief McMillion said there are a lot of things with art that should be considered and that station 17 may not be the best place for art to be held. He explained that one, people drive extremely fast past the station and, two, the difficulty entering the fire station, because if you are going northbound there is not a cut out to be able to turn. He noted you have to make a U-turn to come in and see it. Chief McMillion stated that it is a momentous station and it's beautiful in itself. There are bright red doors that actually take a lot of focus away from some of the other particular areas of the station. They would like to know that this one percent of the fire departments vertical cost would go towards a piece of art that could be appreciated wherever it might be in the city of Fort Myers versus people going by the station at 60 miles per hour and seeing beautiful red doors of the fire station and not actually having the time to be able to appreciate the art. Mr. McMillion explained some other challenges as this project is coming to fruition is that it started off in ward six and that was one of the things that this art committee was diligent in doing and making sure they're taking care of the residents of ward six to have a representation of art. Then redistricting happened and now fire station 17 is in ward five, so even that check box that you were trying to accomplish is no longer the same. He stated that he'd rather not get into the feelings and the thoughts about the particular piece of artwork that was chosen other than we would not like that piece of artwork to be at the fire station. He said he would just like to throw out as consideration to this committee is that you have opportunity here to be able to say hey we can take this \$50,000 and what can we do with it to make our city beautiful. What are some things that we can do that are the most impactful within the city of Fort Myers to have artwork that people can appreciate. Chief McMillion noted that the other thing to think about is typically when people stop off to a fire station a lot of times it is not really to look at art. It's either to look at the fire truck or to hang out with the fire fighters. He just wanted to say those couple of things to consider those different points as you guys make your decisions. He said you have opportunities to do something magnificent and great for our city that can be appreciated by each and every resident and visitor to the City of Fort Myers. He thanked the committee for their time. Chair Gora asked if there were any other fire stations that art would be appropriate to be at. She said that this just may not have been the right art for the right fire station, with the hopes that we can do something that still says something about what you do for the community. Chief McMillion said inherently in the heart of a firefighter our innate desire is to help individuals, but recognition is something we struggle a lot with, because a lot of the firefighter's desire is to be humble and serve the public as best as possible. We definitely appreciate that recognition, but as far as the city fire stations there is a challenge how that art could potentially be displayed, because they are not really places that seem to be a gathering hub. Committee member Roeder asked if it was just the design in front of the station or was it the design itself. Chief McMillion stated that it was both. He noted that within that particular piece of artwork there are some things that we see as a trade that are not consistent to what we do. Committee member Dotres thanked the Chief for coming and stated that the committee wanted to

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commemorate and honor them and thank them for everything they do for us. He noted that this is a learning experience just like our chairperson said, so we learn from this. Committee member Dotres noted that a lot of the things that he said made sense and he wished we had all their input a while back. So moving forward it was suggested to let us know which ones appeal to you, so we are not back here again. Chief McMillion noted that they definitely do appreciate that and apologized that they weren't more vocal through the process and for putting this back to the committee and having them relook at this. Mr. Hall noted that Council woman Darla Bonk was very adamant and proactive about having art within her ward and of course that's been changed because of the redistricting. Mr. Hall thought that Station 17 functioned as neither a gateway or art hub location and would not be a location that they would have chosen. Mr. Hall noted that we are governed by our public art ordinance which is 118.7.7. So there are two considerations here, one is what Mr. Alley suggested that the provision in the ordinance could be waived, in which case that gives us the latitude not to install a public artwork at station 17 and then therefore we could choose a more appropriate location for an artwork which may or may not be homage to the fire department. Or it's conceivable that we can hold that money in the public art fund unallocated in reserve harkening to Councilman Bochette's comments last month that the city is considering some kind of inflation crisis plan that could portend budgetary cuts for the public art committee and other committees, so we should just hold the money in the public art fund, but again all that is going to be dependent upon Mr. Alley providing us with direction in terms of does this ordinance require us to install artwork at the building that's responsible for the contribution and if it does can that provision be waived or if it cannot be waived can we then amend the ordinance. Mr. Alley noted he couldn't provide an answer tonight and that he would like to have an opportunity to review the ordinance in its totality and try to give the best legal opinion. The committee discussed the language in the Call to Artist and that it not only builds in the ability to go to number two or to start over again, but it gives us the ability to reject all three and start over again. Committee member Taylor asked if they could reject all three then go back to those three and not start all over again just ask for a resubmission. Mr. Hall was not sure, but if they decided they would start over they would have to do a new call. Chair Gora noted they would put this on the agenda for next month, but asked what we do with the artists, number one has he been informed. Mr. Hall noted Mr. Wu was knowledgeable about the fact that it has to go through an approval process. It was understood that before they could move forward, they would have to wait for Mr. Alley's assessment and to give the three-artist notice that the matter is still pending and that a decision will be forthcoming in June.

