

Artist Forum - Round 1 | Overview & Chart Notes

Monday, October 20th | 6:00pm - 9:00pm | BMHQ - Zocalo

Facilitated by: Sarah Fisk, Harley K. Dubois, Crimson Rose, BettieJune Scarborough, Tomas McCabe, Heather White

Present (46): Charlie Dolman, Josh Lease, Eli Peterson, Peter Hudson, Capra J'neva, P. Kimelman, Eva Konig, Chad lent, Daniel Macchiarini, Warrick Macmillan, Matt Melnicki, David Mustelier, Joseph Olivier, Carlyn Perona, Christina Pettigrew, Jon Sarriugarte, Christopher Schardt, Kristian Akseth, Melissa Barron, Ruby Bettencourt, Karen Cusolito, Erick Dunn, Michael Emery, Gwen Fisher, Dan Fox, Orion Fredericks, Mike Herrin, Casey Ho, Jessica Hobbs, Maggie Roth, Bryan Tedrick, Lightning Clearwater, Paul Belger, David Shulman, Kyrsten Mate, John Beamens, Cathryn Blum (Catbird), Ross Asselstine, Tammy Lee, Michael Christian

Attended via Fuze (19): Chassy Cleland (and other Seattle guests), Cheryl B, Darrell, Emma, Eric Zann, Fred Stern, Gary Gunderson, Gary Long, Hibbard Engler, Jan DeLano, Jessica Levine, Joe Bob Merrit, Julie Whitelaw, Kay Morrison, Matthew Schultz, Pricilla Nocuyay, Rail, Tabasco Mills, Wrangler

MISSION

The mission of the arts program of Burning Man Project is to change the paradigm of art from a commodified object to an interactive, participatory, shared experience of creative expression.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Take responsibility for your own outcomes
- Listen for understanding
- Speak from your own perspective
- Be present (mindful of devices/interruptions)
- Advance notice of recordings

GOALS

1. Inform artists what Burning Man Arts Program strategy is
2. Listen to artists about what they want Burning Man Arts to be
3. Investigate key areas of improvement and development
4. Develop a spirit of partnership with artists to co-create our future

CURRENT BMA PROJECTS

- New grant contracts
- Improving the grant process - including a Letter of Intent (LOI) for BRC Art
- Considering partnerships

OVERARCHING QUESTIONS FOR CONVERSATIONS

- What would you keep in place?
- What would you change?
- What do you need?
- What would make you happy?

- What do you want to contribute? Or how do you want to participate?

CLOSING PROCESS

- Sarah brings people together
 - Heather describes current projects, Q&A w/ Harley delegating to the right person to answer
 - Closing: What matters to you about this? (part of BM community etc.)
 - Crimson's closing
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BREAKOUT GROUPS

SMALL GROUP PROCESS

- 5 topic stations
- Give everyone big post-its and markers to write with and have them roam around writing their comments under the topics (okay to add a check mark next to a post-it already written if you agree with it)
 - Time allotted: 30 minutes
- Pick one topic to have a more formal discussion and look for “key issues” and “little gems” e.g. brilliant ideas
 - Time allotted: 20 minutes
- Jigsaw debrief
 - Time allotted: 20 minutes

TOPICS

1. Grants
2. Services
 - Business
 - Consulting
 - Heavy Equipment
 - Food on playa
3. Civic/Community Engagement & Change
4. Opportunities
 - Local
 - National
 - Global
 - Intergalactic
5. Other

TOPIC GROUP POST IT NOTES

- See link for Artist Forum – 10.20.14 – Breakout Group Notes

TOPIC GROUP MEETING NOTES (IPAD NOTES)

1. Grants

Summary: Make art-making on the playa more sustainable by ACCELERATING the grant cycle, particularly the theme, offering multi-year grants for larger projects, BROADENING what is covered by grants to include things beyond materials and transportation, including STIPENDS, and MATCHMAKING with non Burning Man org funders.

- Make the process more TRANSPARENT by providing information and feedback up front and throughout the process:
 - contracts
 - information about tickets & early arrivals
 - grant writing workshops & mentoring
 - mid-process feedback
 - artist participation in selection committee in off-years
- Below is the list of things we covered:
 - Know the THEME sooner
 - Multi-Year/Multi-Location grants
 - Multi-Tier grants - Monumental 50-100 people to build: 1-2 year grant, R&D grant; prototype, have a job & life; Mid-Level; Small 1-2 person
 - Sustainable Process - start process earlier in the year, time to do the artwork while living lives
 - STIPENDS - don't make the grants exclusively for materials and transportation; cover stipends (even if small, make us feel good), cover studio costs, insurance, etc. Rent grant if you run out of money. Housing for poor artists. Theatre Artaud
 - Have a giant warehouse where we store, make it, live
 - Make online grant form user-friendly or drop it. Be able to see progress, saving, large enough text in fields. Integrate tutorials into online grants.
 - Know you'll have enough tickets to cover large support teams.
 - Midway check-ins.
 - Sponsorship or Matchmaking process/support - are there other opportunities to matchmake people coming to playa with projects needing outside of grant support; great tie-in with 501.c.3 sponsorship
 - Have a copy of the CONTRACT at the beginning of the process - inform first-time artists what they are signing up for. Remove uncertainty.
 - Grant writing help & workshops.
 - Artist participation in curation/grant selection committees (can't apply to make art if you are on the committee)
 - Greater percentage of actual budget covered
 - Temple budget covered 100% from proposal. If they go over, cost covered by artists. No one works as hard as temple crew or has more complaints about going into debt making art. The budget should be equivalent to the man. Man crew gets paid. At least stipend temple artists. Some people strongly disagree with this (David Best and other well-fundraised artists).

