



## Board Report

**File #:** 2020-0629, **File Type:** Informational Report

**Agenda Number:** 39.

### EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OCTOBER 15, 2020

**SUBJECT: REPORT ON MOTION TO “UPLIFT THE HUMAN SPIRIT THROUGH METRO ART”  
AMENDMENT**  
**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE a report and approach to “Uplift the Human Spirit Through Metro Art” in response to the 2020 Board motions (Attachment A).

#### **ISSUE**

At their June and August 2020 meetings, the Board directed staff to think about how artists might be included in the Reimagining of transportation, and to report back on the following: a) a specific set-aside percentage of interior space on both rail and busses to accommodate the placement of Metro Art posters, with preference for local artists; and b) include \$400,000 in the FY21 Budget to accomplish Uplift the Human Spirit Through Metro Art goals and initiatives and to work cross-departmentally to identify internal and external funding opportunities to support the projects. This report provides the requested response and policy directive updates.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Los Angeles County is recognized as one of the world’s most important creative capitals and is home to an incredible range of remarkably talented artists. Metro has been at the forefront of interweaving art and transit and transforming quotidian commutes into pleasurable journeys. Ad-hoc temporary programs have been particularly effective ways to commission local artists to create works that are relevant and responsive and which help celebrate and champion the creative vibrancy of our region.

Metro Art posters by local artists have been installed onboard buses and trains since 2003 as resources have been available. The Metro Art poster program has received over twenty-three awards and fifty-eight local artists have been commissioned to date. Over half the artists commissioned are women and over half are artists of color. Meet the Artist events are well attended and the posters have been featured in local newspapers and are often proudly hung in the offices of elected officials locally as well as in Sacramento and Washington DC. The program recently celebrated it’s fifteenth anniversary in an award winning publication designed and produced in-house by our Marketing department (Attachment B).

---

Recognizing the arts as a way to bring people together in ways that are inspiring, welcoming, and add humanity to our public spaces as well as the significant role the arts sector plays in our regional economy, the Board has directed that \$400,000 be allocated to commission local artists in ways that Uplift the Human Spirit Through Metro Art, go beyond infrastructure, strategically balance Metro safety and recovery messaging, and mitigate anxieties.

Similar initiatives have been launched locally including City of Santa Monica which has allocated \$500,000 to new arts programming “in the spirit of the New Deal Works Progress Administration (WPA) Federal Art Project”, the City of LA which has allocated \$340,000 “to help keep working artists and performers afloat and support the creation of new public art for the city”, and recent LA County initiatives to “ensure the resilience of the arts sector and contribute substantially to the County’s overall recovery”.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Board motion asks Metro to consider ways in which the arts might play a role that goes beyond transit infrastructure and to accommodate the placement of Metro Art posters onboard buses and trains, with a preference for local artists. The majority of onboard advertising space is reserved (90 percent) for revenue generation and the onboard advertising space available to Metro (10 percent) is very limited (and is primarily used for critical messaging to support programs like LIFE, ridership, COVID-19, Bikeshare, public safety, TAP and other priority programs). Metro continues to be committed to including art posters in the system as we have in the past. In support of the motion to Uplift the Human Spirit Through Metro Art, staff will double the number of local artists commissioned each year for the poster program and is committed to placing their work in the Metro bus and rail system as space is available.

To be responsive to the issues and concerns of our time, and to address the Board motion, Metro Art staff has launched the series of initiatives identified in the motion. The first initiative commissions local artists to create original, culturally relevant artworks that visualize and encourage expressions of connection and care that have emerged as silver linings during this time. The posters will begin appearing onboard buses in December. With the additional funding allocation authorized by the Board, Metro Art will also commission a broader range of local artists, including musicians, dancers and digital to creatively explore annual agency priorities (e.g. Climate Change, Equity, Reimagination). Artworks will be promoted and staff will make website improvements to ensure the works are made more widely accessible online, and an imaginative curated cultural programming series of podcasts, playlists and live performances will surprise, delight and inspire in alignment with the Customer Experience Plan.

