

Kentucky Arts Council Board Meeting
Flame Run Studio Louisville, Ky./Zoom
September 20, 2024, 10 a.m. – Noon

Staff Present: Sarah M. Schmitt, Chris Cathers, Macie Lowe, Tamara Coffey, Leeann Potter, Vinh Dao

Board: Lennon Michalski, Stephanie Renner, Brook Forrest White, Everett McCorvey, Lynn Schrader, Randall Vaughn, Margaret Prim, and Marcheta Sparrow

Absent: Dior Cotten, Wally Dant, Elizabeth Griffith-Mudd, Nathan Mick, and Janell Samuels

Everett McCorvey, Board President: Welcomes board, staff and guests, and calls the meeting to order without quorum. Executive Director Christopher Cathers reads the Kentucky Arts Council (KAC) land acknowledgement. Approval of the June 2024 minutes is tabled. Host and board member Brook Forrest White introduces the location, Flame Run and tells his professional story. Introductions are made in the room and on Zoom: Lynn Schrader; Macie Lowe; Christopher Cathers; Everett McCorvey; Brook Forrest White; Stephanie Renner; Lennon Michalski; Sarah M. Schmitt; Tamara Coffey; Vinh Dao; Teresa Day; Lori Meadows; and Joel Buno.

Executive Director Joel Buno presents on his professional background and the activities of Asia Institute Crane-House. He concludes his presentation by highlighting their upcoming the SouthArts Southern Cultural Treasures Summit, which will be hosted by Crane House in November. Lennon Michalski remarks on the suspension of the Confucius Institutes. McCorvey asks about possibilities of continuing partnership with University of Kentucky (UK) in the absence of the disbanded institutes. The group discusses possibilities for creating new mutually beneficial partnerships. Vinh Dao asks Buno about Crane House's about young professionals' organization, how to join and the activities of the group. Cathers complimented the work of the Crane House and thanks them for their work and dedication, even with a small staff, when curating and promotion the Continent to Commonwealth travelling exhibit. Cathers also mentions their work as a southern cultural fellow uplifting the south and the arts of Kentucky. He voiced excitement about the mini conference in November. "You do a tremendous job networking and being a representative of the state, and we thank you for that."

Quorum is established with the addition of Marcheta Sparrow via Zoom. McCorvey requests a motion to approves the June board meeting minutes. Lynn Schrader moves; Sparrow seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

Cathers provides the executive summary, which includes the following activities of the Kentucky Arts Council:

The Friends of the Senior Center was awarded a Performing Artists Directory-Touring Grant through the Kentucky Arts Council. As a result, two hundred community members enjoyed the LexPhil Brass Quintet performance at the Lexington Senior Center. The short chamber music program was part of an ongoing Creative Aging Program with LFUCG Department of Aging Services to co-develop creative aging programs for any adult 60 and older who is residing in Fayette County.

In 2024, the Governor's Derby Exhibit was available in the rotunda through July 1 in the State Capitol Rotunda. This year's theme was "Commonwealth Landscapes" and featured the work of 45 artists from

across the state.

“Continent to Commonwealth” ended its stay in Louisville and moved to Paul Sawyer Public Library through the last week of July.

Brand new Teaching Artist Directory artists (and a few veterans) participated in an orientation, which featured a presentation by arts education specialist Eric Booth. Each teaching artists received a copy of Booth’s book.

Made possible through the support of South Arts and the Kentucky Arts Council, Hindman Settlement School offered weekly “Pick & Bow” session for students taking part in summer music lessons! A total of 37 students are enrolled in small group lessons in fiddle, banjo, guitar, and dulcimer.

The Team Kentucky Gallery recently sent a call to Kentuckians who have created artworks and photographs celebrating “100 Years of Kentucky State Parks.” The exhibit will be located in a main hall of the state Capitol in Frankfort and will show during the fall.

Gov. Andy Beshear recently received a hand-lettered copy of Kentucky Poet Laureate Silas House's "Those Who Carry Us." This poem was read on inauguration. The governor also sat down with the poet laureate to discuss what we love about the commonwealth's rich heritage and culture in his new series, Distilled in Kentucky. House has also debuted an oral history project, “Listen Now,” as part of his platform as the poet laureate. “Listen Now” is meant to create easy opportunities for young people to interview elders and encourage listening and learning.

The Kentucky Arts Council, the Kentucky Heritage Council, and the Kentucky Native American Heritage Commission have just announced a call to Native American artists living in Kentucky to submit visual art for consideration in an exhibit. The goals of this exhibit are to share expressions of Native Americans’ experiences in Kentucky today, and recognize that Native American individuals, families and communities are here and have lived in Kentucky all along. Artwork will be chosen by a panel of Native American Kentuckians. This exhibit will be displayed in the Kentucky Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort in October and November 2024, then travel to locations across Kentucky through May 2025.

