

MINUTES

Seattle Music Commission Meeting

Wednesday, June 17, 2020 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

Zoom Conference

<u>Commissioners Present:</u>	Reese Tanimura (Chair), Jennifer Czeisler (Vice Chair), Tim Lennon, Daniel Pak, Sue Ennis, Terry Morgan, Kitty Wu, Joleen Hughes, Paula Madrigal, Nate Omdal, Sharlese Metcalf, Jerry Everard
<u>Commissioners Absent:</u>	Ben Secord, Ben Hunter
<u>City Staff Present:</u>	Alex Rose, Chris Swenson, Scott Plusquellec, Meli Darby, Ashraf Hasham, Randy Engstrom, Meghan Sebold
<u>Guests:</u>	Eric Lilavois (commissioner candidate, musician, producer, owner London Bridge studios, VP of local recording academy chapter), Michaud Savage (SIASE, FACS)
<u>Call to Order:</u>	The was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by Reese Tanimura
<u>Public Comment:</u>	N/A

Welcome – Reese Tanimura

- (Happy birthday song for Reese!)
- Acknowledge that we're guests on the land of the Duwamish and Coast Salish people
- Acknowledge we're in the 4th/5th month of a global pandemic + social unrest in response to racism and police brutality
 - Hoping we can come together in these forums to **unpack and undo some of those systemic barriers and damage perpetrated on Black folx, indigenous folx**. Consider how music too is built on lots of black imagination and creativity and labor.
 - What is it we're doing now for those communities and how we move forward?
- We're in 2020, the year that the [City of Music Vision](#) is pointed to
 - pre-pandemic, the three pillars of the vision were weakening (city of musicians, city of live music, city of music business), and the pandemic has turned them upside down
 - It's not up to us how all the issues get solved and when things reopen, but where is it that SMC has greatest amount of influence, leverage, and advisory capacity to improve situation?
- Not saying it to be dire, but for a reality check re: workplans and other traditional ways we've gone about things.
 - **Rethink how we meet, how frequently we meet, what we talk about** – so that we move forward from here with steady footing

- Usually the full commission meets every two months with an even longer break in the summer
 - New faces at the table, more folks coming into committee meetings - how can we **bring in more perspectives** and more human power while in a holding pattern on formal appointment process?
- We're *in it* - commissioners are trying to run organizations, trying to make a living or get unemployment, moving work and programs to go virtual

Michaud: new here! How does the Music Commission understand its role in helping artists right now, and how are ideas being put forth?

- Alex: offering up what the City has done: forgiving rent for city-owned property, funding to campaigns supporting individual artists (Seattle Artists Relief Fund, and Artist Trust relief fund). Music Commissioners have been involved in advocacy organizing around digital equity, [WANMA](#), etc. Since new developments are happening all the time, part of the work is tracking what's being done and where gaps are.
- Responsive to the moment: Y+C began discussing opportunities for young people during the summer --> digital equity has become a focal point for advocacy
- Pak: yes, digital equity letter which at this point is being led by Jason Clackley and Sabrina Roach and Sharlese Metcalf (with support by Ashraf). Hard to go into work plan mode while in the double pandemic; timelines have been skewed
- Kitty: things keep changing on a monthly, weekly, daily, sometimes hourly basis
- Michaud: how has this community adjusted from pre-COVID, post-COVID, and now with social uprising. Aware of Music Commission but unaware of how it relates to action re: funding, advocacy, policy. Because things have changed quite a bit, and just trying to understand how collective framing has shifted. Wants to understand where convo is at before jumping in.
- [Link to reference [2019 Work Plan](#) in chat]
- Reese: City of Music vision had actions including Musicians Loading Zones, launching live music at Sea-Tac Airport (contract with Gigs4U). Before this all blew up, SMC trying to find their place in the community. Affordability crisis, special events and festivals becoming economically more challenging, effective platforms for musicians/artists, venues/cultural spaces in crisis long before COVID--societally we didn't have the unemployment rate we have now, and suddenly we're in a bunch of conditions that has now altered funding initiatives and staffing. We are spending a lot of \$ in emergent fashion, and if the impact of that spending doesn't last--that thinking in the long run will put us in a detrimental position. So now, thinking about relief--rent, food, etc--tangible, AND at the same time how can that be more impactful in the long term. We haven't figured it out yet. How can Music Commission play in some of those systems? And because we were looking at those structures that got exposed all at once, offered trajectory for conversations that we haven't really been involved in before, but understanding how it affects our folk--both in cultural community and otherwise. Flexible to be responsive, and also trying to convert that response to be more lasting.
- Alex: commissions exist to advise City departments on how they meet communities' needs. Looking at interventions city offices are putting forth, looking with critical eye, make it more equitable, and thinking about music industry more specifically. Will connect with Michaud offline.

