

# MEETING OF THE VISUAL ARTS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 30, 2025

2:00 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

**Draft Minutes**

Chair Ferras called the meeting to order at 2:09pm.

## **1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Agenda Changes, Land Acknowledgment**

### **Commissioners Present:**

Janine Shiota, Vice President

Nabiel Musleh

Marcus Anthony Shelby

Debra Walker

### **Commissioners Absent:**

Suzie Ferras

JD Beltran

SFAC staff in attendance: Public Art Program and Civic Art Collection Director Mary Chou, Deputy Director of Programs Ebon Glenn and Director of Cultural Affairs Ralph Remington (arrived at 2:13pm).

## **2. General Public Comment**

**(06:09)**

### **Public Comment**

Richard Rothman raised concerns about the lack of maintenance for historic murals on Recreation and Park buildings, specifically at Coit Tower and the Mother's Building at the San Francisco Zoo. He emphasized that preserving these murals was crucial - painted by women artists and using egg tempera. Rothman noted the Mother's Building has been closed since

2000 and may face structural failure without restoration, which could cost around \$20 million. He urged the Arts Commission to be more involved and to have a more active role in preserving these murals.

Susie McKinnon from the Mid-Market Community Benefit District announced the upcoming "2 Blocks of Art" event on October 11. The theme, "Sight and Sound," will include over 20 activations across vacant storefronts, museums, and historic buildings from 5th to 7th Street, aiming to bring vitality and opportunities for artists and neighbors alike.

#### Written Public Comment

Jack McCarthy, Board Member of Docomomo US/Northern California

"I'm a SF resident and a board member of Docomomo US/Northern California. We are dedicated to highlighting and preserving Modern buildings and sites. Our broad coalition submitted a letter advocating for the preservation of Embarcadero Plaza and the Vaillancourt Fountain.

Today, we're here to address two key procedural issues. **First**, the Arts Commission's bylaws require a Landscape Architect, but this seat is vacant. We request this position be filled before any action is taken on the fountain, as its history is deeply tied to landscape architecture. **Second**, the fountain appears to be bypassing established deaccessioning procedures by going directly to the Full Commission. We ask for clarification on the process and a commitment to following the correct procedures to ensure transparency and public engagement. Thank you"

Tad Sky, a Street Artist since the late 1970s, voiced concern over the Commission Streamlining Task Force's proposal to combine or eliminate the Arts Commission. He also shared his personal experience with Vaillancourt Fountain, and how when it was working, it was spectacular. He believes that it is a site-specific artwork, but once the freeway came down and it started to breakdown, it became an eyesore and it won't fit into the newly proposed waterfront park.

Matt Joseph criticized past and current handling of the Vaillancourt Fountain and Embarcadero Plaza. He highlighted several failed projects and warned against repeating mistakes driven by biases and rushed commitments. He reminded Commissioners of past projects at Embarcadero Plaza that have been not as successful. Joseph called on the Commission to request an unabridged historical account of the plaza and fountain, including renovations, prior designs, and relevant artifacts, and a full public briefing on the application of the California Art Preservation Act, and whether gross negligence in maintenance occurred.

### **3. Consent Calendar (20:56)**

1. Motion to approve a sole source contract with Certified Tile and Stone, Inc. for fine art installation services for the Mission Bay School Public Art Project pursuant to San Francisco Administrative Code Section 6.73, in an amount not to exceed \$31,756. The contractor's specialized qualifications, proprietary knowledge of the artwork and project site, and proven expertise in fine art handling make these services not reasonably available from another provider without risk of duplicative costs, delays, or potential damage to the artworks.
2. Motion to approve a sole source contract with One Hat One Hand LLC for fine art installation services for the Pier 27 James R. Herman Cruise Terminal Plaza Public Art Project, pursuant to San Francisco Administrative Code Section 6.73, in an amount not to exceed \$20,473.75. The contractor's specialized qualifications, proprietary knowledge of the artworks, and proven expertise in fine art handling make these services not reasonably available from another provider without risk of duplicative costs, delays, or potential damage to the artworks.

There was no public comment.

**Moved: Walker/Musleh**

The motion unanimously carried by the following vote:

**Ayes:** Musleh, Shelby, Shiota, Walker

#### **4. Gift of Mayor Ed Lee Bust**

**(24:01)**

Art consultant Dorka Keehn presented the final wax designs of the bust honoring the late Mayor Ed Lee. The bust is created by sculptor Jonah Hendrickson, who also created the bust of former Mayor Gavin Newsom at City Hall and the Mayor Lee sculpture at Chase Center. The bust is the same size and scale as former Mayor James Phelan's bust, which it will be replacing, and is intended to reflect Lee's legacy as a "man of the people." Lee's family was actively involved in the review process and approved the bust design. The bust will be installed at the entrance of San Francisco City Hall.

In addition to the sculpture, a plaque will be affixed to the pedestal featuring a quote chosen by the family, which will also be translated into Chinese. The plaque will be made of sandstone to match the current pedestal material and will be hand engraved by a local stone engraver. It will be attached using concealed pins and epoxy for a seamless look.

There was no public comment.

Motion to approve final design of bust including clay model of Ed Lee bust and final design of plaque on pedestal, including layout of text, material and attachment method for installation in City Hall.