The Week of Sept. 9 was National Arts in Education Week, a week designated to highlight the benefits of and need for the arts in education! The Kentucky Arts Council wants to help educators find ways to support equitable arts access for students of all backgrounds.

Partner Asia Institute-Crane House presented Asian Night Market

This month and through and October 2024, the Berea Arts Council (BAC) will host an educational exhibit showcasing the rich history, heritage, and culture of African American families from Berea and nearby communities of Farristown, Bobtown, and Middletown. The exhibit/project, titled the “Berea Black History & Heritage Exhibit,” will feature artifacts, stories, documents, and photographs that illuminate this legacy at a museum quality level. Throughout these two months, the council will also organize a variety of events to be hosted in our gallery, including musical performances, literary nights, and more. These events will celebrate and highlight the talents of Black performers and artists from Berea, as well as other distinguished Black Appalachian artists. Performers include Hasan Davis, Malcom Davis, Joe Deuce, Sparky & Rhonda Rucker, Bernard Clay and more.

First Lady of Kentucky, Britanny Beshear will serve as the honorary chair of the Kentucky Book Festival on Nov.2, 2024 at Joseph Beth Booksellers in Lexington. Al Roker, Nic Stone, Yolanda Renee King, Chef Edward Lee, Crystal Wilkinson, and Jonathan Eig will be on hand to sign books.

The Kentucky Crafted Juried Panel took place this week.

Lastly, Cathers welcomes two new staff members: Vinh Dao, digital information director and Dr. Leeann Potter, our communications director.

McCorvey comments on the breadth and depth of the work of the arts council and asks Cathers about open positions. Chris comments that the KAC is at full staff. McCorvey and Cathers discuss positive representation from staff out in the state.

McCorvey calls attention to annual report. Chris provides and overviews. Sarah M. Schmitt discusses the process and content, indicating that the 2024 report will be available by March next year. McCorvey calls attention to the final page of the report that includes a ten-year overview of state funding and encourages advocacy among the board.

McCorvey calls the board to review abstentions, explaining the term. No new abstentions are indicated.

No grants are up for review; no vote required.

McCorvey calls attention to the monitoring reports. Cathers discusses the content of the monitoring report and the process for reporting compliance.

Cathers requests McCorvey ask for a motion to approve the reports. Stephanie Renners moves and Randall Vaughn seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

McCorvey introduces Lori Meadows of Kentuckians for the Arts. She discusses the broad research KFTA conducted via survey and listening session around the state among non-profit arts organizations. Data was compared to national data. Ten percent of organizations in the 200-organization sample are newly formed since the pandemic, but it is not clear about those that have closed or are in danger of closing. Meadows cites behavioral changes among audiences, which have not returned to pre-pandemic numbers for arts organizations. When asked if organizations gather their own economic impact data, 39 percent do collect it; 69 do not. Education is needed to help organizations know what to ask for in data collection among patrons, audiences, etc. Fifteen percent feel their stability is excellent, 12 percent indicated that they are struggling. Nationally, organizations had 6 months' worth of revenue for emergencies before COVID. While relief money did help, rising operating expenses created an additional depletion of resources. Some organizations describe being in a worse place than they were during COVID. Funding is always an issue, but there is also a huge need for adequate facilities – many are the wrong size, have high rent, are in need of maintenance, have poor accessibility, lack accommodations for special needs (dance, acoustics, etc.). Kentucky does not have capital fund program similar of other states to ameliorate this. Schmitt comments on the parallels between this survey and anecdotes from KAP groups.

McCorvey turns the discussion to what's going on around the state. Margaret Prim echoes the challenges discussed by Meadows and the Pennyroyal Arts Council's own challenges. She discusses a conference she recently attended – the Midwest Exchange (showcase), and details their fundraiser on

Sept. 7 – raised \$92,000. Louisville Orchestra will open their season. McCorvey and Prim discuss the nature and importance of [showcases] and block booking.

Randall Vaughn discusses aiding Freedoms Singers, African American Cemetery 2, and the University of Kentucky College of Design dedicating a new building.

Marcheta Sparrow mentions the big craft fair event in Midway this weekend and at Josephine Sculpture Park. Compliments Lori, reminding everyone that this year is not a biennium budget year, but it never hurts to “put a bee in the ear” of a legislator. Has a piece currently in the Capitol for the Park’s anniversary. Discusses the upcoming renovation of the capitol and potential closure.

Michalski discusses work at the Living Arts and Science Center. “Reimagine” an exhibit of elementary school students opens tonight for Lexington Art League Gallery Hop.

Stephanie Renner mentions St. James in October and the first annual Artists and Afros event on Saturday, Oct. 5th at Norton Healthcare Sports & Learning center.

Everett McCorvey reminds all of Dec. 6 board meeting in Berea.

Cathers mentions the arts license plates for KFTA and thanks staff for tremendous work over the last quarter.

McCorvey motion to adjourn. Schrader moves; Vaughn seconds. The motion passes.