

MINUTES

Seattle Music Commission Meeting
Wednesday, Sept 16, 2020 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.
Zoom Conference

Commissioners Present: Reese Tanimura (Chair), Jennifer Czeisler (Vice Chair), Daniel Pak, Joleen Hughes, Ben Hunter, Sue Ennis, Terry Morgan, Kitty Wu, Nate Omdal, Sharlese Metcalf, Jerry Everard

Commissioners Absent: Paula Madrigal, Ben Secord

City Staff Present: Alex Rose, Scott Plusquellec, Meli Darby, Ashraf Hasham, Randy Engstrom, Meghan Sebold

Guests: Simon Okelo (founder and ED of One Vibe Africa, musician), Mikhael Mei Williams (Seattle Arts Commission)

Call to Order: The was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by Reese Tanimura.

Public Comment: N/A

Welcome – Reese Tanimura

- We acknowledge that we gather, work, and play on indigenous land, the traditional territories of the Coast Salish people - specifically the Duwamish Tribe. Reminder that we must cultivate relationships with indigenous communities.
- September already?!

Regular Commission Business – All

- Review Agenda
- Approval of July 15, 2020 SMC Meeting Minutes:
 - Sue motioned to approve, Kitty seconded, all approved (no oppose, no abstain). July 15 minutes approved.

Updated SMC Work Plan

Alex: Working from the agreed upon SMC priority areas, Meghan adapted into current form (SMC values, alignment with Inclusive Creative Industries work, committee work plans)

Meghan (screenshare)

- grounding framework for this advocacy group to interact w OFM OED ARTS in the work that we do and where we commit our staff time and priorities so that we are making the most of SMC's knowledge and industry experience, and hopefully get actionable items out of that
- Grounding it in City's recovery strategies, Film Task Force priorities, Seattle Arts Commission, and subcommittees' priorities
- Short and long term goals per committee and with the commission at large
- A+ED subcommittee has seen these, Y+C is adapting (Ashraf and Pak will meet to discuss)

Connections to OFM/OED/ARTS work

OFM's priorities re: recovery and reopening – Inclusive Creative Industries Strategy slide deck screenshare (Meghan)

- Projecting automation displacing many jobs that are low-wage and essential
 - COVID accelerating timeline on this, toward the 4th industrial revolution - we have to do this work sooner than we expected
- Inclusive Creative Industries Strategy outline:
 1. Continuous learning
 - a. Digital literacy
 - i. Access to digital skills and tools and devices and internet
 - ii. Reskilling + upskilling (e.g. livestreaming support)
 - b. Creative skills
 - i. Adults
 - a) Business development + technical assistance
 - b) Industry specific trainings
 - c) Curate creative ecosystems
 - ii. Youth
 - a. Career pipelines
 - b. Advocate for STEAM
 2. Jobs and Business
 - a. Inclusive hiring + procurement practices
 - b. Key industry cluster strategies
 - c. WPA/CETA for creatives (Hope Corps)
 - d. Cross-sector innovation (apply creative skills to maritime, manufacturing, clean tech, etc)
 - e. Access to capital (getting the market to invest)
 - f. Career pipelines
 3. Infrastructure
 - a. Toolkit for affordable commercial space (Cultural space PDA as the tool)
 - b. Curate creative space
 - c. Digital equity
 - i. Bridge the digital divide
 - ii. Access to exhibition
 - i. Identity
 - a. Diversity
 - i. Representation
 - ii. Inclusive hiring practices
 - b. Branding and communications
 - i. Access to exhibition

- ii. Promote creative industries locally + abroad
- c. Policy alignment at County and State level
- d. Creative industries events (Mixers, music performances and event production)

Discussion

- Sue: to Joleen: re: access to exhibition, perhaps [EVRGRN channel](#)?
 - Joleen - yes! Tom Skerritt. Still fundraising. Content is based locally. Distribution shifts for wider launch
 - Not making content, but if good content exists, happy to loop in CEO in those discussions
 - On STIR right now - free programming! Download the app!
 - Partnering with lots of arts organization and local companies - like MoPOP, etc
- Meghan: awesome - City doesn't want to duplicate work, but support community in doing what they're already doing for the greater good
- Alex: is Tom Skerritt's Heyou Media still a thing?
 - Joleen: no, it's now called [Triple Squirrels](#), slightly different team

Staffing

Chris shared an overview of an MOA between OFM, OED, and ARTS regarding the staffing of the Music Commission

- Excited about this work and how it overlays and supports the work that the office is doing, and builds SMC to become more advisory
- SMC is supported by 3 depts: OED, OFM, ARTS