Funding for Metro Art has been tied primarily to the capital program wherein a small percentage of transit construction costs is allocated to the integration of art into transit capital projects (Attachment C) and temporary programs have been done on an ad-hoc basis. The motion establishes the first Board-directed funding for arts programming dedicated to bus and rail riders that goes beyond infrastructure, which will provide greater access to arts and culture to our diverse ridership as well as the opportunity to be more immediately responsive to Los Angeles’ vast and continually varied cultural landscape.

Metro Arts and Design staff recently successfully secured \$20,000 of external funding through a grant

---

awarded by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity. While these funds cannot be used for temporary arts programs, they will be used to support the June Board motion to include artists in the Reimagining of Transportation through a pilot cultural asset mapping and artist-led community engagement process for projects for two current mobility corridor planning phase projects.

Metro Arts and Design staff has included the Board approved guiding principles and policy directives to uplift the customer experience and expand the role of the arts beyond transportation infrastructure into the program policy as directed (Attachment D) and is partnering with other agency departments to pursue ways of incorporating arts and culture into existing and new agency plans and initiatives such as the Customer Experience Plan, NextGen, BRT Vision & Principles Study, Long Range Transportation Plan, Equity Framework and the Recovery Task Force response to Reimagining transportation.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is no net impact to the FY21 Budget. Due to the financial crisis, staff is reprioritizing available resources and working cross-departmentally to identify internal and external funding opportunities to support the Board directives. In future fiscal years, when the financial outlook improves, staff will allocate resources for this program as dedicated funding.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

The information in this Report supports Metro's strategic goals of delivering outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system (goal #2) and enhancing communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity (goal #3). This work aligns with Metro's Equity Platform, specifically Pillar Two: Listen and Learn, and Pillar Three: Focus and Deliver. Arts-based strategies will be utilized to improve relationships, partnerships and actions to advance more equitable transportation outcomes. Community-driven conversations will be used to develop best practices, inform strategic community-focused partnerships, and build capacity to better address the needs of historically underserved communities.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Staff will pursue the work as described above and will return to the Board in April with a report detailing pilot projects launched in response to the Board motion.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - August and June 2020 Board Directives

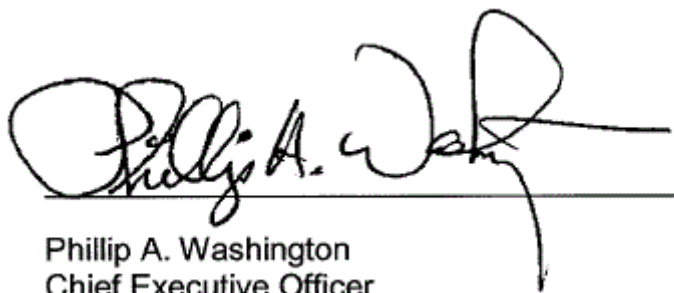
Attachment B - Through the Eyes of Artists Poster Program Fifteenth Anniversary Book

Attachment C - Transit Agency Percent for Art Programs

Attachment D - Metro Art Program Policy Update

Prepared by: Maya Emsden, Deputy Executive Officer, (213) 922-2720

Reviewed by: Yvette Rapose, Chief Communications Officer, (213) 418-3154



---

Phillip A. Washington  
Chief Executive Officer



## Metro

## Board Report

---

**File #:** 2020-0427, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response

**Agenda Number:** 36.

---

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
JUNE 18, 2020**

**Motion by:**

**DIRECTORS BUTTS, SOLIS, GARCETTI, AND HAHN**

**Uplifting The Human Spirit Through Metro Art**

On Saturday June 6th the L. A. Times published in its Saturday Section (F) 14 different artworks from different artists under the title “California Artists Express the Pain of Injustice.”

I’ve been periodically reminded by my staff that Metro has a long history in the forefront as a leader in integrating public art into transit construction projects. Our Metro Rail stations are famous for their artworks. We even have people taking tours of the station artworks.

As I mentioned in my State of the Agency remarks, we are currently faced with two concurrent tragedies and the artwork published in the Times spoke to the moment of the outpouring of grief and anger across our county and nation.

Mayor Garcetti spoke of re-imagining LA County transportation and I would propose that we consider ways in which the arts might play a role in that transformation that goes beyond transit infrastructure.

The Arts are a powerful means of bringing people together across borders of all kinds. Much of the inspiring news coverage/media attention at present is often about how the artists are expressing and conveying the longstanding pain of injustice.

