



**Date:** November 29, 2017

**Attendees:** Mohamed Alyajouri, Meagan Atiyeh, Randy Blazak, Eugenie Fontana, Sabina Haque, Victor Maldonado, Valerie Otani,

**Absent:** April Slabosheski

**Guests:** John Laursen

**Staff:** Bob Hastings, Tom Markgraf, Michelle Traver

**Subject:** Hollywood Transit Center Tribute Advisory Committee Meeting

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## MEETING NOTES

November 7, 2017

6:30-8:30 p.m.

Valerie Otani, Committee Chair, welcomed committee members, who then introduced themselves and elaborated on their interest in participating on the committee. TriMet Public Art Administrator, Michelle Traver, reviewed the role of the committee. She thanked them for volunteering to participate in this exceptional project and indicated that their effort would help lay the groundwork for a permanent memorial in the future.

TriMet Agency Architect, Bob Hastings, provided an overview of the site for context and presented on a project currently being developed that reconsiders the functionality and best use of the Hollywood Transit Center. He reported that the current scope is to identify jurisdictional requirements, as well as technical considerations, before entering into a design process next year.

The designer of the commemorative plaque, John Laursen, discussed the parameters and initial vision for the piece to be authentic while affirming the values of the community. He also provided a mockup image of the placement with the potential scale of the plaque and a material sample. Committee members made the following recommendations:

- Consider if this might be an opportunity to include poetry by Micah Fletcher.
- Consider using words in the narrative that do not need to be translated to be understood.

Michelle Traver reviewed the draft Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Tribute Wall, which led to a robust discussion and numerous suggestions by committee members to

make the call more accessible to a wider range of artists and communities. Discussion items included:

- The project is not about the “artist” and is more about the people and the event.
- The goal of the project is to honor the people involved and to center around the needs of the survivors and victims of the incident, and is of critical importance not to add to their trauma.
- It is desirable to clarify the potentially temporary nature of the project and to encourage mentorship; murals allow for a certain immediacy of speed and expression.
- The important to understand the difference between “political” and “partisan,” and apply that to this project; recognize that this type of crime reverberates both geographically and temporally in communities.
- All will feel a different response to the project; the human experience is a means for dialogue and people find clarity through understanding; encourage a different read every time one views/experiences the work.

Next steps – staff to revise and distribute the RFQ with a deadline of November 29; distribute submissions to committee members to review in advance of the next meeting.

*Next meeting: Tuesday, December 5, 2017, 6:30-8:30 p.m.*

### **Advisory Committee biographies**

**Mohamed Alyajouri** is currently a Practice Manager, managing teams that support Oregon Health & Science University’s world-class primary care facilities. His experience also includes program development for Oregon’s Community Health Centers, project management at the Multnomah County Health Department, multiple roles at the Corvallis Clinic and graduate work at the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. For most of his adult life, his professional and community involvement has revolved around public health initiatives, community building partnerships and interfaith outreach. In spring 2017, Mohamed was elected to the Portland Community College Board of Directors, serving residents of Washington and Yamhill counties. He also serves on World Oregon’s Advisory Board and is the co-chair of the Muslim Educational Trust’s Outreach Committee. Mohamed completed both his undergraduate and graduate studies at Oregon State University, receiving his Bachelors in Healthcare Administration and his Masters in Public Health.

**Meagan Atiyeh** manages Oregon’s Percent for Art in Public Places program. She also oversees the Oregon Arts Commission’s Visual Artist Fellowships. Prior to joining the Arts Commission, Meagan served in several capacities at the Portland Art Museum’s Northwest Film Center, where she was the director of the Northwest Film & Video Festival. As an independent curator, she has organized exhibitions for Disjecta Contemporary Art Center, White Box, University of Oregon and co-curated the two-year project ALL RISE in Seattle, WA. She has served on the boards of the University of Oregon Architecture and Allied Arts and Disjecta Contemporary Art Center, and currently co-chairs the Curatorial Committee for Converge 45.