Staff Roles

- SMC led by Alex, supported by Meghan
- Executive Committee co-led by Alex and Meghan
- Advocacy + Economic Development Committee led by Meghan, supported by Alex, Scott
- Youth + Community Committee led by Ashraf, supported by Alex, Meghan, Sasha
 - This committee is shared with SAC
- Special Events & Festivals Committee led by Meli
 - Also a shared committee with SAC

Working Towards Direct Action – Breakout Discussions

By the way, Kitty, Paula, and Terry confirmed by City Council yesterday :)

- Breakouts! 2 smaller groups, come back together and report
- Possible topics
 - continued relief for our communities + road to recovery
 - how do we engage funds that are not just from the City: philanthropy strategy
 - Pre-phase 4 opening: questions from venues and artists
 - uneven protocols w/ restaurants opening but not music venues
 - Any allowance for easing of restrictions? + we know things are happening, so things are underground, unaccountable, non-enforceable - an array of things that are not great either for safety
 - Terry: what can we build to have ppl look forward to, position ourselves as leaders

- Kitty: how tied in the alcohol piece is, and how these venues need to serve alcohol, and how occupancy concerns won't work - especially during winter gloom and into the spring
 - Looking at unusual venues we've had - airplane hangars, etc
 - How can WSLCB and venues work together to ensure financial stability of venues
- Nate: had an interesting convo with a couple of vocalists, approached by Town Hall who wanted to stream some jazz concerts - eventually production got shut down. Vocalists were curious that certain public speaking allowed but not singing
 - Good points too - only one vocalist just like one speaker on stage - can be socially distance and compliant too
 - How do we involve musicians around these discrepancies when the action is essentially the same - can have magicians but not guitarists?!
 - Scott has been working with Washington Hospitality Association (WHA) - gov's office logic is that live music encourages ppl to gather and stay longer
 - Meli: does the music commission have an official stance on the current live music ban?
 - Reese: looking to propose perhaps, having direct response and recommendations to produce with this group

What direct actions could you imagine taking on behalf of the Music Commission - as an individual, or along with your fellow commissioners? Any particular actions that your group agrees would be impactful?

BREAKOUT 1!! Ashraf, Reese, Simon, Chris, Mikhael, Kitty, Sue, Terry

- Reese: what advocacy can this group get behind, what recommendations can we post that can shape state response - understanding that we're thinking about what we can see for the current phase we're in, and stepping thru phases forthcoming
- Chris: on working with state on reopening issues - they come into it with a lot of presumptions - part of the process is educating why they're wrong, and also finding out why they have those presumptions
 - They want to reopen, and are open to being compelled by good enough arguments
- Kitty: at 206 Zulu, keep going back and forth - def a safety issue - but at the same time, **in the name of following the rules, are we falling behind when folx are doing underground events?**
 - The 'why do they think that' is interesting
 - Staggering groups with 2-3 shows per night is a lead they have but puts burden on artists
 - Reese: From a venue standpoint, what are some of things you feel would be successful on your side? Conditions to make sure opening the doors can be worthwhile for you and the artist
 - a. Very diff venue. A rental hall. They make money regardless of alcohol sales.
 - b. Mostly - how do we **clean** between events and what does turnaround look like
 - c. How do we keep **staff** safe/how many staff do we need
 - d. where's the line w/ ppl pull facemasks down, being hardasses - **mask policing**
 - e. Monitoring physical distancing too
 - Sue: is it standing or sitting?