9. Discussion of Weight to be Given to Stakeholders Selection Committee

It was decided to delay item number nine to another meeting.

10. Discussion of Nature and Scope of Otocast Content of Audio Recordings for Carmona Sculptures

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Tom Hall, Art Consultant noted that 11 more artworks were uploaded to Otocast. He stated that all of the Carmona sculptures that were moved in November to their permanent homes are now included on Otocast. Mr. Hall mentioned that they do not have the audio component to those 11 artworks. He addressed Ms. Mesdaghi's comments from the last meeting and that she expressed some reservations about using the audios to tell historical stories that are really not related to the artwork. He gave scripts for example in their materials for both Utopia, which is the boy fishing from a bucket and for Al Galope, the horse that's at Billy Bowlegs park. He said that the scripts tell stories that go beyond what the artist intended for the artworks. He thought Ms. Mesdaghi's concern was that it is not really what the artist intended, and we should just stick to what the artist intended. Mr. Hall noted that what he was doing was utilizing the artworks as an opportunity to share with the general public who listens to those recordings some stories about our local history that they might not otherwise be exposed to. He asked the committee what the nature and the scope should be for the audio recordings and what level of review would they want to play. Chair Gora thought that gives the people who are listening or viewing it more information and history about our area, which is getting a full package. Committee member Dotres noted he read them and liked them and volunteered to read one. He thought all of the committee members should read one. Mr. Hall stated that the intent was not to put words in the artists mouth, but to use it as an opportunity to tell stories about this is why it is there. Committee member Roeder noted that you would have to explain how we acquired these, but you don't have to explain the whole thing. Chair Gora thought that each one would need a little biography, because people may not be seeing all of them, so the biography even if it's repeated that's very important. She stated that it doesn't have to be very detailed, just how we got these sculptures. Mr. Hall confirmed following the same general format. He noted that as he prepares a script he'll send it to the committee and they can look at it and let him know whatever comments or mark ups they want to make. Chair Gora noted that she has learned so much from them. Committee member Dotres called them educational and thanked Mr. Hall for his great job!

11. Brief Report on Annual Maintenance by Rosa Lowinger & Associates

Tom Hall, Art Consultant had a question for Ms. Lovejoy and the annual maintenance on Stacked Brands and that they now have a revised proposal for the conservation. He noted that the costs of conserving that artwork dropped from \$24,000 down to \$16,000, so the next step is communicating with someone from the county about the necessity for conserving it and how do we proceed with that. Donna Lovejoy, Assistant Director of Public Works asked for a copy of the proposal, and she could reach out to the facilities team at the county and have a conversation with them to start. She continued that once they initially make contact maybe it would be best at that point for Mr. Hall to jump in and work with them, since he has the expertise on that.

12. Individual Artist Grant Recipient Show at Sidney and Burne Davis Art Center Opening May 6th, 2022

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Tom Hall, Art Consultant announced to save the date the opening of our 2022 biannual individual artist grant recipient show at the Sidney and Burne Davis Art Center on Friday, May 6th, coextensive with art walk. He said there will be about 14 artists that will be participating in the show. The show will be up through May 26th including during the Fort Myers film festival, so the artist will get exposure during the film festival, as well. It goes 6 to 10p.m. Chair Gora suggested wearing your name tags.

13.FAPAP Annual Conference, April 26-29, 2022

Tom Hall, Art Consultant noted that the Florida Association of Public Art Professionals has its annual conference April 26th through the 29th.

14.Upcoming Public Art Committee meeting on Tuesday, May 17, 2022

OTHER

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved by Committee member Dotres; seconded by Committee member Middlebrooks; to adjourn the meeting at 6:11 p.m.

ITEM NO. 8

ISABELLA BAQUERIZO

Isabella Baquerizo is a digital illustrator who was born in Ecuador and currently splits time between Naples, FL and New York City. Baquerizo graduated summa cum laude from Florida Gulf Coast University with a BA in Art and Graphic Design. Before graduating, she was an intern at the Rauschenberg Residency in Captiva, FL. She currently works as a graphic designer for B3 Marketing, based in Naples, FL. Baquerizo is passionate about sustainability, social causes, and being active in her community. She previously exhibited in *Plays Well with Others*, a 2020 exhibition curated by Jessica Todd featuring local and national artists who created work centered around play.

