

**New York State Council on the Arts  
Committee and Council Meeting Minutes  
February 3, 2021 1:00 PM- 3:50PM  
Held via Video and Teleconference**

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Present:

Katherine Nicholls (Chair), Laura Aswad, Scott Eberle, Joan Hornig, Janet Kagan, Jayne Keyes, Hildy Kuryk, Eric Latzky, Laudelina Martinez, Richard Mittenenthal, Mahnaz Moinian, John Morning, Hal Payne, Deborah Ronnen, Elsie McCabe-Thompson

Quorum present: Yes

Others in attendance:

Mara Manus, Executive Director, NYSCA

Megan White, Deputy Director of Programs, NYSCA

Abigail Young, Deputy Director of Operations and General Counsel, NYSCA

Abby Adler, Executive Assistant, NYSCA

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*Due to public health concerns and as authorized by Executive Order of the Governor, this meeting was conducted by teleconference and video participation.*

*Roll call conducted by Abby Adler and roll call was confirmed. Meeting called to order by Chair Katherine Nicholls at approximately 1:10 PM.*

**CHAIR'S WELCOME**

**KATHERINE NICHOLLS:**

Good afternoon and welcome to the joint meeting of the Council and Committees of the New York State Council on the Arts on February 3, 2021. I am KATHERINE NICHOLLS, the Chair of NYSCA.

Thank you to our Council Members joining us today for our first meeting of the new year. Due to public health concerns and as authorized by Executive Order of the Governor, this meeting may be conducted by teleconference and video participation.

Some housekeeping before we begin; I ask that all attendees remain muted unless they need to speak, and anyone wishing to speak to please state your name before you begin. Additionally, if at any point you must leave this meeting, please inform us as we must maintain a quorum for today's session.

To remind all in attendance; this is a public meeting that is being recorded.

When Council last met virtually on June 25, 2020, we approved NYSCA's CARES grant opportunities. Since then, the incredible NYSCA staff has continued their valuable work, including a restructuring of the entire FY2021 panel process so that every meeting could be held virtually – which was a first for NYSCA. The staff has also been working hard to reimagine and plan for the FY2022 application process. I want to take this moment to congratulate Mara, Megan, and Abigail for their unparalleled leadership, and the entire NYSCA staff for their incredible service to the field during these unprecedented times.

I thought it would be helpful to provide some context for the incredible work we have achieved together of the course of a year unlike any other, and I want to first acknowledge that the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and systemic racism have drastically heightened the need for service to the field, ultimately allowing us to begin to implement various elements of our from our strategic planning process. To review some priorities we identified:

- Amplify Field Innovation Through Goal-Oriented Funding
- Lead in Promoting Fairness and Access
- Create and Implement a Powerful NYSCA Communications System
- Be a connector and convener to other resources

I would like to thank Governor Cuomo and the Department of the Budget for their recent announcement that the NYSCA FY2021 grant budget, which had been frozen since April 2020, would be preserved at level grant funding. Additionally, they have proposed no reductions for the FY2022 grant budget. This decision demonstrates the Governor's unyielding support for the arts during these unprecedented times, and his understanding of the immense impact our field has on the health and vitality of our state.

Today's meeting will differ from past Committee and Council meetings as we will review and vote on the NYSCA FY2021 panel rating recommendations in their entirety, rather than over the course of three meetings. Due to delays in releasing the FY 2021 budget, we are several months behind in approving and releasing the much-needed funding to the field. This late timeline requires us to be proactive and responsive, and thus our time for discussion today will be compressed.

Please note that the meeting materials were first sent to council on Thursday, January 28. Many thanks to the Council Members who submitted questions and comments in advance. This proactive review will enable us to achieve the full years review in our session today.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At this time, NYSCA has determined that the Committees and Council have a basis to enter into executive session to review the recommendations put forth by NYSCA panels, staff, and Executive Leadership for the NYSCA FY2021 new grants. Section 105(1)(f) of the Open Meetings Law permits a public body to enter into an executive session to discuss: "...the ... financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation."

Council members, please raise your hand now to approve entry to executive session. Make sure your video is on. We will return to public meeting at the conclusion of the presentations by NYSCA staff at approximately 3:55PM.

*[The meeting continues in Executive Session for Committee members and invited guests. Quorum was confirmed upon returning to the public portion of the meeting at approximately 3:40PM.]*

**KATHERINE NICHOLLS:** Welcome back to the public portion of the joint meeting of the Committee and Council for the New York State Council on the Arts. I am Katherine Nicholls, Chair of the New York State Council on the Arts. Thank you all for joining us.