- Micro-grants for smaller-scale projects/crazy ideas
- Larger budgets for projects with a life beyond playa envisioned (i.e., permanent installations elsewhere)
- Out of the box for future:
 - Lottery for first time 5 small projects selected at random

2. Services

- COMMISSARY
 - Food delivery or a separate food service with existing commissary vendors
 - Artists pool funds?? to create commissary or burning man helps facilitate
 - What chefs from plug n play camps can be coordinated to:
 - volunteers set up second kitchen with support of vendors
 - take food prep off artists place
 - Wheels on meals beefed up “commissary that provides onsite food and food-to-go”
 - Art support camps
 - Artist access to wifi somewhere...maybe in commissary
 - All the big art projects are creating individual kitchens
 - coordinate kitchen masters for the big art projects to design a new kitchen service based on artist needs
- INSURANCE
 - Propose the contract states you have to have insurance
 - Why doesn't BM insure artists or extend policy to artists
 - Most artists can't afford insurance
 - Can BM beef up insurance policy to cover art projects?
 - As a group with buying power an introduction to an underwriter
 - Who decides how to filter out “nitwits”
 - Artists don't want artists that are going to jeopardize the liability
 - The artist policy got cancelled at Heffernan because of lack of interest
 - Pooling artists resources to approach underwriters through a forum of insurers
 - Telling artists they're not covered by Burning Man insurance - BM should help protect the project and community with helping hands
 - ****Injuries occurring on art needs to be informed to the artists leading the project immediately!!!! conflicts with personal privacy laws, and a long delay in the chain of reporting - refer to safety officer****
- FUEL
 - <No notes, but this was a bullet>
- PORTAPOTTIES
 - Porta potty on job sites
 - Open porta potties in deep playa
 - Placed near art
- WATER

- Need dedicated water truck to make specific deliveries for art projects and theme camps
- Dreadful to go without water
- HEAT
 - Artists told to be at a location and waiting several hours and never getting the service
 - Using app for phone like voxer to act as walkie talkie for artists to talk to ass
 - Art support want to do a beta test of this with artists off-playa. Have a group
 - Beta test day to test the process with 100 projects
 - Honorarium or project assigned to project manager from BM
 - More staffing needed to make that
- GATE
 - Need separate line for artists and staff to enter the event
 - Point 1 access for artists and staff
- COMMUNITY RESOURCES
 - Mentoring program
 - Mentoring from senior artists to newer artists or artists requesting mentoring
 - Artery open 24/7 during event setup
 - Artery provides dedicated project managers for a group of projects
- CARS ON PLAYA
 - ****Carpooling gets quicker access through the line!!!!****

3. Civic/Community Engagement & Change

- Instruction wiki and resources for organization creation, art creation, art outreach, art placement in the public arena
- Legal support , what's important to know about putting your art out there
- Non-Facebook website, there are lots of people who are not on Facebook (*snaps)

4. Opportunities

- No notes available - Ash reached out to the list twice, but received no responses from this group

5. Other

- Having artist on the selection team
- Having artist involved with placement
- Start earlier. Give artist more time on all aspects
- Let artist know about promised tickets earlier
- Balance in the liability with lawsuits between bm and artist
- Artist want attribution when photos are used
- When an artist copyright is stolen bm follows through with a cease and desist
- Art cars need to follow rules wrt sound

- Offer help with recruiting art guardians
 - Support more novel sound art
 - Should there be another grant category for things that are non conventional
 - Help shy artist that need support
 - Index list for past projects
 - Provide proposed contract at beginning of process
 - Extend some liability protections to artist
 - Contracts that better serve artist
 - Have less adversarial first impulse in dealings
 - Mentoring. Past artist helping new artist
 - Mirrored clause for legal fees
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CLOSING

SUGGESTIONS - p1

- Have a dedicated spot on the website where we can continue these “deep dive” conversations
- For the next meeting, consolidate the “obvious” comments - the ones stated frequently, and list them for the groups ahead of time
- Have people use voice recognition on their phones to capture notes if they prefer that to iPads and taking notes.

SUGGESTIONS - p2

- Publicize timeline ASAP & LOI process for all artists
- Short explicit email to as many artists as possible
- Theme should coincide with the LOI process
- There should be a place for new artists to go for info
- Provide greater context regarding transition in the beginning of this forum process (ah-ha moment happened towards the end v. the start)

SUGGESTIONS - p3

- Good to hear artists share many of the same concerns
- Prefer first breakout group to report out to everyone (whole group) v. their individual groups
- Org chart and acronym breakdown would help
- More communication in the future with smaller groups of artists
- Great to see diverse opposing opinions on same topic
- Next session should focus on what works - “what you want to keep in place”
- Use topic areas to cluster places for feedback groups online
- Sessions like this could occur regularly/frequently
- Sessions to include theme camps?

WHAT MATTERS

- I feel like I have 50,000 friends
- My first project - It would have been nice to have this before (annually?)
- Grateful that BM opened my mind to possibilities
- Been part of BM community for 20 years. Still proud to be included in this group
- Appreciates the orgs reaching out to artists to include them, it's refreshing (even if it's remote)
- Opportunity to make art on playa v. real world is greatest thing ever
- Thank you for helping creative people make crazy art!
- Person to person connection is very helpful & motivational (on & off playa)
- Art has become a spiritual bond