ORANGE COUNTY ARTS COMMISSION

October 2025 Agenda

Monday, October 13| 6:30pm
The ArtsCenter, Carrboro

Agenda

1) Call to Order 6:38 Crystal Wu

Staff present: Katie Murray
Board members present: Renee Hayes, John Bemis, Ashley Nissler, Lindsay Metivier, Denise Duffy, Wendy Smith, Heather Washburn, Alexander Gast, Gideon Young, Crystal Wu
Board members absent; Francesca Talenti, Krista Bremer, Josh Rosenstein

2) Approval of September Board Minutes Crystal Wu

John moved to approve minutes, Wendy seconded. All in favor.
Approval of August Board Minutes, Denise moved to approve minutes. Renee seconded. All in favor.

3) Board updates Katie Murray
   a) Welcome Ashley Nissler!
   b) Vacant positions: We currently have two vacancies, positions 6 and 15. Need someone in an official capacity with CH arts but it's hard to have now. We need representation from Carrboro Arts Committee but it's a challenge. We are covered in performing and literary arts. We could use someone in the visual arts We could use a working teacher. Right now, we have more people from CH than other areas but that is okay. Jonathan Hameil got back to Katie and is too busy. Carrie Alter, an art teacher at Durham School of Science and Math could be a good fit and is an artist herself. Mary Carter Taub, public artist, reached out to Katie. Arts Alliance also needs board members. Last month, Kelly Mills' application stood out. Katie will reach out and try to get together with her. The board all agreed that her application was very strong. She is a dancer which we don't have and is younger. We need racial diversity; it's a requirement but moreover, we all agree that it is important to have all voices heard. Bren West has been suggested- Well-rounded background. Graphic presence. Grayce Curry with Town of Carrboro, Rec. and Parks department was suggested. Katie said it would be beneficial to have someone from the town. Krista Bremer is up in the spring.
   c) We need a secretary starting next month. Ashley served as Arts Alliance secretary so she should not feel pressured to do that. John Blemis stepped up. Thank you, John!
   d) 2026 Officers- The chair goes before the commissioners to report on what we are doing. This upcoming year visibility will be important with both the pending grand reopening and new rebrand.
4) Director's Report Katie Murray
   a) Mill update; Looking like March will be when we can move back in. So perhaps April will be the grand opening, but all this is up in the air. This year will be a loss no matter what, but we need to start bringing in revenue to pay rent. Right now, we aren't paying rent. The board recommends Katie to plan a soft opening. Katie is not sure how many artists will come back. Some have found new homes and others are too traumatized to return. Katie would like community to sponsor some of the artists so we can have more artists in residencies. We will be changing some things, more storage, more offices. Debating about breaking up the back studios and making half ceramics. We will need a studio manager. We would have one large classroom, one studio workspace, one room to store glazes and other chemicals, an office for person running the space, space for kilns on the back wall. Heather suggested kiln rental. Chair of Claymakers would be a good studio manager. Is it feasible that the dust won't impact other classes? Studios would need to share sinks and Heather pointed out that it won't work. Heather stated that they would need a floor drain. Should have a trap too. Wendy can introduce Katie to Taryn. Heather has designed clay studio and can be of help. Artists from Mebane and Efland might be pulled to do ceramics. Worth checking out. Lindsay

wants a dark room.

b) Fundraising efforts to date raised $125,840. $107,090 for Artist relief. Any artist in OC can apply for a relief grant. No limits right now. Too hard to figure out an upper limit so Katie wants to see what comes in. 9 artists have applied so far. Let Katie know if you are interested in serving on a panel that will review applications and recommend awards. $18000 was donated and earmarked, ”where it’s needed most” and will be designated for staff who lost items in the flood. Some may go to artists in need. This funding could also be used for budget shortfalls. This Saturday, Salt & Smoke & Sound Festival will donate a portion of sales and alcohol sales to OCAC. Volunteers are needed but be forewarned the platform to sign up is challenging. Food will be great-Acme. Great music lineup.

c) Katie shared an update about her participation in the “Beloved Community Journey” to Birmingham, Selma and Montgomery. This trip changed Katie’s life. Other people on the trip included parishioners from Binkley Baptist Church, Chapel of the Cross, The Church of Reconciliation, University Presbyterian. Katie was inspired to go on this trip after seeing Bryan Stevenson, founder of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), in 2018 at an Americans for the Arts Conference before the opening of the Peace & Justice Memorial in Montgomery talking about the integration of art into the design of the project. Katie found it so inspiring!! Katie wants more people to see this and would like to hire Anthony Clay, an historian at Carolina Friends School, to coordinate a trip next fall. She would want to find someone to lead a guided tour of sculpture garden and add in a music piece. Katie envisions Montgomery would be the sole focus and would like to get sponsors so we can offer 10 seats to artists. Heather recommended involving Jhad Amazi, an architect and an artist. This trip would be by bus, approximately eight hours on the road each way, there and back.