Regular Commission Business – All

- Review Agenda
- Approval of April 2020 SMC Meeting Minutes:
 - Kitty motioned to approve, Sue seconded the motion, all approved (no oppose, no abstain)

ARTS & OFM Updates

ARTS Update - Randy

- Randy: Pak shout out. Honors way he centered moment we're in: it's really hard to conduct business as usual. In a moment of state-sponsored violence against Black bodies in the context of an economic crash in the context of a global pandemic and 400 years of structural inequities-- all true, all where we are. Only solution is building better systems.
- November 2019 had this retreat with SMC and SAC - context where we are - how to get people paid equitably for their labor
- [Randy begins presentation] Since 2004 the City has had a [commitment to Race & Social Justice](#)
- 38k small businesses in Seattle, the ones closing at the fastest clip are owned by people of color
- Reimagine our field. Who is gonna be at the table? Who decides? Communities must be at the table; listen to voices of those most impacted. COVID accelerated inequities.
- We're going to have to be comfortable with discomfort
- Short term response: what we did was add to immediate relief, then hired artists to make work and encourage social cohesion via the #SeattleTogether campaign
 - **How can we hire hundreds of creatives to help reimagine and rebuild these systems?**
 - Ijeoma's fund was the first in the country crowdfunding campaign to support individual artists
 - ARTS relief funding was the first in the country of its kind as well
- Mayor formed a Community Resilience subcabinet – three areas of focus: economic recovery, civic reimagination, community support
 - **Civic Reimagination: A city driven by racial equity and environmental justice values, creativity, and culture.**
 - We're going to have 20-30% unemployment; ways to get people back to work:
 - Green New Deal
 - Creative Hope Initiative – centering creative and culinary workers of color WPA program
- Climate justice, workforce, digital equity, inclusive creative economy, community wealth building, cultural space PDA (considerations for where to apply stimulus funding for infrastructure and workforce)
- We have a [Road Map to an Inclusive Creative Economy](#)! Let's use it!
- If COVID was the accelerant, George Floyd's murder was the catalyst
- systems change - the community has to demand it
- "the only way over is through"
- Also: we're facing horrific budget cuts across the City

Funding

- Paula's organization did its own COVID response efforts, and is offering conductor scholarships (two for Latinos, two for African Americans, two for women) to study with Tacoma Symphony

Orchestra. Fundraising opportunities? BLM specific fund at Seattle Foundation. Lots of resources on the [Seattle Together website](#).

- But we have to find more money both locally and nationally. **How might we leverage the federal stimulus to do the work we want to do?**
- Reese: been tracking state work with Manny from Inspire WA - state funding via fed funding.
- All of our systems have finite resources. **How do we use our voices and orgs to advocate higher up the food chain?**

OFM update – Chris

- This is opportunity to be flexible to develop workplan that is responsive and forward thinking.
- Excited for SMC's influence on City priorities, OFM priorities. Needs to make sure voices elevated to prioritize this work. OFM staff on this call representative of how valuable this community input is.
- Budget impacts pretty extreme throughout the board, but for 2020, OFM does not anticipate any program impacts or staffing impacts. MAY be different next year.
- **Inclusive Creative Industries director position moving forward.** Put on pause pre-COVID and during COVID. **Commissioners will get update and probably some invitations to discuss soon.**
- Alex: re: SMC budget - some of that has been repurposed toward NASH. Career Days typically large portion of SMC budget, but given the fact that we don't know what Fall looks like and the amount of advance planning that needs happen, putting those on hold for 2020.
 - Reese: shout out to NASH. Worked with NWFL in May for [virtual festival](#) to put together a combo of live hosting and prerecorded w/ OBS backend. Really great to work with. Beautiful product. Centered on being a resource both re: livelihoods for musicians and for artists getting their work out there.
 - Kitty: NASH also currently working to produce Festival Sundiata out of Washington Hall
 - Alex: may be tapping you all for **suggestions of who else should be on [NASH site](#).**

Reese: we need to consider that budget cuts are happening at all levels - city, county, state

Commission Leadership, Terms, Appointments

- Reese: Many leaders standing up for Black lives are artists
- "Community" = artists, youth, nonprofits, businesses that make up the music ecosystem
- **We are conduits of anti-racism and equity work into the industry**
- Community have potential to be amazing platform and driver of economy and social movement, AND that industry has work to do re response to social unrest: BIPOC at table to build wealth agency and sustainability. Hard to talk about when industry as a whole has huge unemployment and empty venues. Partly for Reese, being on this body, is to try to understand a little deeper on how we can make an impact to our people/networks the importance of everyday commitment to racial equity.
- Alex: SMC is a 21 seat commission. 11 mayoral, 10 council appointed. Not all seats roll off at the same time. Terms go thru august 31, start on sept. 1st.
 - Currently 7 vacancies on SMC (a couple people are in process - Eric Lilavois and Kevin Sur)
 - Tim's second term coming to an end. Jen's 1 year extension closes too. **(Need others to take on their roles as A+ED chair and SMC vice chair!)**

