

Belmont Art Association Meeting: June 20, 2019

Location: Benton Library

Members Present: Paul Beckingham (Webmaster), Julliette Carignan, Naomi Ellenberg-Dukas (Co-Chair), Susan Kottler, Dari Paquette (Co-Chair), Ron Rothenberg, Derrick Te Paske, Fleur Thesmar, Jane Wentzell (Recording Secretary).

Business Meeting

Co-Chair Dari Paquette brought the meeting to order at the Belmont Gallery of Art.

1. **Empty Storefronts:** We revisited an issue from our previous meeting: There was an article in the Business Section of the *Boston Globe* on Tuesday March 19, 2019 by Max Reyes about the negative effect of empty storefront windows, nationwide, creating a bad business climate for nearby businesses. Dari posted the link on our Facebook page, or you can access it here: (<https://www.bostonglobe.com/business/2019/03/18/storefronts-from-empty-artistic/1888gYQ0ahvy36zHmpZu0H/story.html>) Landlords and property managers in multiple local and national municipalities have realized the benefits of creating interest in the windows of properties temporarily empty during tenant turnaround times. This helps maintain traffic to the surrounding businesses. Cambridge, Arlington, and Boston are inviting artists to display their art in available windows by incentivizing landlords. Arlington has passed a bylaw introducing a fee to owners of vacant stores which is waived if they agree to display art in empty store windows. Cambridge is very active with similar projects, including turning unused shops into galleries and shared studio spaces for artists. Other local and national municipal locations have also adopted a vacancy fee and are using empty retail space to display art. Why can this not be considered for Belmont? Currently there are several empty storefronts in Belmont Center in the Locatelli Properties. Naomi proposed that someone in our group find out how Arlington got their bylaw passed. Ron Rothenberg, a well-connected art enthusiast, told us that the Arlington Center for the Arts has a very large membership and that there was a grassroots effort to get the bylaw. He offered to get more information for us.

2. **BAA Show Planning:** In August the BAA Show Planning Committee will reconvene to create a list of tasks and timeline for preparation of our upcoming show at the Belmont Gallery of Art in January and February of 2020. Our show will be called: *2020 Vision: New Work for a New Decade*. Helen Canetta and Naomi will join Dari, Paul, and Susan on this committee. The BAA is actively looking for members to give a talk during this show to draw people to see the exhibit. Anyone with ideas should contact Dari or Naomi. Rebecca Richards and Adine Storer are going to help look for a sponsor for the opening reception, which they say costs around \$600. This is an opportunity for a local patron to have a presence on opening night. Our guest juror for this show will be Gillian Ross of Gallery Twist in Lexington. She will be joined by a BAA juror and a BGA juror.

In November, the Call for Entries will be emailed to all the artists on our membership list as well as past or potential members. The BGA will also send out the Call for Entries. Entries will be due in early December. The show will be open to current members in good standing with an entry fee of \$10 per piece. Members will be able to submit up to three pieces, and space considerations will obviously be a factor. Submitting artists must have paid their dues for 2019 in order to enter the show, and for work to hang, the dues for 2020 must also be paid since our fiscal year begins in January. **Annual dues of \$35 are payable in January of each calendar year!**

3. **Member Publicity and Other Business:** BAA membership entitles one to a page on the BAA website, including an artist's statement, biography, head shot, and art image(s). People with show or event announcements can send them to Dari for posting on the BAA Facebook page, to Naomi for inclusion in the newsletter, and to Paul for posting on the website. Images need to be .jpg files.

We discussed the BAA's goals of building up our membership community and making it stronger and more cohesive, in order to promote more opportunities to show our work. Ron Rothenberg suggested using Meetup.com to let a wider selection of people know when and where our next meeting will be. It was pointed out that this is not a free service, but something to consider down the road.

Our next meeting will be a social event at Dari's house in September to kick off the fall season. No meetings are planned for July and August because many people are on vacation, and we all need a break!

Recording Secretary: Jane Wentzell, 617- 489 - 0412

Edited by Dari Paquette and reviewed by Naomi Ellenberg-Dukas