**Moved: Walker/Shelby**

The motion unanimously carried by the following vote:

**Ayes:** Musleh, Shelby, Shiota, Walker

## **5. San Francisco International Airport Terminal 3 West Modernization Courtyard 4 Connector**

**(29:29)**

The Terminal 3 West Modernization Project (T3 West) consists of the renovation and expansion of the west portion and connector to the F concourse of the Terminal 3 facility. The overall goals of the project are to make the passenger journey between Terminal 3 and the International Terminal Building more efficient and comfortable, to provide essential operational office space for tenants, and to offer expanded airline lounge space for passengers.

The design concept of the T3 West Modernization project is “A Day in the Life of San Francisco,” which reflects the rich culture, food, art, life, and geography one would encounter while walking the Crosstown trail in a single day. The Courtyard 4 Connector (C4C) building is a new six-story building that acts as a spatial link between the international terminal and T3 West, while incorporating a mix of passenger and tenant functions.

For the East Wall of the Federal Inspective Services (FIS) corridor, the artist review panel selected Tomashi Jackson, a multimedia artist known for her research-driven practice. Jackson’s proposal involves creating a vibrant, site-specific mural that reflects the joy and diversity of San Francisco. She plans to incorporate archival and original photographs of locals celebrating, playing, and dancing, along with materials like secondhand clothing and soil from significant City sites. These elements will be layered into a painted and collaged image, which will be translated into durable tile and glass mosaic. The work aims to offer a welcoming and festive corridor to travelers passing through.

For the West Wall of the FIS corridor, Muzae Sesay was recommended by the panel. His mural, *From Bridge to Bridge and Our Life In Between*, is a colorful, energetic tribute to San Francisco’s landscape and spirit. The artwork follows a day in the city, moving from sunrise over the Bay Bridge to nightfall at the Golden Gate Bridge. Each section channels the magic of

discovery found in exploring San Francisco, and will be fabricated using hand-glazed ceramic tile and Byzantine glass smalti.

There was no public comment.

#### **A) Federal Inspection Service (FIS) East Art Wall**

Motion to approve the conceptual design proposal by Tomashi Jackson for the Terminal 3 West C4C FIS East Art Wall Public Art Project, as recommended by the Artist Review Panel.

Motion to authorize the Director of Cultural Affairs to enter into a contract with Tomashi Jackson for an amount not to exceed \$400,000 for the design, fabrication, insurance, and consultation during installation of a tile and glass mosaic artwork for the Terminal 3 West C4C FIS East Art Wall Public Art Project.

#### **B) Federal Inspection Service (FIS) West Art Wall**

Motion to approve the conceptual design proposal *From Bridge to Bridge and Our Life in Between* by Muzae Sesay for the Terminal 3 West C4C FIS West Art Wall Public Art Project, as recommended by the Artist Review Panel.

Motion to authorize the Director of Cultural Affairs to enter into a contract with Muzae Sesay for an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 for the design, fabrication, insurance, and consultation during installation of a mosaic tile artwork for the Terminal 3 West C4C FIS West Art Wall Public Art Project.

#### **Moved: Walker/Musleh**

The motion unanimously carried by the following vote:

**Ayes:** Musleh, Shelby, Shiota, Walker

### **6. San Francisco Main Library – Temporary Atrium Mural**

**(48:47)**

Senior Program Manager Jackie von Treskow presented the final artwork design for the San Francisco Public Library Temporary Mural, created by

artist Belen Islas in collaboration with Dr. Jonathan Cordero of the Association of the Ramaytush Ohlone. This project, funded by the Library, aims to highlight the importance of intergenerational knowledge sharing from an Indigenous perspective. The mural will be installed in the atrium of the Main Branch Library, above the staircase leading to the Fisher Children's Center, and will be printed on high-quality vinyl for a two-year display. The total project budget is \$52,000, covering both the artist's design and the mural's fabrication, installation, maintenance, and removal.

The mural, titled *Atemtuhe* (meaning "to listen"), builds on the concept previously approved in July, emphasizing circularity and the continuous cycle of learning between Elders and children. The design features a vibrant California landscape with native flora and fauna, interwoven with Indigenous symbols representing natural elements like wind, sun, and water. These elements, along with scenes of storytelling, play, and ceremony, reflect Indigenous ways of knowing and the deep connection between cultural knowledge and ecological heritage.

Now complete, the hand-painted artwork has been digitized for printing. Once approved, the digital file will be sent for production, marking the final step before this meaningful artwork becomes a vibrant part of the Library's space. Installation is scheduled for October 12–13, during the Library's closure for Indigenous Peoples Day, with a public unveiling on October 14 at 9:00 a.m.

There was no public comment.

Motion to approve the final design of an artwork by Maria Belen Islas Cuellar (Belen Islas), in collaboration with the Association of the Ramaytush Ohlone, for the San Francisco Main Library Temporary Atrium Mural Project.

### **Moved: Walker/Musleh**

The motion unanimously carried by the following vote:

**Ayes:** Musleh, Shelby, Shiota, Walker

### **7. Staff Report**

**(56:14)**

There was no staff report.

There was no public comment.

## **8. New Business & Announcements**

**(57:00)**

There was no new business or announcements.

There was no public comment.

## **9. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

Posted 10/9/2025, 3:00pm pc

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## **Archives Available**

A recording of this meeting will be available online after the meeting at the following address:

[https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view\\_id=152](https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=152)

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