Artist Statement

I capture everyday moments between conversations, feelings, book readings, and concepts that had an impact on me, in order to make the experience tangible. I usually begin by drawing in my sketchbook and then digitalizing the images on my iPad. This automatic process evokes a mindfulness that helps me dig deeper into my subconscious and gives me a sense of comfort and understanding. My randomness ends in unexpected results, creating a story filled with satire and humorous content. My goal is to create something that's emotive and relatable.

For more information, please visit <https://www.isabellabaquerizo.com/> and <https://www.instagram.com/awyeahizzy/>.

KATHERINE BOREN

Katherine Boren is an abstract and textural relief-collage artist. By employing a monochromatic palette and combination of nontraditional, unexpected materials, her works emphasize the reflection of light, varying textures and shapes, and differing grades of color saturation.

“My current work experiments with multiple mediums in two dimensions,” Katherine shares. “It is also influenced by personal, local, and world events.”

Her composition *Water View* is an illustration of the latter theme. It is a mixed media piece that includes sand culled from the shore of Sanibel Island. The majority of the canvas transitions from soft turquoise to the luscious, mottled emerald green you would see from a drone or dangling from a parasail high above the tranquil waters off the white sandy beaches of Pensacola, Fort Walton Beach or Destin. The waters west of Sanibel and Captiva were once that color too. And that part of *Water View* “celebrates the beauty of the water the way it once was and could be again if we all do our part in caring for our community and planet.”

But *Water View* also contains a rectangular field of color that resembles the color of the clumps of the biological gunk that issues from the mouth of the Caloosahatchee, Estero and Imperial Rivers. In fact, that rectangle of color might very well serve as a symbol for Lake Okeechobee, which is regularly blanketed by a thick mat of cyanobacteria just waiting to be released into the Caloosahatchee by the Army Corps of Engineers, which is charged with responsibility for discharging millions of gallons of nutrient-enriched lake water into the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Rivers in order to preserve and protect the integrity of the dikes surrounding the lake. If the releases are large enough, the algae will flow all the way into the Gulf of Mexico, where the algae-laden freshwater will mix with the ocean’s saltwater, stimulating a chemical reaction that often spawns red tide.

For centuries, artists have striven not only to draw attention to the pressing problems plaguing mankind, but to challenge us to find and implement solutions that will preserve, protect and improve ourselves, our environment and our understanding of the human condition. From within this framework, *Water View* can perhaps best be viewed as a clarion call for better water quality stewardship –

not just from political leaders and governmental agencies, but each of us, individually and collectively, as citizens of planet Earth.

Boren regularly exhibits at venues throughout Southwest Florida. She enumerates all the shows in which her work has been featured since 2009 on her website.

Originally from New York, Katherine studied at New York University and The New School, graduating from the State University of New York with a Bachelor of Fine Arts with an emphasis in sculpture. Katherine has served as Executive Director of the Young Artists Awards and Advisory Director and past president (2009) of the Lee County Alliance for the Arts. She received Individual Artist Arts and Culture Grants from the City of Fort Myers in 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2017, 2018, 2020 and 2021.

CONNIE BOTTINELLI

Connie Bottinelli is a multiple Emmy recipient and nominee, with international awards for producing, directing and writing in documentary and series for broadcast and cable networks.

Her career began at CBS Entertainment in New York City and its documentary unit in Philadelphia. In 1995 she co-founded Grinning Dog Pictures, breaking ratings records for Lifetime Television with their one-hour special, *Jessica Savitch: An Intimate Portrait*. She created and contributed to award-winning documentary series for Discovery, TLC, Ch4 UK, CBS, NBC, Lifetime, NYTimes, Discovery Health, GreenPlanet, Fox, Hearst Entertainment, CourtTV and others.

Connie's most recent work is a slate of independent film projects as a director/producer, cinematographer and editor, including *Driving Mrs M*, which is currently in post-production. The film tells the story of a third grade teacher who catches a cold from her students, which quickly spirals out of control. In a matter of weeks, she loses both arms and legs. Against school orders, her students go rogue and do a fundraiser for their teacher. Without warning, Mrs M is terminated for disability "but enables the future with a world first." With the help of the students who love her, she creates a new normal in her life. *Driving Mrs M* is a roller coaster of roadblocks, turning point moments and breakthroughs. The film, and life itself, pose a poignant question: When you go for what you want, will you recognize when you achieve it?

"I'm often asked 'Where do you get your stories?'" states Connie in her Artist's/Director's Statement about the film. "They're from unexpected places – like this one, from an 8-year-old girl, distressed about her teacher. Her story intrigued and horrified me. A common cold took a deadly downturn. That could be any of us, catching a cold at work. Could we be disabled, denied medical coverage, lose our job while recovering? Gripped by the importance of this story, it unfolded in front of my lens for the next 9 years. A woman, whose passion for a continued purpose, inspires child leaders and blazes cutting-edge contributions to the medical world. This untold story tests what's possible and what's next. Ordinary people, standing up to extraordinary circumstances, become movies in my head. This one became *Driving Mrs M*."

