



**CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
ARTS ADVISORY PANEL MEETING**

**Friday, February 12, 2016 11:30 a.m.**

**City Commission Chambers**

**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida 33134**

*Historical Resources &  
Cultural Arts*

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<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>
	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>
Dr. Carol Damian	P	P	-	-	-	P	P	-	-	-	P
Dr. Jill Deupi	P	P	-	-	-	E	P	-	-	-	E
Marijean Miyar	P	P	-	-	-	P	P	-	-	-	P
John Stuart	P	P	-	-	-	P	E	-	-	-	P
Freda Tschumy	P	E	-	-	-	P	E	-	-	-	P

**LEGEND:** A = Absent; P = Present; E = Excused; \* = New Member; ^ = Resigned Member; - = No Meeting  
+ = Special Meeting

**STAFF:**

Dona Spain, Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Director  
Catherine Cathers, Arts and Culture Specialist, Historical Resources and Cultural Arts  
Yesenia Diaz, Administrative Assistance, Historical Resources and Cultural Arts  
Carlos Mindreau, City Architect  
Glenn Kephart, Public Works Director  
Ernesto Pino, Assistant Public Works Director  
Javier Betancourt, Economic Development Director  
Billy Urquia, Assistant City Clerk  
Rayza Collazo, IT Specialist  
Aaron Casabone, Producer/Editor, Public Affairs

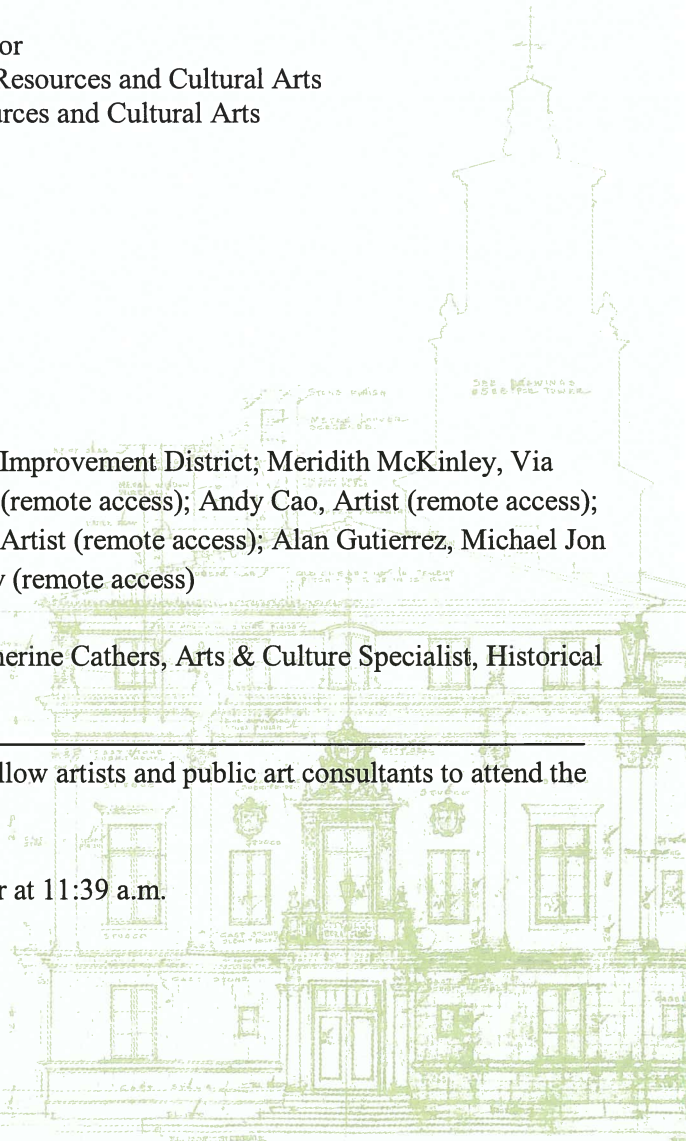
**GUESTS:**

Earl Jackson, Cooper Robertson; Marina Foglia, Business Improvement District; Meridith McKinley, Via Partnership (remote access); Todd Bressi, Via Partnership (remote access); Andy Cao, Artist (remote access); Blessing Hancock, Artist (remote access); Sibylle Pasche, Artist (remote access); Alan Gutierrez, Michael Jon Gallery (remote access); Michael Jon, Michael Jon Gallery (remote access)

**MEETING RECORD / MINUTES PREPARATION:** Catherine Cathers, Arts & Culture Specialist, Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Department

GoToMeeting.com, a remote access system, was used to allow artists and public art consultants to attend the meeting from off-site locations.