**Randy Blazak's** scholarship on hate crimes has made him a regular commenter in media outlets from NPR and CNN to BBC and Al Jazeera. Randy earned his PhD at Emory University in 1995 after completing an extensive field study of racist skinheads that included undercover observations and interviews across the world. He became a tenured sociology professor at Portland State University and criminology professor at the University of Oregon. His work has taken him from classrooms to criminal trials. His research has been published in academic journals, books and in the mainstream press. In 2001, his co-authored book, *Teenage Renegades, Suburban Outlaws* was published by Wadsworth and in 2009, Praeger published his volume, *Hate Offenders*. Since 2002, he has been the chair of the Oregon Coalition Against Hate Crimes. He works with the National Institute of Justice and the Southern Poverty Law Center on hate crime research issues and recently formed the Jameson Research Institute to study issues of hate and civil discourse.

**Eugenie Jolivett Fontana** has enjoyed being in the creative world at every point in life. After receiving a BA in Theatre Arts from University of California, Irvine, she co-founded a design studio. Her company worked with a wide range of industries, received awards from companies like Adobe® Systems, and curated events and gallery exhibitions. Since living in the Northwest, Eugenie has been more inspired to co-create a platform for people of color and LGBTQ+, called w(HERE) we are, created Gather & Garner to share her knowledge and serves on the board of directors at AIGA Portland. She is a Digital Communication Specialist for the Regional Arts & Culture Council.

**Sabina Haque's** work draws on South Asian folk rituals, oral histories, video performance and hand-drawn animation to explore the turbulent transformations of identity and place. In 2016, Sabina was artist-in-residence with the *Portland Archives & Records Center*, where she created a multi-media art exhibit exploring the tumultuous and fraught process of annexation and growth as experienced by disparate communities east of 82nd Ave. In 2015, Haque was a TEDxMtHood speaker and TEDx artist-in-residence, and was awarded the 2014 Oregon Art Commission Individual Artist Fellowship. Haque received an MFA in Painting from Boston University in 1998 and teaches Fine Art at Portland State University, Oregon. Haque exhibits her work nationally and internationally. Noteworthy exhibits include solo and group shows at Avampato Museum of Art, Bowery Gallery in New York City, the Boston Contemporary Art Center, the Los Angeles Arts and Cultural Center, the SAVAC Visual Arts Center in Toronto, Canada, and Koel Gallery in Karachi, Pakistan. Her artworks are in noted public collections including the Gordon Gilkey Print Center at the Portland Art Museum, the Jordan Schnitzer Collection and in the Public Portable Art Collections of both Portland and Seattle.

**Victor Maldonado** is a multidisciplinary artist, freelance curator and writer in Portland. Born in 1976 in Changuitrio, Michoacán, Mexico, Victor grew up in the Central San Joaquin Valley of California in a family of migrant field laborers. Currently an Assistant Professor and Inclusions Specialist at Pacific Northwest College of Art, Maldonado holds a BFA in Painting and Drawing from the California College of Art and a MFA in Painting and Drawing from the School of Art Institute in Chicago. Deploying both traditional mediums including painting, printmaking and drawing alongside contemporary strategies such as performances, installations and interventions, Victor expresses the power of identity to author experience and perception. His work is

included in the permanent collections of the Tacoma Art Museum in Tacoma, WA, the Museum of Fine Art in Houston, TX and the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, in Salem, OR.

**Valerie Otani** (Committee Chair) Japanese American artist Valerie Otani creates public installations and sculptures that engage our shared history and imagination. Her works build connections between the viewers and the place, and include “Voices of Remembrance” at the Expo Center MAX Station, commemorating the location where Japanese Americans were imprisoned in 1942. She has served on design teams and created art for the Blue, Yellow and Green MAX lines and for parks and community centers in Portland, Seattle, Phoenix and Oakland. She supervises the public art program for the City of Hillsboro, is a presenter on the Fair Housing Council of Oregon’s bus tour on the hidden history of racism in Portland and is a founding member of Portland Taiko, an Asian American drum ensemble. She received her BA in philosophy from Antioch College in Ohio and her MA in Interdisciplinary Arts from San Francisco State University.

**April Slabosheski**, Manager of Museum and Holocaust Education at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education (OJMCHE), oversees educational programming and outreach related to Holocaust and Jewish history. . She holds an MA in Judaic Studies from the University of Michigan and a BS in Community Education and Engagement from the University of Wisconsin. April has worked at OJMCHE since 2014 and recently curated one of OJMCHE’s core exhibits titled *The Holocaust, an Oregon Perspective*. Prior to moving to Portland, she worked at cultural and educational institutions in the Midwest including the Milwaukee Jewish Federation, Jewish Museum Milwaukee, and the Ann Arbor Hands On Museum.