



**Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art
Board of Directors Meeting
April 21, 2009**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Paul Giancola called the meeting to order at 5:43 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Directors attending: David Allen, Zach Bonsall, Judy Chemers, Paul Giancola, Eric Jungermann, Dorothy Lincoln-Smith, Mike Medici, Tom Morgan, Alice Olsan and Mitchell Stillman.

Directors absent: Joe Baker, Rachel Wohl Blank, Janis Leonard, Sara Lieberman, Ali Salass, Phyllis Stern, Max Underwood and Mai Yahn.

Staff attending: Bill Banchs, CEO, SCC; Cassandra Coblentz, associate curator; Barbara Meyerson, interim director; Lesley Oliver, marketing and pr manager; Alexandra Parker-Moquay, director of development; Claire Schneider, senior curator and Elizabeth Theisen, administrative and special projects coordinator.

Guest: Jeff Babcock, VP/artistic director, SCPA

Regular Agenda:

1. Report from the Chair

Board Chair Paul Giancola welcomed the attendees and thanked Dorothy Lincoln-Smith for hosting the meeting. Acknowledged that SMOCA is being asked to make extensive budget cuts and thanked the staff for their hard work and dedication, especially under these circumstances.

2. Introduction of Jeff Babcock

CEO Bill Banchs introduced the new Scottsdale Center for Performing Arts VP & Artistic Director, Jeff Babcock. Mr. Babcock has extensive collaborative experience with other arts organizations and possesses a theatre and musical background as well as experience in art technology and research. He is enthusiastic about collaborating with SMOCA on programming as he feels it is important to the community. New audiences could be reached through cross-over disciplines such as theatre, dance design and film

to dove-tail exhibitions at the Museum. Collaboration among all the divisions will be a theme of the October gala/theatre renovation unveiling. After next Tuesday's Trustee meeting, Mr. Babcock will present and discuss the upcoming SCPA season. .

Mr. Banchs commented that weekly Operating Director's meetings are moving forward now that Jeff Babcock is in place and that he is already regularly meeting with senior curator Claire Schneider and Valerie Vadala-Homer, director of Public Art to discuss collaborative programming. He explained, as an example, that the Latin Jazz Festival (Nov. 13 – 15) is a collaborative opportunity for exhibition, films, dance, lectures, etc. This fall's festival could be incorporated into the SMOCA Nights kickoff of November 12th with an outdoor concert. This event may become an annual event, offering plenty of opportunity for community involvement.

He further elaborated that scheduling programming three years out will help with timing of collaboration and securing sponsorships. Mr. Banchs emphasized that the Board could help with these projects by providing feedback and support to challenges (i.e. such as how centralized fundraising would work in this situation). SMOCA would still need to do regular fundraising with any festival sponsors donations being divided among all divisions; everyone will agree together on where the funds will go.

Mr. Banchs explained that monies raised during fundraiser/membership events go to the SCC with the surplus going to special projects in the various divisions. This increased collaboration will equate to increased attendance levels for everyone. Mr. Babcock commented that in order to grow, the divisions need to produce, not just present work and that the SCPA is willing to program around any exhibition coming down the pipeline. He also stated that Claire Schneider has been meeting with Valerie Vadala-Homer and Cory Baker about programming and is waiting for budget approval.

3. Approval of February Minutes

The March minutes were approved, with voting as follows:

Moved by Mike Medici; seconded by Tom Morgan. The Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art Board of Directors unanimously approved the March Board minutes.

4. SMOCA Director Search Status

Interim Director Barbara Meyerson reported the position has been posted (or is awaiting posting) on 15 sites and 15 resumes have been received so far. She stated she is going to the American Association of Museums annual conference next week where she will promote the position and meet with a potential applicant in Santa Fe this weekend. A search committee meeting will be held sometime within the next three weeks, as the end of May is the deadline for closing the application cycle. She will put together a timeline and may revisit using search firms depending on how the search goes. She plans to begin looking at the resumes tomorrow and will follow up on the Museum's reaccreditation status at the AAM conference.

5. Finance Report

Giving an update on the current budget status, Mr. Banchs noted that a memo was released today by City Manager John Little recommending that all-non revenue generating programs and products be eliminated. On May 5, the newly formed Citizen Budget Commission will report their budget cut recommendations to the City Council. The Council is then expected to vote on next year's budget at their meeting the first week of June. Most recently the Education department was asked to cut an additional \$83K from their budget (the department's total budget is \$300K including salaries) – they were able to come up with \$73,040, which would eliminate the majority of the educational programming the Museum offers. In addition, the Exhibitions department was also asked to make additional cuts, of which they were able to come up with \$102,000.

These cuts would severely inhibit the ability to bring in outside exhibitions, requiring the curators to create more exhibitions out of the Museum's collection and possibly having to install Public Art in the galleries. Ms. Meyerson interjected that such cuts would compromise the Museum's ability to obtain AAM reaccreditation. She also emphasized how crucial it is, particularly in light of recent 10-year anniversary, to maintain the status and reputation of the Museum. Addressing the members directly, she underscored their importance more now than ever to help during this time to provide new blood and new resources for the Museum to continue to fulfill its mission.

6. Attendance Report

Lesley Oliver, marketing and pr manager, reported that March's attendance numbers were on par with previous years. She cited well attended events, increased attendance during Festival, Cycle for Arts (which received great press) and SMOCA Nights as contributing to the overall numbers. April attendance is already seeing a upswing due to the launch of the Culture Pass and the Modern Phoenix Expo, which was featured in the *L.A. Times* weekend section. She also passed around the March 22 *New York Times* travel article on Scottsdale, which prominently mentioned SMOCA and the *Flip a Strip* exhibition.

7. Fundraising strategy update

Ms. Parker-Moquay and Mr. Banchs discussed the Museum's fundraising strategy for the remainder of the fiscal year and ideas for funding next year. In response to the budget discussion, Ms. Parker-Moquay noted that the additional cuts will impact applying for grants and any grant monies coming in. Weekly meetings are being held to divide up a list of donors & potential donors to meet with as soon as possible, as many leave town in May for the summer. Mr. Banchs encouraged the Board to bring any contact names to either him or Ms. Parker-Moquay and offered to either meet with them individually or together with their prospect.

One of the ideas discussed at their weekly meetings is the idea of Board members hosting cultivating events in their homes to show off their collections. An excellent component to this idea would be to bring in an artist to educate the potential donors and to create discussion. Further collaboration among the division's development

departments will help build a larger constituent base that becomes more familiar with the fundraising staff, creating less dependency on the Operating Directors to raise monies that may be lost when they leave. As of today \$236K is still needed to meet the Museum's contributed revenue goal before the end of the fiscal year. This topic will be raised again at a future Board meeting for further discussion.

8. Education & Exhibition budget reductions and Collaborative programming opportunities

Tabled for a future meeting due to time constraints.

DATES TO HOLD:

April 23: Coffee for Prospective Docents, 9:30 pm

April 23: SMOCA Contemporaries, 6:30 pm

April 23: Gallery Performance with artist Martin Kersels, 6:30 pm

May 8: Photography Symposium, 7 pm

May 9: Photography Symposium, 8:30 am

May 9: Reading by Mothers Who Write, 2 pm

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Theisen, recorder