As we are undertaking strategies to encourage people to return and use public transportation wisely and more often, I would like to see us explore ways to formally incorporate arts programming into areas beyond construction. As people ride busses and trains in this troublesome era, we should balance Metro safety messaging with welcoming creative artworks that mitigate anxieties and add a touch of humanity. Let us use this tragedy to help uplift the human spirit through art.

**SUBJECT: UPLIFTING THE HUMAN SPIRIT THROUGH METRO ART**

**RECOMMENDATION**

APPROVE Motion by Directors Butts, Solis, Garcetti, and Hahn that the Board direct the CEO to return in the August Board cycle with a Report back on how Metro can:

- Integrate Metro Art programs into our trains, busses;
- Champion artistic experimentation including provocative works that are responsive to the issues and concerns of our time; and
- Think about how artists might be included in the Reimagining of transportation



Metro

Los Angeles County  
Metropolitan Transportation  
Authority  
One Gateway Plaza  
3rd Floor Board Room  
Los Angeles, CA

## Board Report

**File #:** 2020-0566, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response

**Agenda Number:** 45.1.

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
AUGUST 20, 2020  
REVISED**

**Amending Motion by:**

**DIRECTORS BUTTS, GARCETTI, AND GARCIA**

Related to Item 45: Report on Motion to "Uplift the Human Spirit Through Metro Art"

Metro staff has returned to the Board with an excellent response to the above Motion in so far as identifying immediate initiatives that can be implemented in the next six months including:

1. Champion artistic expression of local visual artists through posters within Metro's allocation of advertising spaces, including on buses and trains, when/where space is available
2. Partner with community based cultural organizations to interpret and document this pivotal moment
3. Curate cultural programming to foster connections with the public, and
4. Commission local artists to creatively convey 'new manners', safety messaging and mobility.

While the report is very good as far as it goes, the Item before us is presented for information only with no financial funding being recommended.

We cannot accomplish the initiatives described above and create an inclusionary synergy with Metro's Customer Experience "Surprise and Delight" program, including such aspects as Performance Art, without providing funding.

**SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO REPORT ON MOTION TO "UPLIFT THE HUMAN SPIRIT THROUGH METRO ART"**

**RECOMMENDATION**

APPROVE Amending Motion by Directors Butts, Garcetti, and Garcia that the Board direct the CEO to initiate the following policy directives:

1. Instruct staff to return to this Board in September with a specific set-aside percentage of interior space on both rail and busses to accommodate the placement of Metro Art posters, with preference for local artists, as we have done in the past; and
2. Include in the FY 21 Budget \$400,000 dollars to accomplish the goals outlined above. Staff will reprioritize available resources and work cross-departmentally to identify internal and external funding opportunities to support the projects.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - RBM Item 45.1 (Before Revision)



Attachment B

[https://media.metro.net/art/images/through\\_the\\_eyes\\_book\\_web.pdf](https://media.metro.net/art/images/through_the_eyes_book_web.pdf)



## Examples of Transit Agency % for Art Allocations

|                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Sacramento                      | 2.0%        |
| San Francisco                   | 2.0%        |
| Santa Clara                     | 2.0%        |
| Miami-Dade                      | 1.5%        |
| Portland                        | 1.5%        |
| Atlanta                         | 1.0%        |
| New York City                   | 1.0%        |
| Seattle                         | 1.0%        |
| <b>Los Angeles County Metro</b> | <b>0.5%</b> |

FTA Circular 9400.1A recommends that transportation projects allocate “a minimum one-half of 1% of construction costs, but should not exceed 5% of construction costs”.