- a. Both! Weddings/birthday parties/live shows/AEG/crocodile - rentals
 - b. For 206 Zulu - standing room or bleachers - open to families, places to sit for littles or elders
- Simon: maybe one of the things commission could consider doing is to bring to light the suffering of the artists thru **storytelling** via social media (not costly) - e.g. instagram interviews with artists - so policymakers can understand struggle, then ppl can work towards change
 - a. Create smaller communities in Seattle - **this venue is a SMC endorsed venue** for acoustic performances
 - b. Ppl need healing, and we need to hear more stories of what's going on, cuz we're all silo'd and we don't know what's happening until something bad happens
- Terry: to Chris
 - a. Any way to push towards **equalization of legislation between venues and restaurants?** Difference is fork and guitar.
 - b. Chris: Difference is State and City layers too. Scott's been leading on this.
 - a. Encouraging updates to policy to fix those, and opportunity here to do that
 - c. Terry: outdoor dining is gonna go away with the cold weather approaching... we're all moving indoors
- Reese: to Simon
 - a. SMC certification is interesting concept, could build trust and add legitimacy
 - b. Great point about storytelling too
 - a. Stories of those impacted by not being able to do things could be an effective way of reaching folx w/ empathy
 - b. In combination of sane set of rules - could be powerful
- Reese: to Kitty
 - a. Interesting to think about having an activity allowable, but **mitigating risk by separating folx** - re: smoking outlawed indoors, or pens for outdoor alcohol in festivals
 - b. Kitty: either ppl are gonna start doing things safer or get more risky (abstinence v safe sex argument)
 - a. Her kids - going to house parties with no masks at all - need to have a medium
- Reese: cultural and economic piece interesting - sales of alcohol intrinsically linked to music and nightlife - wondering if that could be part of the solution, driving piece of economic need - can we work toward a different model?
 - a. Beer gardens = sponsorships, sales, etc
 - b. But for folx in recovery - can't even go to venues or shows - lots of ppl that don't drink and are triggered in those environments
- Chris: Kitty's comments resonates: 20-year old locked down, and 15-year old trying to go to these house parties
- Terry: challenging times we're in, but we gotta lead the way in one direction or another
 - a. If we're not doing it, someone is gonna do it less safely
 - b. Like speakeasies when alcohol was outlawed

BREAKOUT 2!! Alex, Sharlese, Ben H, Scott, Nate, Pak, Meghan, Randy

- Nate: started about a week ago on a specific info ask on **Admissions Tax** - Manny Cawaling, Alex, Scott, Kathy and Calandra from ARTS; feels encouraged about where we're headed

- Ben H: is it outlandish to look to NOLA for a guide for alcohol policies, designated zones?
 - Scott: **Liquor board a little more open**...have not been interested in introducing open container laws... Good time to push for new ways of doing things though. Sidenote: NOLA having a rough time right now with managing that.
- Sharlese: maybe look at NYC?
 - Scott: they're light years ahead of where we are; not allowing venues to open yet to my knowledge - **NYC** alliance similar to WANMA but broader; they've moved policy work thru **Office of Nightlife there - great resource**
- Pak: WANMA/Keep Music Live champions in fundraising campaign - if anyone interested in that; **challenge that a lot of venue owners are white men - a welcome topic at these meetings**
- Pak: Joleen talked about supporting things that are already in place - **have we talked with Gigs4U?** Jon Stone was working on a video last week. Check in with them on outdoor series...
- Sharlese: in producing the Afternoon Show, was looking up to see if there's a National Live Music Appreciation Day - what if we **declared a city holiday - streaming** happening all over the city, maybe a fundraising element for venues, livestreamed performances from venues, encourage ppl to share their memories of being in venues
 - Ben: thinks it's a great idea; maybe could be paired with what NASH is doing. Work with venues to **get performances streamed through a channel/station.**
 - Sharlese: been watching livestreams, ppl could contribute to gofundme or orgs' fundraisers
 - Scott: this was an idea that generated some heat in discussions with WANMA - petered out a bit bc they changed their fundraising strategy, but could be good to **connect with some of the WANMA folks** who expressed interest/support
 - Sharlese: I care about the **venues**, but I care about the **artists** too (our music ecosystem is broken)
 - Pak: also need to think about the **technicians!** Nectar has been using their stage and platform, livestreaming + LiveConcertsStream platform for local musicians to make money
 - Sharlese: **maybe opportunity for crossover with SAC and FTF** also (e.g. NWFF hosted an event with DJs)

BACK TOGETHER

- Alex shared out, Ashraf shared out
- Reese: more direct specific issues - in being able to open back up - even if we're in phase 4, we're gonna have a different set of conditions we're working around
 - Culture of policing around masking, to Kitty's point - is there a way to fund more widespread deescalation training in our industry? Theatres, venues, restaurants are gonna have some 'why can't I do that' convos - give frontline staff tools they'll need
- Ben H: how can we stream things outdoors on giant screens (a la World Cup) - inserting performances into the mix - not live or in person but on a screen
 - maybe partner with PARKS or Stay Healthy Streets
 - Could take lead from Nectar or NASH w/ their streaming successes
- Alex: Scott provided WANMA reopening docs
 - Could there be a subcommittee of folx who can extrapolate?
 - Nate: sounds like REVS convos around reopening/gov's guidelines. One of the main things holding up our reopening - is the convo about patrons, not staff.
 - Hard to hold space for convo about patrons, not staff, not performers. Is there a way we can maybe do that?