d) Grants have gotten really messed up because of changes made by the federal government. The state has removed the multi-cultural requirements and now the requirements center on community representation. Also, during all this, it came to light that Katie should not have been signing contracts and instead they should have been signed by Travis. All organizations are on hold now until the County Commissioners meet on 21st and payments will be late going out.

e) Fred Joiner is the headliner at Weave and Spin at the Eno house at 7 pm. Joan Barasovska will also be joining him.

f) Other updates:
Nov 7th, thank you event for everyone who gave to the artist relief fundraiser and auction. No program. Come how fun
Nov 15th Hillsborough Holiday Bazaar from 10 am to 4pm at River Park. Greg is coordinating this.
Eno Mill Brewery- Padget Blythe designed a can label but their relationship with the brewery got wonky, Eno didn’t honor the contract, and they didn’t pay her the full amount. Katie will talk to them. Board encourages Katie to advocate for the artist. Katie wants to get story from the brewery with a goal to make it right.

5) Liaison Reports

a) UNC Student Liaison Update — Alexander Gast
Tomorrow 10/14, there is a wind ensemble at Memorial Hall. The Wolves is at Playmakers on Wednesday. Also on Wednesday, there is yoga under the stars at the planetarium. Gabi Calvocoressi of UNC has a book of poetry, The New Economy which is now a finalist for the 2025 National Book Award. On Sept 30th 2025 Thomas Wolfe Lecture by Tressie McMillan Cottom of the School of Library Sciences. Cellar door submissions just opened up.

b) Chapel Hill Arts

c) UNC — Crystal Wu
Diaspora Film Festival at the Stone Center- check it out Oct 14th and 21st. Morehead Planetarium welcomes back grammy nominated artist Radhika Vekaria (21 and up event). Carolina Performing Arts is hosting the Australian experimental theater collective Pony Cam for their performance of **"**Burnout Paradise**"** on October 28–29, 2025. The show is performed entirely on treadmills.

d) Hillsborough Arts Council — John Bemis
Oct Last Friday is Halloween. Extra nutty! Solstice Lantern Dec. 20th. Looking for volunteers for both.

e) The ArtsCenter — Wendy Smith
Fun Halloween performances- Wild Mind Improv will have a holiday show on Oct. 25th.

Black Sheep Comedy will host "Carr*boo*ro Fright Night" on Oct. 31st
There is a call for art for our next gallery show "A Light in the Dark" celebrating light during the winter days.

f) Visitor's Bureau — Wendy Smith
Chris Cavenaugh of Magellan Strategy Group will help the Bureau plan their strategic direction. Mex Tour surpassed projections. Also mentioned Savanah Bananas...this has been something the bureau has been keeping under wraps but hoping for, for quite a while.

g) Orange County Artists Guild — Heather Washburn
Show at TAC for Pre-tour now through Oct 26th. Next at Hillsborough Gallery of Art. Open reception 31st of Oct. Meeting at The ArtsCenter next Thursday and will be talking about board members

h) Carolina African American Writers' Collective/Carrboro Poets Council — Gideon Young
West End Poetry festival is this weekend. Thursday, at Steel String, there will be a reading and collaborative poem hosted by the Carrboro Poet's Council. On Friday at the Drakeford activities will start with a Youth Writing Workshop, followed by a reception and lastly a poetry reading by Carlina Duan and Meg Day with a conversation and Q & A. Then on Saturday there will be events all day long at the Century Center with lots of great vendors including Carrburritos and Open Eye. Poets include Jameela Fay Dallis, Erin Miller, Vince Kopp, Crystal Simone Smith, Liza Wolff-Francis and James Davis May. After party at Steel String. There is a call for new poet laureate. Dec. 6th will be a party to celebrate the new one.
Close at 8:08 pm

6) Board member updates — All

IMPORTANT DATES

Sat Oct 18	Salt & Smoke & Sound Festival (vteers needed)	Blackwood Farm
Fri Nov 7	"Thank you" party with Shoaldiggers	Eno River Brewing, 6-9pm
Sat Nov 15	Hillsborough Holiday Bazaar	Historic Courthouse Lawn, 10-4