*Los Angeles County is recognized as one of the world's most important creative capitals and is home to an incredible range of remarkably talented artists. Since the early 1980's, Metro has been at the national forefront of interweaving art and transit and transforming quotidian commutes into pleasurable journeys. The revisions below include recent Board directives and Guiding Principles.*

### **Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority Metro Art Program Policy**

Metro Art is L.A. County's cultural connector providing increased and equitable access to arts and culture for Metro's diverse ridership through programs that add vibrancy, identity and a sense of place. Known for a broad range of artists who have been commissioned, Metro Art programs are also recognized for their innovative and impactful community engagement. Alongside a unique volunteer docent-guided tour program, Board-approved programs include percent-for-art, phased art asset management, onboard posters, and the performing arts. Together, these award-winning initiatives express the vibrancy and spirit of the region, elevate the customer experience, and include both emerging and established artists in the reimagining of transportation with the following Guiding Principles:

- Put people first
  - Uplift customer journeys and local communities through artistic expression
  - Provide paid opportunities for artists at all levels of their careers
  - Engage riders and stakeholders through shared sense of ownership
  - Provide workforce development and career pipeline opportunities
- Connect to creative communities throughout LA County
  - Celebrate connections to diverse local arts and cultural destinations
  - Present curated partnerships and sponsorships
  - Foster and facilitate arts tours and highlight creative communities
  - Facilitate creative outreach and engagement
  - Provide opportunities and technical assistance for local artists
- Champion innovation
  - Collaborate with internal departments to integrate the arts across transportation modes and initiatives
  - Leverage strategic funding opportunities
  - Support artistic experimentation
  - Explore new technologies and advance best practices

Metro Arts & Design oversees and directs all arts and cultural programs on Metro property and is the technical lead for all agency non-Metro property arts and cultural strategic initiatives. The department is also responsible for the implementation of the phased art asset management program. In accordance with FTA Circular 9400.1A (Design & Art in Transit Projects) and APTA SUDS-UD-RP-007-13 (Best Practices for Integrating Art Into Capital Projects), a minimum of 0.5% of construction costs for transit capital projects is allocated for public art. Real estate acquisitions, vehicle procurement, professional services, unallocated contingency, and finance costs are excluded from the calculation. The art allocation shall be used for artwork and may not be spent for other general Project costs such as signage, supergraphics, engineering, administration, overhead, cost overruns or betterments. When art replaces standard features (e.g. wall tiles, flooring, railings, etc) funds otherwise spent on those features shall be credited to the art budget. Where funding sources allow, funds may be pooled for more equitable distribution. Art program staff are engaged during early Project planning and are responsible for art program development and communications, as well as artist outreach and commissioning, for all Project delivery methods. Lessons Learned are incorporated into agency policies and procedures to ensure continuous improvement.

In a 2020 motion to "Uplift the Human Spirit Through Metro Art", the Board formalized the role of the arts beyond transportation infrastructure and directed funds be included in the FY21 budget to champion the visual and performing arts, with preference for local artists, through temporary programs, onboard posters and cultural programming that enrich the customer experience, advance cultural equity, and respond to Los Angeles County's vast and evolving cultural landscape.

A large mural of diverse people is displayed on a wall in a grand hall with a glass dome. The mural features a group of people of various ages and ethnicities, including a man with a beard in a blue suit, a woman in a pink headscarf, a man in a purple turban, a woman in a blue headscarf, a young girl in a green shirt, a boy in a brown shirt, a woman in a blue shirt, a young girl in a white shirt, and a man in a green suit. The hall has a high ceiling with a large glass dome and a checkered floor.

# Uplifting the Human Spirit Through Metro Art

EMC Item 39

October 15, 2020

**RICHARD WYATT**  
*City of Dreams/River of History*  
Union Station

# Board Directives to “Uplift the Human Spirit Through Metro Art”

- Integrate Metro Art programs into trains, buses (set-aside percentage of onboard ad space with preference for local artists)
- Champion artistic experimentation including provocative works responsive to the issues & concerns of our time
- Think about how artists might be included in the Reimagining of transportation
- Support local artists, include performing arts
- Reinvigorate the arts in a post-pandemic world
- Provide access to arts and culture for riders from underserved communities
- Include \$400K in FY21 budget to accomplish these goals



# Capital Projects (% for Art)



CHRISTINE ULKE  
*El Aliso de Los Angeles*  
Division 13

# Current Arts Impacts

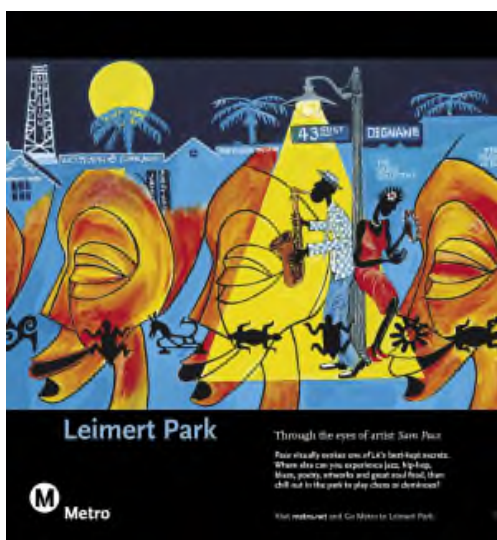
## Americans for the Arts Report 8/11/20