I would like to ask the Chairs from each of our Performing, Literary & Visual Arts and Multidisciplinary Arts Committee to jointly ask for a motion regarding the FY2021 funding recommendations made by the NYSCA panels.

*At the request of Chair Katherine Nicholls, a motion for the two Committees and Council to jointly recommend then approve the FY2021 new grant recommendations is made and seconded.*

**KATHERINE NICHOLLS:** I would now like to ask MEGAN WHITE if there are any recusals to report. Those with a conflict will be deemed recused on their vote for the applicable application.

**MEGAN WHITE:** Thank you Katherine. The conflicts are as follows:

- **Architecture + Design Program**
  - FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY FOUNDATION: Joan Hornig
- **Arts Education Program**
  - Manhattan Theatre Club, Inc.: Hildy Kuryk
  - SARATOGA PERFORMING ARTS CTR: Jayne Keyes
  - The Research Foundation of CUNY: Elsie McCabe Thompson
- **Dance Program**
  - HENRY STREET SETTLEMENT: John Morning
- **Electronic Media & Film Program**
  - Museum of Arts and Design: Joan Hornig
  - Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute: Laudelina Martinez
- **Facilities Program**
  - Museum of Arts and Design: Joan Hornig
  - Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute: Laudelina Martinez
  - SARATOGA PERFORMING ARTS CTR: Jayne Keyes
  - The Vivian Beaumont Theater, Inc.: John Morning
- **Individual Artists Program**

- Arts Services Initiative of Western NY, Inc.: Hal D. Payne
- HENRY STREET SETTLEMENT: John Morning
- **Museum Program**
  - Asia Society: Mahnaz (Nazee) Moinian
  - FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY FOUNDATION: Joan Hornig
  - NEW YORK CITY MUSEUM EDUCATORS ROUNDTABLE: Laura Aswad
  - Rensselaer County Historical Society, Inc.: Laudelina Martinez
- **Presenting Program**
  - American Dance Institute, Inc. : Hildy Kuryk
  - SARATOGA PERFORMING ARTS CTR: Jayne Keyes
  - SHED NYC INC Laura Aswad
  - The Symphony Space, Inc.: Richard Mittenthal
- **Special Arts Services Program**
  - American Dance Institute, Inc.: Hildy Kuryk
  - Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation: Lisa Baker
- **State & Local Partnership Program**
  - Arts Services Initiative of Western NY, Inc.: Hal D. Payne
- **Theatre Program**
  - Classical Theatre of Harlem: Elsie McCabe Thompson
  - Manhattan Theatre Club, Inc.: Hildy Kuryk
  - The Drama League of New York: Janet Kagan
  - The Vivian Beaumont Theater, Inc.: John Morning
- **Visual Arts Program**
  - SHED NYC INC: Laura Aswad

*Following the reading of the recusals, the motion carries unanimously with the Council members joining via teleconference.*

**KATHERINE NICHOLLS:** Thank you to our NYSCA staff, leadership, and Council, for your ongoing service and commitment to New York State. Today in doing our civic duty, we have worked to ensure that all state residents receive the benefits of the arts, including communities that need it the most during these unprecedented times.

We anticipate launching our FY2022 application process in the Spring, and as we continue to navigate the landscape of COVID-19 and our state's recovery, we will update Council members on any changes to the NYSCA Council Meeting schedule when we have them.

Before we adjourn, I want to say that it has truly been a pleasure to share this space with you all after so long. We are looking ahead to our state's economic recovery, and I am comforted to know that we will move forward together. I also want to emphasize that there is much healing to be done and the toll that system racism and COVID-19 has taken on our sector is enormous on so many fronts.

I ask that we take a moment to acknowledge the individuals that this pandemic has stolen from our sector, our communities, and our families.

While it is clear that no one will emerge from this time unscathed, we must also look to support one another through our individual recoveries and future growth. Over these last 10 months we have been nourished by a resilient arts community that continues to sustain us in times of loneliness, isolation, frustration, and fear. Our sector is creative, strong, and vibrant, and I am proud of the work we have done and the work we will do to ensure that they thrive in the face of challenge.

*At the request of Chair Katherine Nicholls, a motion of the Council to adjourn the meeting is made and seconded. The motion carries unanimously with the Council members joining via teleconference.*

***Meeting adjourns at approximately 3:50PM.***