

## MINUTES

Cultural Services Advisory Committee

Saul Room, The Atrium Building

April 16, 2019

Noon

**PRESENT:** Buzz Kawders, Diane Retallack, Harriet Merrick, David Van Der Haeghen, Kelly Johnson Committee Members; Isaac Marquez, Theresa Sizemore, Darcy Beal, Colette Ramirez, Ben Klipfel Cultural Services Staff; Rene Grube Executive Director.

### MINUTES APPROVAL

February 6, 2019 minutes were approved with no edits.

### MINUTES

#### Committee Membership

The current membership list with term dates was distributed. Isaac asked that everyone review and confirm that the membership terms were correct. Isaac and Harriet will take the time to review applications from now until June. They will make candidate recommendations for Renee.

#### Community Programs

Bridge the Distance Between Us: Partnered with Earthbound Moon and curated by Lillian Almeida. The concept for this project is, "What if we walked along a city street the same way we walk through a museum?" They paired 15 artists with 15 business to come up with a one-time only product for that business. This has allowed Community Programs to work with businesses in a way they never have before. Individuals have a couple of different ways to engage- they can go to the business or attend a docent tour. A project example is a "thank you ticket" created by the artist working with the parking garage.

National Dance Week April 22-28: Colette explained that this project has been a few years in the making. This event also allows community programs to have a more positive presence earlier in the season. Ended up with over 30 free workshops over the week. Colette distributed a calendar of events.

Public Art Manager Hiring Update: Colette explained that they reviewed 108 applications, had phone interviews and in person interviews. They just hired Kate Ali, a local candidate that really rose above all of the other candidates. She works with the Oregon Arts Commission, is a co-founder of Gray Space and is an artist herself. She has great ability to build bridges and is excited to be a team player and collaborator.

Partner Engagement: Colette spoke about how partner engagement is one of their long-term initiatives. They've seen the benefit of engaging with partners, and recently did a big partnership with the library when they did Lasers at the Library. This was the largest event they ever had with 1238 people. The positive outcomes of partnering were also seen with the winter programming as they were able to work with over 70 artists. This year they also extended programming to be April through October.

Visual Arts Week Aug 2-9- Celebration of visual arts including gallery, contemporary and street art, as well as expanding it to artist talks. This Thursday they are hosting a focus group to see how individuals want to participate and what they want to see done.

## **Hult Updates**

Theresa spoke about the upcoming Hult Projects:

- Soreng pit replacement
- Soreng floor replacement. This will be the first time they have done this since the theater was built.
- Soreng sound.
- They are working on counter weight system, which will be done in phases due to cost.
- New administrative offices. Admin is currently behind a locked door, and this will be more of a storefront. This will also help make space for Marketing and Programming.
- They are currently in the process of putting in high speed fiber. This allows the Hult to connect the backstage area to the stages.
- Security cameras upgrades
- New POS system. The current one is on a cellular plan and slows whenever they are busy. The new system will be a wired in system and will continue to run if something goes down. This will provide a seamless service to the patrons and increases their ability to serve. This is the same type of system they have over at the arena.
- New ticketing system. They put out an RFQ. Those that match the minimum requirements will work with the functionality builder. The functionality builder consists of close to 700 questions and the Hult staff diligently worked through all of these. They will make their selection in July. This is a big effort to transfer to a new system. They really considered where the Hult is going in the next 15 years.

Isaac confirmed that Theresa just presented nine projects the Hult is currently working on. He asked Theresa out of the 9 which one is a game changer for the Hult?

Theresa said that two are- the ticketing system and the new POS system. They are both sales and revenue, and service to the center and the patrons. She said that the others are game changers for the organizations or staff.

Theresa reviewed some upcoming events at the Hult in April: The Color of Sound (a partnership with the Eugene Symphony and Harmonic Labs), Damsels Divas and Dames an HIV fundraiser, John Mellencamp, Metropolitan Choral Festival, Eugene Concert Choir - American Style from Big Bands to Broadway, Eugene Symphony an Afternoon with Beethoven, Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical

## **Hult Center 5 year Growth Analysis**

Theresa distributed handouts that address the Hult growth over a 5 year span. The pie charts show the balance of revenue between local, Hult Presents, commercial and resident companies from FY15 – FY19(estimated). Theresa explained that it might seem like resident companies got smaller, but it is just the % of the portfolio. She further explained that this is a healthy portfolio. You never want it to be too one sided. Organizations that can shoulder the most should be the most dominate.

Theresa spoke about how Hult Presents does both sides of programming, commercial and “performing arts.” Programming makes choices based on gaps or educational components. They try to bring something our community will not see unless we bring it. And then there are the bigger shows like a David Byrne. They are a one and done with a large profit margin. Those pieces help to pay for the other shows the Hult does.

Isaac explained that the big change is the Programming Director and Marketing Director. None of this growth would happen without them.

Buzz asked if resident companies are maxed out in terms of their revenue.

Theresa answered that none of them are approaching a sell out where they don't have room to increase. They are all steadily increasing.

Theresa reviewed the Revenue Growth sheet. She noted that in FY16 was when they brought on Vicki Infinito, the Director of Programming and Lee Alberts, the Food and Beverage Manager. Vicki has relationships all around the country and she had what the Hult needed. Concessions was a service before but not actually run by a manager. Both made a world of a difference.

FY17 – Broadway has a slow season, but it was the first full Hult Presents season. FY18 – There was a nice bump because of Broadway had week long standards, and weekend shows. Second year of Hult Presents. FY19 – Broadway had the Lion King and a big year for Hult Presents.

Ticketed events increased by 45%. That is an additional 60 events in a year, plus any rehearsal or reception on top of that. Theresa spoke about how now they are looking at where they have staffing gaps and how they can change jobs around in order to sustain the growth that they have. She said that staff is doing a great job but the Hult needs to learn how to sustain the work they are doing.

Kelly asked if Hult Presents draws in more commercial work? Theresa confirmed that it does and will continue to increase. She explained that when they went back to presenting it made a big impact. Offered folks an opportunity to present outside of Portland.

Kelly asked if Resident Companies receive show information ahead of time so commercial shows do not conflict. Theresa spoke about how Resident Companies are on the calendar first and they manage that balance. If they see a clash, they will let people know.

### **Big Picture & Marketing Update**

Isaac spoke about how we will see an influx of public art projects. With the redesigning of several parks and recreation facilities, it gives them a chance to put up more public art. They are looking to create more north of the river. Isaac also spoke about how the airport is well on their way with their public art plan, and will be looking for a committee to plan their work.

Ben provided an overview of the new Marketing division. In November, Renee merged library, cultural services and recreation into one marketing team. This is an ongoing process, as the library alone does 2400 programs a year so they had to be thoughtful on how to pull two teams into one. Ben presented a slight that illustrated all of the programs they market a year. Currently they market 8,400 programs – that includes 2,500 free events, 30 productions for Hult Presents, and are now in 16 locations. For the library marketing, this is all done with \$12,500.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:09PM