- 94% report income loss
- 63% have become fully unemployed
- 76% use their art to raise morale and create community cohesion

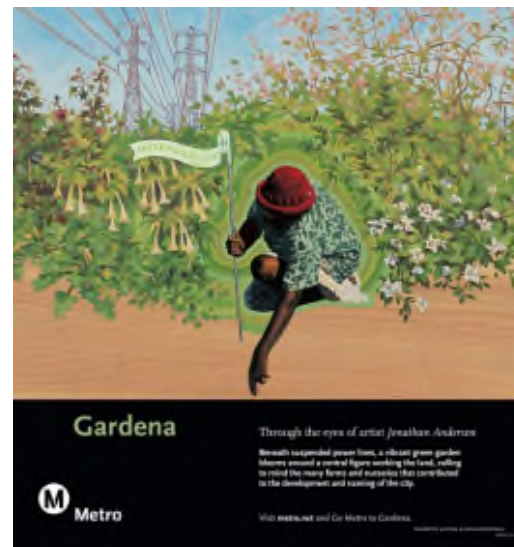
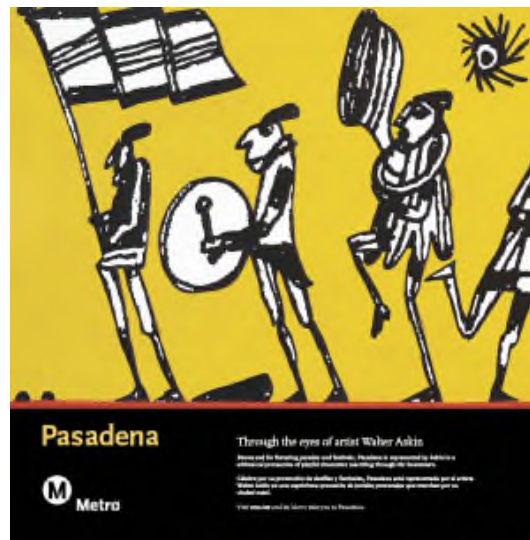
## Brookings Institute Report 8/11/20

- Creative economy is one of the sectors most at risk
- California will be hit hardest in terms of absolute losses
- Small stop-gap measures will not undo the damage; a substantial and sustained recovery strategy is required
- Opportunity to develop strategies to hire local artists and create online platforms





# “Integrate Metro Art Into Trains, Buses”





# On Subways as Riders Return: Odes to Their Resilience

Leaders of the “Poetry in Motion” program hope verse can help to comfort and encourage people as they return to the trains in greater numbers.





“Champion  
artistic  
experimentation  
including  
provocative  
works  
responsive to  
the issues &  
concerns of our  
time”

NONI OLABISI  
1995 Commemorative Poster  
Metro Green Line



**Metro Green Line**  
Summer 1995

Rosa Parks' contribution to the history of transportation and civil rights is honored in this powerful work by artist Noni Olabisi.

This is a member of our poster by local artists contribution to the MGLA & D.C.T. Program in celebration of the opening of the Metro Green Line.



“Think about  
how artists  
might be  
included in the  
Reimagining of  
transportation”



# **FY21 Initiatives May Include:**

1. Champion artistic expression of local visual artists through new “Silver Linings” poster series featuring works by local artists
2. Partner with community-based arts and cultural organizations to interpret and document this pivotal moment
3. Curate cultural programming (podcasts, playlists and select live performances) to foster connections with the public
4. Commission broad range of local artists, musicians, dancers, etc

# Next Steps

- Temporarily reprioritize FY21 resources
- Engage local artists
- Advance cultural equity initiatives
- Explore ways to include artists in Reimagining transportation
- Report back to Board in April