



**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

*Economic Development Division*

**m e m o r a n d u m**

**TO:** Urbana Public Arts Commission  
**FROM:** Anna Hochhalter, Public Arts Coordinator  
**DATE:** March 4, 2010  
**SUBJECT:** **Arts Lecture Series Update**

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## **Background**

The Arts Lecture Series is a program described in the Public Arts Program Plan for FY 09-10, and approved on May 26, 2009 by the Urbana City Council. The program as described in the current fiscal year Program Plan is as follows:

### **Arts Lecture Series**

The Arts Lecture Series of the Urbana Public Arts Program will provide an opportunity for artists and “non-artists” to engage in dialogue with professionals in the arts related to the cultural vibrancy of Urbana. Panel discussions will be offered to the public at the Urbana Civic Center and will address a variety of areas in the arts and the role the arts play in people’s lives. Four lectures are planned for FY 09-10. This program offers an opportunity to partner with other organizations.

**Timeline:** Dates for the lectures will be considered in the months of October 2009, and January, March, and June 2010.

**Estimated Expenditures in FY 09-10:** \$4,000. The Panel speakers will receive a stipend for their service. An additional \$2,000 donation will be sought from external sources to enable additional lectures.

### **Goals Addressed:**

- Expand the City’s creative community
- Preserve and commemorate local and multicultural traditions and histories
- Create a program that represents our community in all its diversity
- Provide opportunities for local and national, established and emerging artists in Champaign County
- Support life-long learning in the arts
- Create conditions for equity and participation in programs of artistic excellence that are accessible, affordable, and diverse
- Promote inquiry and confluence amongst Urbana residents
- Encourage relationships among artists and the public to further Urbana’s cultural

development

- Address Public Arts Program suggestions from the public including increasing art venues and events

## **Discussion**

The Commission and Staff not yet been able to coordinate the lecture series described above. However, staff has been working with Commission member Sarah Ross on coordinating a lecture and dialogue addressing the timely topic of Art, the Economy, and Work. Additional information is below.

*ART WORK: A National Conversation About Art, Labor, and Economics* is a project of Urbana-based internationally exhibited artist Brett Bloom. Staff has been in discussion with Mr. Bloom regarding the possibility of hosting a conversation and lecture in Urbana through the Urbana Public Arts Program Arts Lecture Series. The project is being planned to take place on Saturday May 1<sup>st</sup>, the location is yet to be determined. The subcommittee has proposed to allocate \$600 to support the coordination of this event, including artist stipends to bring speakers from other areas of the U.S. to speak. Additionally, speakers living in Urbana who have done research on the intersections of the arts and economics will be invited. The event will be open to the public and is intended to engage the community in critical dialogue.

Because \$4,000 was allocated to support the Arts Lecture Series, and because the project as it was originally conceived has not yet been completed within the proposed timeline, the Commission should consider how to best utilize the remaining \$3,400. The Commission could consider reallocating these funds to other existing Public Arts Programs, or propose to use it in the next fiscal year as a programming budget for programs proposed in the Annual Public Arts Program Plan for FY 10-11.

## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Commission review the Arts Lecture Series Program changes described above and be prepared with suggestions on the use of the remaining funding.