- Dana from El Corazon - made decision to wait until Phase 4 - can't keep ppl from moshing, and won't
 - Jazz Alley debacle - all artists had plexiglass cages around them, shut down again, because of the patrons - going to the bar, etc
 - Could we set an extracurricular meetings to keep patrons safe and complicit when the music starts - people are still going on dates, keeping track of who's who and who's distanced from who, etc
 - Could be good to hold time and space to talk about patrons
 - Chris: farmers markets can only happen with incredibly strict guidelines - same with film sets
 - Nate: museums, aquariums, zoos getting green light
 - Even just streaming staff - no tickets, not admission, no public, but because of gov ban, can't move on from that. Blurring of that - music industry is admissions - not the standard anymore.
 - Sharlese: big convo for clubs that host DJs - dance parties
 - Simon: working with churches - helped curate music part of it
 - Churches have adjusted better than venues and artists. Could we learn from them?
 - Reese: open to creative ways ppl have dealt with these reopenings
 - Reese: as you (Simon) had suggested via storytelling - coupled with a plea to your circles to be conscious of how we're interacting with public spaces as part of their daily work
 - Because of health conditions and guidelines and mandates - does feel like a softer approach dealing with public - addressing narrative of 'being oppressed by everyone around me' - artists can help break that down with solutions
 - Alex: wondering if there's any room to get a permission to run a pilot - where these theoretical situations where folx are so moved by the music that they cannot accommodate safety protocols
 - If that's where the convo stops - belief that patrons won't comply - is there any way around that?
 - Scott: could cite the week of concerts developed in Germany to determine if COVID spread occurs in different types of environments ([reference here](#))
 - May not get public health approval for human trials (Meghan/Randy)
 - Reese: **suggest these convos continue in A+ED** or perhaps another ad-hoc group that meets more regularly to push something out more officially, like the digital equity letter/ad hoc working group
 - Randy: Where is there motion to where we want to lend our expertise on, and where do we wanna exhibit leadership
- Kitty: looking at workplan, nothing around **mental health**
 - as we get further and further into COVID - don't see anything about mental health and how music and art contribute to healing, back in the picture in some way - help ppl mentally thru this time
 - More questions than answers right now, but wanted to bring this up
 - Terry: agrees - in January we'll be in a completely different situation - benefits will run out, it's getting darker and colder, we'll start Q1 2021 in a downward spiral, even with a new gov't (hopefully)
 - Artists are gonna have to make it thru the year somehow - and it's gonna be tough
 - Sharlese: resonates! We should always be thinking about it, but especially during this time
 - KEXP is always thinking about mental health so it's always on Sharlese's mind and is willing to think about it more in this group

- In chat: Artists are already moving :(
- Meli in chat: Fall is historically the busiest most profitable time for venues and touring artists - it's so scary to think about how this seasons losses will play out.
 - Terry in chat: Yes, most major music releases are scheduled for fourth quarter, to set up touring season for the next year.
- Randy in chat: There is some scary data out of California re: youth age 16-24 (mental health, economic forecast, education disruption)
- Reese: room for direct action and advocacy! Music has always been a powerful tool for many things, and this is an opp to think about it

Committee & Work Group Updates

- Y+C update (Pak/Ashraf)
 - Digital equity - way back in April - devices/internet/skills became obvious as a gap
 - Concerned with City Council, have they read the letter, how do they feel
 - Planning a digital equity town hall - invite City Council members to this town hall - trying to create moving, emotional experience for them
 - Reese: Sabrina Roach from the digital equity group (and National Digital Inclusion Alliance) has been working on a letter for the governor's office - asking for additional sign-ons, will forward to this group - for consideration by SMC and individual orgs within this group.
 - CoMCD Career Day rethinking
 - Like Terry: How do we support musicians? And how do we support youth in that same way? What kind of messaging do we need to do, while still being realistic with them?
 - Sharlese: Aligns well with metal health as well
- A+ED update (Meghan)
 - Looking for a new committee chair or co-chair
 - Have gotten a commitment from Mayor's Office to fill the 6 mayoral vacancies
 - This group has done a lot of work on nominee compilation
 - When looking at the history of filling vacancies on Board and Commissions – common protocol is public-facing process. Transparent and equitable as possible - representing community
 - In both the intention of being expedient, but also incorporating public-facing process, will be talking to Exec Committee to move on next steps
 - Terry will submit list of suggestions in writing :)
 - Alex will resend existing list of nominees for the whole commission to review/add to
- Reese: Keep an eye on your emails for updates on the public-facing process
- Closing
 - Reese: thank you for your concerted care for our community! Working toward solutions!

Meeting adjourned at 2:05 pm.