PAT COLLINS

Pop artist Pat Collins creates mixed media works with a focus on painting & printmaking, including murals, interactive mixed media constructions/installations. Many of her artworks comment on current issues and human rights. For example, the pieces in her March, 2022 solo show, *Action Reaction Interaction*, in the Florida Gulf Coast University ArtLab combine those interests with social commentary on life during current times. In that regard, Collins writes:

“Combining a carnivalesque attitude with social commentary, I reflect on the challenges of communication in daily life and emotions triggered while navigating the landscape of issues, images and events encountered along the way. Working with stencils, silhouettes and cutouts of varying scale and materials, I layer, combine, and juxtapose elements, both physically and digitally, to activate the space. Be it the picture plane or the room, a stage is set for a cast of characters, symbols, and images in reaction to societal problems that surround us – racism, environmental urgencies, voting rights and disinformation – seeking to make connections both personal and universal with the viewer.”

Born and raised in Massachusetts, Collins earned a BFA in Communications Design at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. During the time she lived there, Patricia’s artistic development was influenced and energized by the artists, music, street art and DIY gallery scene in Manhattan’s lower East side. When rising rents forced her to relocate, Collins came to Southwest Florida. Since then, her work has been exhibited twice at the John & Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, the Florida Museum for Women Artists in Deland, Scope Miami, the Morean Arts Center in St. Petersburg, and other venues.

Collins has exhibited her work in numerous group and solo shows. The latter include *Past Present, Future Tense* at the Collier County Museum of the Everglades; *Visual Rhythms* in the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center; and *My Name Is Art* at Howl Gallery, Ft. Myers, FL.

Patricia’s limited edition artist book, *Urban Anxieties*, is in MoMA Queens Artists’ Books collection.

KAT EPPLE

Kat Epple is a Peabody, Edward R Murrow, and Emmy Award-winning composer and flutist. Over the course of her storied musical career, Kat has released 42 original music albums, composed film scores for National Geographic, Nova and Valentino Fashions, and has performed at the United Nations and museums around the world including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Guggenheim and Bob Rauschenberg Gallery. For over twenty years, Kat performed at legendary visual artist Robert Rauschenberg's international art openings.

Currently Kat performs in concert with her varied ensembles, and also plays and speaks about the indigenous flutes which she has collected in her travels and studies throughout the world.

For more, please visit katepple.com.

WHITNEY HACKETT

Whitney Hackett grew up in Fort Myers, FL, where she currently lives and works as an artist. She has a BFA from the University of Florida.

Whitney explores memory and nostalgia through her body of dreamy and celebratory paintings. Her innocent appreciation for everyday life encourages a childlike playfulness in her work. Through the enshrinement of simple things, she elevates the ordinary to the extraordinary. The juxtaposition of her imagery speaks to the interconnectedness of all life, the way we assign meaning to the material world, and the honoring of our existence.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.instagram.com/whitneyhackettart/>.

LILY HATCHETT

Lily Hatchett is a multimedia artist who combines sculpture, video, drawing and live performance. All of her art starts with drawing. Pencil, ink and paint on paper are her drawing mediums. She visualizes three dimensional ideas in flat space first.

“Drawing is a language,” Lily points out. “It is a universal language beyond the spoken or written word. Perhaps the spoken word preceded drawing, but drawings have lasting value, and are easily understood throughout time and culture. If you can’t read, just look at the pictures.”

Lily likes to work on and with paper because of its many extraordinary properties.

“Not only is it a perfect medium for drawing, it also has the ability to contain light. It has structural potential and transformational powers as well.”

Born in Belgrade, Lily was raised in Paris, Honolulu and Ohio before moving to New York City to become immersed in the latter’s arts and cultural scene.

Lily received her B.A. at Antioch College in Ohio, where she studied staging, rigging, inflatable architecture, prototype 5 (covering one acre of land), early childhood education and fine arts. She earned her Master’s in fine arts from the Maryland Institute College of Art, LeRoy E. Hoffberger School of Painting in Baltimore. She moved to Fort Myers in 2007.

Hatchett has received individual artist grants from the City of Fort Myers in 202, 2018, 2015, 2014, 2012, 2010 and 2009, along with a grant from the Meisenberg Family Foundation in 2020 and grants from Buffalo and New York City. Among her awards and accolades are a 2013 sculpture award from the Alliance for the Arts and a Paper Art Award from Big Arts in Sanibel.