- Joleen, Sue, and Ben Secord up for reappointment Sept 1.
- Exec = chair, vice chair, and chairs of subcommittees.
 - Subs = A+ED, Y+C
 - Leadership roles = 1 year commitment, with options to continue.
 - Lucky to have continuous leadership on our committees.
- Reese: Last meeting Alex asked how ppl were feeling; some folx want to focus on future-building, some wanted to talk about immediate relief. Is there a structure to move what we want to do forward--are these subcommittees something we want to consider retooling? Or add cadence to move work along?
 - Weekly taskforces? Could be more generative. Move the work forward.
 - Digital equity taskforce example + WANMA meeting reps
- Kitty: is there a needs assessment re recruiting for commission positions? Where do we nominate?
- Reese: yes! We did an assessment matrix for sitting commissioners. Have an existing list of folx who we're courting.
 - Some genre areas not represented, and working/touring artists not well represented.
 - Good representation in nonprofits, special events folx, recording academy, venues, lawyers
 - Can nominate here or on email.
 - Eva Walker
 - 18-26 year olds
- Alex email out master list of nominations and matrix of current commissioners
- SMC has been under capacity for a while now, but could redouble efforts if we get a full commission at the table. Many of the folx sitting in leadership--we love being in community with you! But we're perfectly happy to move aside to continue to move forward with bold ideas.
- Email Alex and Reese with nominees, or questions re leadership roles
- Pak: it's been an absolute joy to lead Y+C; responsive to the times; welcomes others to consider the role
 - although we are Music Commission and it's a Y+C committee, adding more members from general youth serving arts community - dance, film, visual arts, etc - adding SAC back into it
 - open to serving again but also open to sharing power and transitioning over the summer
- Tim: A+ED work on cultural space side of things, provide racial equity trainings to industry; Nate's work on admissions tax - committee largely focused on businesses and orgs
 - need to focus more on individual working artists
 - Nate willing to lead task force on admissions tax (sports teams will be making money long before our colleagues will)
 - something to track: how does ad tax apply to digital exhibitions?
- at-large community members on committees build SMC's capacity
- (labor council voting on SPOG contract tonight at 6pm)
- **Sharlese**: happy that commission is thinking about adding more BIPOC voices; **interested in taking on a leadership role**

What else?

- Terry: a newbie in this commission, and appreciates the energy . Encourages more public visibility; has been working with Volunteer Park Trust – we are slated to have a new amphitheater at Volunteer Park next summer, activate/program that park like never before
 - used to have the Music Advisory Council involved with PARKS (eventually became the Out to Lunch program)
 - will have roof, dressing rooms, danceable stage
 - this commission would be a great partner in the amphitheater
 - park lawn capacity is about 4-5k comfortably, 7k max cap
- Sue: winding up first quarter in online teaching; feeling the tension of encouraging students and giving them a reality check. Agrees with shifting focus
- Joleen: trying to listen a lot more, see how I can best contribute (to advance equity)
- Nate: Statewide labor efforts re employment hours counting, employee classification. Very little of the labor we do over the year is not documented as “work”.
 - To qualify for unemployment, 680 hours is needed from ONE employer
 - Paula: hours spent preparing and rehearsing aren't counted
 - **maybe work with Inspire WA on this**
 - **Joleen can help with this issue offline (consider city, state, federal ramifications)**
 - **can also recommend a nominee: employment lawyer and musician**
- Eric: use influence and network to improve the current situation (recording studios disappearing in Seattle); recycling, sharing resources to help others (Reese: sounds a lot like “mutual aid” – Got some? Give some!)
- Meli: down the line support community festivals and programming
- Pak: Safe to say that all of us on this call--as a community--are colonized. Language we speak, way we hold meetings, way we run our orgs. Systemic colonization. How we're groomed, how we're 'supposed' to work. If we're gonna really advocate for BIPOC communities--we need to unlearn. We have been in the pursuit of our own comfort; we need to be uncomfortable. We all need to really check ourselves. We need to take a departure. Reimagine how we talk to each other, how we do business, how we give people a break; let go of some of the colonized language and culture.
 - Hughes Media Law Group working with Totem Star on distribution
 - don't like call out culture - learned to instead call people *in*. “The way that you're thinking might be whack, but here's the knowledge that could help you get in tune with what's going on.” It's not telling people you're racist--it's supporting people with whatever resources we have to get to a better place for us ALL and get to the same level of understanding. We all have work to do! [shared an anti-racism resource document]
- Michaud: yes, lean into the discomfort

Closing

Reese: come back in a month to keep talking about task groups, committees, etc.

- Next full SMC meeting - July 15

Current advocacy efforts:

- Digital equity letter – please review!
- SMC letter – Pak and Reese started drafting letter from commission re: asks coming from black community. Not trying to rush that--intentionally crafting both words and voice to our work.

Trying not to make it performative but a true commitment from our group and lend our voices to the community.

Brilliance in this room, in our community - let's move that forward!

Meeting adjourned at 2:16 pm.