Ms. Miyar called the Arts Advisory Panel meeting to order at 11:39 a.m.



APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD OCTOBER 26, 2015:

**A motion was made by Dr. Damian and seconded by Mr. Stuart to approve the meeting minutes of the October 26, 2015 as presented, which was unanimously passed by voice vote.**

Ms. Cathers informed the Board that Dr. Deupi called in sick and, therefore, was unable the meeting. The Board-as-a-Whole accepted Dr. Deupi's absence as excused.

MIRACLE MILE/GIRALDA AVENUE STREETSCAPE – ARTIST CONCEPT PROPOSAL PRESENTATIONS (ACTION):

Arts Advisory Panel members, staff, and project partners introduced themselves.

Ms. Miyar asked Earl Jackson to provide an overview of the Streetscape project to date. Mr. Jackson gave a brief status on the streetscape project and noted the Commission's approval to continue forward. He went on to review the process taken by the Arts Advisory Panel, with Via Partnership as consultants, to narrow the list of qualified artists to the four artists presenting at this meeting: Math Bass, Andy Cao, Blessing Hancock, and Sibylle Pasche. The Panel was informed that not all of the invited artists chose to proceed to this phase due to previous commitments and the proposed timeline.

Mr. Jackson presented key components of the PowerPoint presentation that was provided to all presenting artists. He noted that artists were asked to consider the district as well as site specific interventions as they developed their concepts – such as recognizing the rhythm of the streets, acknowledging the major intersections and mid-block crossings, and consideration of boundaries between the City of Coral Gables and the City of Miami. Mr. Jackson noted that all artists gravitated toward a response that understands and reflects these conditions and the Streetscape concept of the southern Florida sky, water, colors, and integrated patterns. Ms. Spain informed the Panel that paving samples for Miracle Mile are in place in front of the building next to Starbucks on Miracle Mile.

Ms. Miyar asked for clarification on how parking will be affected. City staff responded with information on current parking conditions and proposed parking garage developments.

Ms. McKinley continued with an overview of the presentation, explaining that each artist will present a concept sketch and should not be considered as a full proposal. She added that artists were asked to sketch their ideas and describe how they would approach the project, including materials, shapes, forms, and siting. Ms. McKinley reminded the Panel that the public art budget for the project is set for approximately one million dollars (\$1m) with location considerations throughout Miracle Mile and Giralda Avenue, and priority given to Miracle Mile. Ms. McKinley conveyed that the Panel is being asked to recommend a single artist for the entire project or more than one artist. With the panel's feedback, the recommended artist(s) will develop a full proposal for consideration. She clarified that staff and the project team will discuss internally how the budget will be divided. All four artists will present with 10 min. in between each artist and at the end, the Panel will have the opportunity for discussion before making a recommendation.

### **Andy Cao**

Andy Cao was the first artist to present, noting that he is representing Cao + Perrot. Mr. Cao walked through Cao + Perrot's proposal and referenced inspiration drawn from the site, such as the tops of the trees and plants attached to coral stone. He noted that they selected the location at the West end of Miracle Mile based on its relationship to the public and private and are proposing a grouping of five Chorisia trees – noting the location of similar trees on the opposite (East) end of Miracle Mile. The trees would have spines imbedded with Swarovski crystals grafted on to each tree to create a luminous crystal armor. He noted that Chorisia thrives in the area and would recommend trimming the tree tops to keep them at 15 – 20 feet tall. Mr. Cao went on to describe the addition of Euphorbia surrounding the Chorisia trees, providing a layer of natural defense while limiting access to the artwork. Mr. Cao stated that the crystals do not have a sharpened point and discussed the grafting process of attaching them to the trees.

Ms. Miyar commented on the beauty of the concept and asked how the trees would react to the grafting and if it had been done before. Mr. Cao explained that a tiny pin would be used to mount each crystal to the outer layer of the tree, which has a very thick layer of bark and should not harm the tree in any way; however, the process has not been done before.

The Panel asked for more detail on the crystal attachment. Mr. Cao further described the process including the pin and a non-toxic adhesive that Swarovski has developed to use on various surfaces. Ms. Tschumy commented that the tree is living and will continue to grow. Mr. Cao stated that as the tree grows, it would grow around the crystal, further solidifying the attachment and becoming part of the tree. Dr. Damian asked how easy it may be to remove the crystals. Mr. Jackson noted that the method of attachment and anchoring details would require further attention and specification.

Dr. Damian asked about the general durability of the work in the harsh weather conditions of the area. Mr. Cao agreed that the work would require regular landscape maintenance with once a year trimming, while the Euphorbia would require no maintenance.