STEPHEN HAYFORD

Stephen Hayford hand crafts miniature scenes and populates them with customized action figures. He then draws upon his 20-year career as a photojournalist to create images that reflect his background in documentary photography. His images are often subtle social commentary or kitschy reflections of Florida.

Once he decides on a scene, Hayford begins with a sketch and a paper mock-up to determine the size of the props he will need, dimensions of walls, and the action figures who will populate the scenes. After designing, cutting and sculpting these props, Stephen builds and paints the scene using a progression of base coats, washes, weathering and faux finishes.

Once all of the set pieces have been completed, Hayford is ready to stage the scene. “This is when I set up the diorama with all the props, substrate (sand, baking soda, crushed leaves, etc.) and characters (which stay in place with nails glued to the bottom of their feet). But this phase is tricky because setting up to be seen through a lens is different than how you see the scene with your naked eye.”

Hayford’s scenes fall into several categories, including Star Wars (primarily for Lucasfilms), science fiction (generally on commission for clients such as Disney, Marvel, Hasbro, Lego and Fantasy Flight Games) and social commentary (based upon his observations of human interactions). His diorama-based photographs have been the subject of a number of well-attended exhibitions locally, including a solo show called *Plasticity* in the second floor Capital Gallery of the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center in March, 2020; the Lee County Library System’s 3rd Annual Comic Fest in 2018; *Fantastic Plastic* at the Founders Gallery at BIG ARTS in 2016; and Howl Gallery while it was still located in the River District. He’s also entered a number of pieces in group shows throughout Southwest Florida, including this year’s All Florida Juried Exhibition at the Alliance for the Arts.

Hayford’s diorama-based photograph titled *You Never Know What You’re Going to Get* was juried into the Alliance for the Arts’ second annual Art Lives Here Billboard Campaign, which was displayed on both electronic and physical billboards located at various venues in Lee County.

KRISTA JOHNSON

Krista Johnson has spent her life in the lush nature of Southwest Florida and her paintings are spirited expressions that capture the color, abundance and mystery of the world she loves.

“I have arrived at a style which is intrinsically mine – my paintings have a part of me in them,” states Krista. “When I am moved by something extraordinary I have seen in nature, I try to convey those feelings onto the canvas. My hope is that it translates to the viewer”

Johnson’s work has been exhibited in numerous local and national solo and group shows, including across town at the Alliance for the Arts, where she and husband, Leo, are exhibiting work in a show titled *Duo*.

You may have also seen her paintings in the Fort Myers COVID-delayed Biennial Individual Artist Grant Recipient Show at the historic Langford-Kingston Home last November (2021), as well as at Watson MacRae Gallery on Sanibel in *Forever Friends* (2020) and in *Edison’s Jungle* as part of the Thomas Edison Invitational in the Caretaker’s Cottage at Edison Ford Winter Estates in 2019.

Krista earned her two-year degree from Edison Community College (now Florida SouthWestern State College) in 1972. For twenty years, Johnson co-taught a children’s art program at the Alliance for the Arts in Fort Myers, where she also worked as the Exhibition Coordinator for 15 of those years. In the latter capacity, she worked with artists from across the country, developing a keen eye for art. She curated the Everett & Miriam Ward Exhibit in May of 2016, *Buell Whitehead: A True Southern Treasure* in January of 2010 and *Florida Seminole Indians: A Journey with the White Medicine Man* in January of 2008.

LEO JOHNSON

Leo Johnson is a third generation Cuban-Sicilian who is immersed in the realms of art, culture and language. An internationally-recognized artist, Johnson has exhibited his works throughout Europe, with his most recent exhibit taking place in the Sunflower Gallery on the island of Crete off the coast of Greece. He has enjoyed solo shows at Arts for ACT Gallery, Broadway Palm Dinner Theater, Syzygy, the Alliance for the Arts and Liquid Café in Fort Myers, as well as Barrier Island Group for the Arts on Sanibel and Der Flur Gallery in Kassel, Germany.

Leo's work has also been included in numerous group exhibitions including across town at the Alliance for the Arts, where he is exhibiting work with his wife, Krista, in a show titled *Duo*. Johnson has plans for an upcoming exhibit in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Leo studied painting in San Miguel, Mexico at the Instituto Allende. Also an art instructor, Leo developed a curriculum for children and adult art classes at the Alliance for the Arts. He has also lectured at many colleges and museums on abstraction in art.

CHLOE LEWIS

Chloe Lewis is a freelance illustrator and designer who grew up in Fort Myers, Florida and is currently based in New York City. She graduated from Florida Gulf Coast University in 2018 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree and majored in Studio Arts. She currently pursues her love of illustration and graphic design. Her focus as an illustrator and graphic designer is to solve visual problems. Her creations are striking in their use of color and line.

