

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting  
Agenda Item H-1  
March 26, 2019  
City Commission Chambers  
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli  
Vice Mayor Vince Lago  
Commissioner Pat Keon  
Commissioner Michael Mena  
Commissioner Frank Quesada**

**City Staff**

**City Manager, Peter Iglesias  
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos  
City Clerk, Billy Urquia  
Arts and Cultural Specialist, Catherine Cathers**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Jessy Nite, Artist**

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Agenda Item H-1[12:38:12 p.m.]

A Resolution approving an artist concept for a temporary public artwork installed at Giralda Plaza for the summer months of 2019. (Unanimously recommended by the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 4-0).

Preservation Officer Spain: I'm going to let Catherine Cathers, I'm going to turn this over to Catherine Cathers, our Arts and Cultural Specialist and she has a PowerPoint; and this is the artist Jessica.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Good job.

Artist: Thanks for having me.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Catherine go ahead.

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Ms. Cathers: Thank you Mayor, Commissioners. As you know, this is responding to the City Commission's desire to have activations on Giralda Plaza and this is our first artist designed one and so we have just a brief PowerPoint. So, this is Giralda without anything on Giralda Sky. So, the process that we followed was, we released a call for art on February 15<sup>th</sup> in the interest of getting something up in time for the summer. We moved this process fairly quickly. We had a deadline on March 15<sup>th</sup> of which we had 36 responsive proposals all the qualified artist. The Arts Advisory Panel reviewed all proposals. They made a recommendation to our Cultural Development Board, who reviewed all the proposals and accepted the recommendation of the Arts Advisory Panel. Today the Cultural Development Board is recommending approval of the proposal, "Sun Stories" by artist Jessy Nite, who is with us here today. So, a little bit about Jessy Nite. She is a Miami-based artist, she is a multi-disciplinary artist, who has experience in design and production of outdoor and site-specific public art installation since 2012. She is known for interactive work that are conceptual and carry a playful, deeply rooted narrative. She has exhibited internationally, most notably London, Zurich, Vienna and Bangkok. Her previous works commissioned by both public art organizations, as well as private entities, including Facebook and Nike. So here are just some examples of her previous work and you are welcome to chime in if you want.

Jessy Nite: I know everybody is going to lunch, but I'll give you a quick background. So, these are probably my most popular outdoor works. They are letters mounted perpendicularly into the wall and they react to the sun, so every single day of the year, every moment of the day its completely different. You can keep moving through if you want. The text is always related to the location. Speaks a lot about the community, about the people, it plays a lot with pop culture. This was actually for Nike. I've done a few permanent installations across Miami and cities in the U.S., internationally, as well as some large brand. This is actually a piece made of living moss. So, all my work is very femoral quality to it, and this is in Brickell city center. I just finished this for the Facebook headquarters. This is made out of metal. It's a large sculpture installation.

Ms. Cathers: So we are going to talk a little bit about the proposal that's going to be happening, "Sun Stories." This is the artist rendering that she submitted to us and a little bit about what she had let us know on the proposal. The materials are UV resistant plexiglass and as the sun passes through the shadows of the colored letters will be magnified and stretched and will be moving throughout the day. By shining through the suspended letters, the sun becomes a narrator to tell the story, nostalgia, humor, aspirations related to Coral Gables and it is the first long-form text execution from her popular Sun installations, which you've seen in the examples, and that have also been installed and exhibited nationally and internationally. The intention is to reflect the people of Coral Gables and Coral Gables is our community and incorporate different languages. I'll hand it over to you since you are here to talk a little bit more.

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Jessy Nite: Yes. I don't know if you want to go back to the rendering. So it's the same concept as installations that I've done before, this time its just above the walkway. Actually, gone forward to pitch this a few times, but this proposal is perfect for this project because the trusses are already being built. So, I think this could be really cool. I could do one long text or have a running list of things that are very much about like Miami, tropical life. I think it might be fun to do short phrases so we could do different languages to really represent the population of our community.

Vice Mayor Quesada: What's its going to say exactly?

Jessy Nite: So, I don't have – because I just got the news yesterday that the proposal was accepted, so over the next few days I'll send something in. But most of my works you saw, “High Hopes,” “Made In The Shade,” things that are just fun and can speak to people in all different levels. This isn't for a discerning art crowd. Its for the public, so we really want everything to be things that you can – look at some of the phrases are familiar, but just have a playful tone and they are really supposed to kind of enhance this idea of the sun being the narrator that kind of unites us and is the narrator of the story of Miami.

Commissioner Lago: I think its important.

Ms. Cathers: We've also asked Jessy to appear before the Arts Advisory.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Lago: The last thing I want to see is something politically charged.

Jessy Nite: Absolutely not. I have my own feelings about political things, and all of my work is very much about the community and making it very happy.

Commissioner Lago: I have two quick questions. What happens at night when there is no sunshine through it, how are we going to ensure that the projection will continue through and hit the floor?

Ms. Cathers: So there is ambient light, as you know, on Giralda Plaza that we imagine will have a similar effect as with the umbrellas, so there was light that was shining through at that time and we can certainly look at enhancing and maybe doing a test ahead of time to see if we need to add anything.

Commissioner Lago: And the second point was, this being an installation, you see for example...drawings that are put up and put down in museums and in private collections. Who owns this work once the 3, 6, months, 9 months, or whatever its going to be up?

Ms. Cathers: This is a temporary exhibition, so the artist will retain the work.

Commissioner Lago: Something that we should consider, we should consider as, again maybe this is a work that if it is a hit, I think it will be, maybe the City should consider speaking with the artist and saying, obviously not have it permanent, but for example with Hank Willis Thomas, we purchase that signage that we could put up maybe every three years as an accent during whatever month.

Jessy Nite: I'm absolutely open to that and Giralda is really, really long – I'm sorry?

Commissioner Lago: I just compared you to...

[Laughter]

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Do I hear a motion?

Jessy Nite: I was going to say, it's a really long space. It can also be repurposed to other areas of the neighborhood afterwards. We plan on using the acrylic glass so everything should be weather resistant. We haven't had any problems throughout the hurricanes.

Commissioner Mena: I think just looking at the other images you put up, single phrases you know, there is an opportunity there if we owned it and do different things with it.

Ms. Cathers: We also, just want to let you know that we are also partnering, collaborating with the Economic Sustainability Department and also looking forward to continuing that collaboration with the Community Foundation.

Commissioner Lago: By the way, I looked at some of the artists that applied, there are some world class artists that applied.

Ms. Cathers: We are very happy with the results.

Commissioner Lago: From all generations, people who have been significant artists that have had major museum shows. I was actually impressed that we are drawing that much attention. That shows that what we are doing here in the City is really making some good ripple.

Jessy Nite: The investment in the trust was a really good investment as artist. It provides a huge amount of infrastructure for a project that you wouldn't normally have to – you'd have to put so much budget into just the infrastructure, so having that built is really a game-changer, at least for me applying to it.

Commissioner Lago: You've got to give credit to Peter on that.

Jessy Nite: Good job. Thank you.

Commissioner Mena: Fantastic.

Jessy Nite: I'm really excited about it; very, very excited.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: When will it be up?

Ms. Cathers: We are looking at June for a June installation date for three months.

Commissioner Lago: Perfect.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright Commissioner Lago.

Commissioner Lago: So moved.

Commissioner Mena: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll please.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 4-0)

Commissioner Keon: Absent

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[End: 12:46:36 p.m.]

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