Discussion continued about the non-native origin of the plant species, if the trees would thrive in this environment, or tolerate the crystals. It was noted that while a beautiful concept, the trees seem to reference another place rather than Coral Gables. Mr. Cao responded that the native vs. non-native selection was a deliberate response to experiencing Miracle Mile as a global place representing many cultures.

Mr. Betancourt asked if the proposed artwork would replace current outdoor dining and Ms. Spain responded that it does not interfere with the outdoor dining and would instead replace a small grove of palms.

Mr. Tshumy expressed concern about how to protect the public from the trees and the trees from the public. It was noted that the Euphorbia would help and that the trees would be in a highly visible location. Mr. Kephart added that CCTV cameras will be installed at the site.

Mr. Stuart stated that the idea was conceptually strong, as a "new nature" connection to materiality having a natural, yet unnatural component. He added its fragility as a life form and art form in a public place all need consideration.

Ms. Spain stated that if the Board wants to move forward with this piece, the City's staff horticulturalist and Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden partners could be consulted.

Ms. Miyar thanked Mr. Cao who logged off; the panel continued their discussion.

Ms. McKinley stated that questions about durability and attractive nuisance are well noted. She agreed that technical aspects need to be resolved and has confidence in Cao + Perrot's experience as landscape artists and previous success working with crystals. Ms. McKinley concurred with the sense of whether it's the right aesthetic for the project.

Mr. Mindreau also agreed with the comments and expressed that it feels more like a landscape project. He also questioned the longevity and use of foreign plant material.

### **Blessing Hancock**

Blessing Hancock logged into the meeting and began her presentation.

Ms. Hancock gave a brief overview of her background and working style, noting her installations placed throughout the world and her experience working with international fabricators. She referenced her ongoing work with light and experience engaging the public with interactive experiences.

Ms. Hancock spoke of her response to the old world, Mediterranean Revival style and architecture of the area, leading her to explore ideas that would enhance the ambiance of the site and experience of the area. She shared how her ideas led to focusing on design details of glamour and elegance found in plaster designs, surface textures and patterns, curves, and nature motifs.

Ms. Hancock presented a concept series of sculptures with similar aesthetic motifs tying the district together to create a sense of continuity along Miracle Mile. She remarked that location and material scale could be modified in a number of ways. She presented images of primary, larger, artworks with secondary and smaller related works referencing plaster, iron work, embroidery, clouds, wind, and water, suggesting an extruded form with side panels of painted stainless steel with front and back-lit panels – possibly interactive – that would be illuminated in the evening with animated lighting. During the day, the artworks would appear bright due to surface luminous acrylic. Ms. Hancock mentioned the embroidery motif blending tradition with a modern, contemporary approach of materials and lighting. Ms. Hancock went on to describe the artworks as similar yet different and, in the evening, encouraging interaction.

Ms. Hancock concluded her presentation and the Panel asked questions.

Dr. Damian asked for further clarification of the artworks' color. Ms. Hancock described the sides, the extruded edges, as painted red steel with the front and back faces a luminous white during the day, that in the evening would change colors moving through an entire spectrum, similar to the animated line of embroidery. The sides would be internally lit with LED lights that could be programmed thematically, with touch-points for people to control the color, or with a slow fading spectrum that elegantly moves and changes on its own.

Mr. Stuart asked about the structure itself - if it would be seen as more two or three-dimensional and how it would be placed. Ms. Hancock stated that the current concept calls for the sides to be extruded about 2-3 feet. She stated that the works would be integrated into the surface plane, primarily with below grade foundations.

Mr. Kephart stated that the proposed locations require permitting by FDOT and wanted to make sure Ms. Hancock was aware of the potential challenges to those particular sites.

With no further questions, Ms. Hancock was thanked and logged off from the meeting.

The panel took a brief break for lunch and resumed at 1:25 p.m.

### **Sibylle Pasche**

Sibylle Pasche logged into the meeting, introduced herself and began her presentation noting its integral relationship to the streetscape project elements of clouds and weather. She described her proposal for Miracle Miles as a series of cloud, cloud towers, and hurricane tower sculptures.

Ms. Pasche referenced the constant change of clouds and the patterns of rain water as it pools, capturing this phenomenon and bringing it into solid shape within the artwork. She described her concept as connecting these elements of sky and weather with the pavement, trees and buildings, noting the smooth surfaces and organic shapes of the sculptures. Ms. Pasche added that in addition to the timeless, steady, nature of the work, their physical weight reflects security and the power of nature.