Her work is predominately digitally created and she is fond of keeping a sketchbook to work ideas in. She pulls inspiration from a variety of things such as architecture, her daily life, modern art and history, and combines them in a way to maximize the expression of joy in her work. Her graphic design is bright and utilizes flat, whimsical vector shapes to create compositions that make the eye bounce. Her illustration work is detailed, color filled and full of texture with elaborate scenes that each convey a story. She was chosen to be a part of the Society of Illustrators 64 Exhibition and Book in 2022. She is a dynamic creator that embraces her varied array of interests to create captivating work that tells a story and elicits joy for her clients.

For more information, please visit <https://chloelewis.dog/> and <https://www.instagram.com/chloeillu/>.

LEILA MESDAGHI

Leila Mesdaghi seeks to connect with viewers in a visceral, evocative, emotional manner. To her, art is a combination of emotional experience and social responsibility. Through her performance pieces and films, she comments on social and political issues like the negative reflections of social media in society, the housing crisis in the U.S, or the price and promise of progress.

Mesdaghi used the grant she received from the City of Fort Myers to help fund her latest project, *Green Wedding*, a series of six portraits she calls “Emotionscapes: (with limited editions) that she staged and shot in the yard, in the pool, and inside the house in which she grew up in Iran.

“Being at the house I grew-up in during my last visit to Iran and conscious about my thoughts, feelings, and memories, I embarked on a new project and began talking to a psychologist to help with my process and understanding,” Leila relates. “As a child I had dreams about getting married and having a wedding in our house. An Iranian wedding is a heavily glamorized and festive event where the bride is treated like a princess and guests celebrate and admire her with gold and jewelry.”

Leila decided to stage a wedding for herself.

“I made my dress at a high-end fashion boutique, bought a beautiful gold ring with my dad’s money, hired Maryam Saeedpoor (a well-known photographer,) a hair stylist, played Persian wedding music, and had few friends plus my aunt and uncle as my guests. Everyone was calling me the bride and this make-believe set up really made me feel beautiful (in an unfamiliar and strange way) with my fake eyelashes and heavy makeup ... kept questioning if that was me or not?”

The following day, Mesdaghi shot a video called *A Poem*, an ode to love and longing by poet Houshang Ebtehaj.

“I made a mirror neckless in the shape of a flower from a Persian rug which was also from a region my family comes from, Kashan,” Leila explains. “I wore the mirror on my chest and walked around, showing the reflection of house and also the reflection of my heart. I collaborated with [Director Mahboubeh Golzari] and vocalist [Mahboubeh Golzari] for this piece.”

PAPER GROTTO

Paper Grotto is an art happening that combines sculpture, drawing, video and live performance. The latter incorporates aspects of Butoh, a form of theater that features a diverse range of activities, techniques and motivations for dance, performance and movement. Butoh is traditionally performed in white body makeup with slow hyper-controlled movement and playful or grotesque imagery in extreme or absurd environments – like a grotto.

“A grotto is a type of cave and Butoh is a type of art that is performed in caves, so the whole thing made sense,” Lily explains. “Grotto has been used in religion as a place where you see the Madonna. Grotto also comes from the word grotesque, and grotesque comes from grotto, strangely enough.”

Hatchett’s grotto is fashioned from paper, or to be more precise, seven totem-like white paper sculptures that range in height from six and eight feet. She arranges them in a way that resembles a cave or grotto. During daylight hours, Hatchett’s monochromatic sculptural environment is not unlike Louise Nevelson’s *Dawn’s Forest*, which greeted travelers passing through RSW back in 2012 and can be seen today in Hayes Hall at Naples’ Baker Museum of Art. But Hatchett’s history with paper sculpture has a more amusing origin, as Lily relates.

“I’ve worked with paper my whole life, including large drawings. But it really came out of having to sit through banquets and dinner parties where my dad was speaking and my mom and my brother and I would be sitting there watching our ice cream melt and then I started making paper dogs out of napkins just to entertain whoever was sitting next to me. They liked it, and I found that I had a knack for wrinkling paper and having it look like something.”

But unlike the assemblages in *Dawn’s Forest*, Hatchett’s pieces are more than mere sculptures. During performances, they function as movie screens.

“When you project a movie, you project it on a white screen so this becomes a substitute for just a blank white screen. It’s white because I project video on it. It looks great. And also the white connects with the original Butoh performances being performed by people who coated themselves with clown white.”

Hatchett gives credit to Mike Lawler for the video she uses in her Paper Grotto performances. Lawler played piano and synthesizer for the Allman Brothers between 1980 and 1982. Lily travelled with the band and got to see all kinds of projection videos.