Ms. Pasche further defined the artwork as contemporary boulders, radiating harmony and silence. She proposed five different design elements repeated throughout the area of Miracle Mile, combining singularly or in groupings with dimensions, positioning, and an adaptable number of works that would guide people through the space, keeping the scale of the artworks to human size for closer personal interaction. She continued, describing the work as joyful and poetic, child friendly, inviting pedestrians to pause and take a break.

Ms. Pasche described the material as Carrera white marble from Italy with a crystalline texture and noted that it is strong, resilient, time-less, remains cool during the day, is easy to clean, heavy enough to forego attachment, yet if needed, easy to move with a crane and is her preferred medium. She referenced how sunlight and tree shadows create patterns on the work, while providing a (bright) contrast with the dark pavers.

Concluding her concept overview for Miracle Mile, Ms. Pasche continued with her concept for Giralda Avenue, expressing it as a response to the Streetscape design themes of rain drops, circular motifs, and ocean water, which led her to consider coral patterns. She presented concept sketches of one large scale solitary piece and a grouping of three smaller pieces proposed for installation at the main plaza on the East end of Giralda Avenue. Ms. Pasche stated the artworks as reminiscent of sea organisms: silent, firm, and natural. She discussed details of the sculpture's surface coral and shell patterns, showing how light and shadow moved across them, giving a sense of vibration and breath.

Ms. Pasche concluded her presentation and the Panel continued with questions and discussion.

Dr. Damian asked Ms. Pasche if she was set on the concepts at their proposed locations or if they could be switched. Ms. Pasche responded with her preference to keep the proposed pieces and locations as is.

Ms. Tschumy asked if water would pool in the (sculpted) cups and commented that standing water would encourage mold and mosquitos. Ms. Pasche stated that no parts of the sculpture will retain water or get dirty and that the surface is designed in such a way that water easily falls away.

Mr. Mindreau commented on the scale of the smallest cloud forms and the easy possibility of unintentional engagement. Ms. Pasche assured the Panel that public interaction and safety concerns will be taken into account and that the public will be encouraged to touch and sit on the works.

The panel discussed the flat bases shown on some of the cloud forms, questioning their function and visual aesthetic.

There being no further questions, Ms. Miyar thanked Ms. Pasche who logged off from the meeting.

### **Math Bass**

Ms. Cathers advised that Alan Gutierrez with Michael Jon Gallery would represent and speak on behalf of the next artist, Math Bass. Mr. Gutierrez and Michael Jon logged into the meeting and gave a brief overview of the proposal.

Mr. Gutierrez began by showing recent works by Math Bass as they relate to the proposed work with large scale versions grouped as an interactive space. He described the forms resembling figures in various positions and placed in the location behind the existing fountain on the Southeast corner of LeJeune and Miracle Mile. Mr. Gutierrez described the material as an arrangement of bent, rolled, anodized, one-inch thick aluminum sited on an island, maintained grass or other surface. He noted the works reference the body and architecture of archways prevalent along Miracle Mile with visitors having an experience of moving their own body through the arrangement.

Mr. Gutierrez concluded the presentation and the panel continued with questions.

Mr. Mindreau asked about the weight of the artworks. Mr. Gutierrez stated that the hollow aluminum would be hundreds of pounds and secured with footings to a below-grade base.

With no further questions, Ms. Miyar thanked Mr. Gutierrez and Mr. Jon for the presentation and they logged off from the meeting.

The panel continued their discussion expressing that the proposal did not meet a standard of uniqueness and quality appropriate for the project.

After reviewing all concepts, the Panel agreed that substantive iconic artwork, rather than a series, would best support Miracle Mile as a destination location.

Ms. Cathers stated that the next step for the panel is to recommend one artist, or more, to proceed and work with. Staff would invite the artist(s) to prepare a full proposal including a budget. After the panel has reviewed the next phase proposal(s) and made their recommendation, proposals would be available for public feedback to pass on to the artist(s).

Discussion continued with a Panel consensus that Cao + Perrot and Sibylle Pasche are most capable of creating artwork for the project that is compelling, extraordinary, and most connected with Coral Gables.

Further discussion concluded with the following motion:

**Mr. Stuart made a motion to ask Andy Cao and his team to work on (propose) a monumental piece at one of the major intersections on Miracle Mile and invite Sibylle Pasche to further develop her "Coral History" concept for Giralda Avenue. Dr. Damian seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Mr. Bressi and Ms. McKinley congratulated the panel on their decision, noting their clarity and that it will be exciting to see what the artists present next.

ADDITIONAL PANEL BUSINESS:

There was no additional Panel business.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY:

There were no items from the secretary.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dona M. Spain  
Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Director