In Hatchett's case, the video comes from three sources. The first is a clip of a mop bobbing in the wake behind a Circle Line ferry that she worked on when she was living in New York City. The second is garden-variety foliage growing in her backyard, like the fronds of fantail palm. And the third is a red-shoed marionette with whom she has a peculiar relationship to which Hatchett will only allude.

All of Hatchett's videos are heavily filtered, and the colored filters that she uses give her videos a non-linear, abstract quality that infuse her static sculptures with a kineticism that makes them appear to shift about.

Hatchett supplements her static sculptures with lives ones during her Paper Grotto performances. Besides herself and her husband and fellow artist David Hatchett, popular local actor Trace Meier often appears in Paper Grotto performances.

Dressed in white and wearing dog heads, the actors become part of Hatchett's activated projection screen. And they don't just interact with each other and the paper sculptures. Hatchett provides them with toys (like paper balls and paper-covered pieces of wire that the dogs can jiggle around) – because, after all, what dog doesn't enjoy playing with toys?

There's a long tradition in theater of actors wearing animal heads. But religious and spiritual metaphors aside, Hatchett's technodogs resonate with audiences, especially children. On more than one occasion, a child has come out of the audience to pet the dogs on stage.

In addition to the sculpture, actors, and colorful video, Paper Grotto Live! has come to be known for its music. Lily's husband, David, wrote a song called "Shadow World" that's particularly appropriate in Paper Grotto performances. But while they have a pre-recorded soundtrack containing their own original music, Hatchett and her team relish performing to the musical accompaniment provided by local musicians such as Nathan Dyke, Sonic Combine, Peter Kincl and Blownapart, and Kat Epple.

DANA ROES

Dana Roes received her MFA in Painting from the University of Pennsylvania and has received several notable awards including a Fulbright Fellowship and a Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture Residency. Her work has been included in numerous exhibitions throughout the United States as well as in Sweden, Iceland, Australia and China. Prior to teaching at FSW, Dana was a Professor of Painting and served as the Director of Graduate Painting and Advising at the Savannah College of Art and Design; she was also a Professor of Painting at Carnegie Mellon University. She is currently the Chair of Fine Arts and Humanities where she was the recipient of the NISOD award for teaching excellence.

Artist Statement

My time spent making paintings has been about exploring psychological and material space and my place within it. I continually revisit the notion of voids; missing pieces, inaccessible or unknowable spaces. Whether it is the psychological space of a lie, the mysterious space of multiple realities, or the indescribable space I feel when I close my eyes and face the sun; it is resistance to containment and the urge towards expansion that drives my work.

The body of work, *Threshold*, speaks of the state in between definition; neither coming nor going, neither material nor immaterial. In these works it is the negative space that interests me the most. I wish to have the viewer's eyes rest in the areas that have no marks or forms in them, to find satisfaction in transit; comfortable with the ambiguity before arrival. Over the past two decades, I have used different vocabularies to express the same experience: the squirming discomfort of movement and the relief found in being released. At the same time, I keep returning to the feeling of entanglement and all that binds us to material reality.

After exclusively being an abstract painter for my entire career, the idea of solid material that existed long before life as we know it has become quite subversive and alluring to me. While the representational paintings in *Marking Time*, black beaches of Iceland evoke the concrete and familiar, I still understand them as abstractions. The elusive presence of a powerful force that is both very real and intrinsically resistant to representation remains at the heart of my work.

My current series, *Future Tense*, returns to abstraction to investigate the coexistence of various modes of existence. Rather than being preoccupied with transitional states and the indecipherable, these paintings resonate with the acceptance of radical difference in future locations. Watching the ways in which the conditions on our planet are changing—both environmentally and politically—I find myself returning to the words of Viktor Frankl who wrote, “That which gives light must endure burning.” I move through hours that turn into years contemplating potential outcomes to this narrative. I create monolithic forms and search for forgotten optimism through color. I am slowly detaching from present comforts as I am looking forward to the future.

TERRY LYNN SPRY

Terry Lynn Spry utilizes oil on canvas to create paintings that tell stories. She considers painting the same as breathing, and better than chocolate.

Spry's paintings have been exhibited in both local and national juried shows. In 2021, she took part in the COVID-delayed Fort Myers 2020 Biennial Individual Artist Grant Recipient Show. Two years earlier, she took first place in *Mirrors and Reflections* at Arts for ACT Gallery and second place in *Dia de Muertos* at the Alliance for the Arts. In 2016, she received first prize honors in the Southwest Florida Art Council show at the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center. She also won an honorable mention in 2021 in *The Artist Magazine* annual art competition.

A four-time Individual Artist Grant Recipient, Terry Lynn graduated from Phoenix Institute of Technology with a degree in production art. She studied under Nina Conner.

JESSICA TODD

Jessica Todd is the Development Coordinator for Tempus Projects, a nonprofit art gallery and residency, and the Administrative Coordinator for Crab Devil, an interdisciplinary arts collective, both based in Tampa, FL. She is a writer, curator, artist, and arts administrator who is passionate about building the creative infrastructures that support artists and arts organizations, as well as studying and addressing issues of equity, access, and inclusion in the arts. Prior to moving to Tampa in 2020, she was the Residency Manager at the Rauschenberg Residency in Captiva, FL for six years. She holds a BA in Metal Art & Technology from Penn State University and an MFA in Jewelry/Metals from Kent State University.

As a curator, Jessica strongly believes in paying artists, which is why she was thrilled to receive a City of Fort Myers Arts & Culture Grant for her 2020 exhibition, *Plays Well with Others*, presented at the Alliance for the Arts. The generous grant allowed her to pay for artwork shipping, material stipends to each artist, advertising costs, and installation needs. She and the artists also created and printed a coloring book using the grant funds. The coloring books were sold to the public and the profits – \$523 – were donated to Southern Fried Queer Pride, an Atlanta-based non-profit organization empowering Black queer and QTPOC centered communities in the South through the arts. A “part two” of the exhibition, called *Playing Around Town*, also traveled to the Cape Coral Art Center afterwards, reaching even more Southwest Florida audiences.

Plays Well with Others was curated by Jessica and featured eight local and national artists – including Isabella Baquerizo, Whitney Hackett, and Chloe Lewis – who created work that engages with play and toys in interactive, mischievous, and subversive ways. The exhibition included works of all media that entertain while disrupting the status quo; one could easily enjoy it as a collection of nostalgia and delight, but the artists skillfully transformed the lighthearted theme of “play” into a critical dialogue of contemporary issues. This vibrant and immersive installation engaged audiences of all ages and backgrounds and introduced fresh voices to the southwest Florida arts scene through (socially distant!) public programming.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.jesstoddstudio.com/> and <https://www.instagram.com/jesstoddstudio/>.

ROSELINE YOUNG

Fiber artist Roseline Young utilizes weaving, quilting, spinning and fabric manipulation to create artworks and installations for both indoor settings and outdoor venues. Her medium includes cotton, wool, linen, mohair and raw, unspun fleece, some of which she obtains from friends who raise sheep and grow their own cotton.

“I love texture, things that come out, exploding from structured pieces,” comments Young.

She creates this effect in a number of ways. For some works, Young uses a spinning wheel to combine different colors of yarn. For other works, she spins several pieces together by hand until they twist back on themselves “often leaving edges and ends spilling out of the tapestry and inviting the viewer back inside,” in the words of Naples Botanical Gardens.

Young believes “art has the power to motivate action.” Toward that end, Young creates tapestries, installations and community weavings for display in public spaces. Many of these artworks and installations express environmental concerns relating to water quality and climate change.

“I am livid about the mistreatment of our earth and water,” Young asserts. “I am passionate about using my artistic voice to call attention to better stewardship of our environment by creating community art projects.” Among these are her *Fish Talk* installations at the Alliance for the Arts, Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center, Mound House and Broadway Palm, and *Turf Wars – Art Speaks for the Earth*, a 2018 and 2019 collaboration by Young with Marci Mills, Paulette Karlin, the Weavers of Char-Lee, Common Threads, Art Quilters Unlimited and Art Lunch Bunch. The latter project produced a 72-foot-long aggregation of 200 circular rings designed to draw attention to the deleterious effect that cyano-bacteria is having on the Caloosahatchee River. Expressing the imperative that agricultural interests in the Kissimmee River valley and surrounding Lake Okeechobee need to stop dumping nitrogen, phosphorous and waste in our waters, the installation traveled to the Langford Kingston Home, Alliance for the Arts and Visual Art Center in Punta Gorda after first being displayed above the entablature of the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center.

Young has received several arts & culture grants which have supported her efforts to foster the arts in Fort Myers and Lee County. She has exhibited work at the COVID-delayed 2020 Biennial Individual Artist Grant Recipient Show at the Langford-Kingston Home (November, 2021) and 2017 Fort Myers Individual Artist Grant Recipient Show at the Davis Art Center (that was shortened by Hurricane Irma).

A retired Art teacher with more than thirty years of experience, Roseline offers classes locally at the Alliance for the Arts, Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center, public libraries and her own Rose Line Weaving Studio that are intended to instill creative problem-solving and play in her students.

“What I love about weaving is that you’re playing all the time,” Rose adds. “You ask, ‘Will this work?’ Then try and see.”

Young holds a Master’s Degree from Tulane University in New Orleans.