



MIAMI BEACH

RECEIVED

2008 DEC -4 PM 4: 49

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR AND COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jorge Gonzalez, City Manager

FROM: Matti Herrera Bower, Mayor 

DATE: December 4, 2008

SUBJECT: For Your Information-Provided by the Wolfsonian-Florida International University

Attached please find the minutes from the October 24, 2008 Advisory Board Meeting.

MHB/lw

RECEIVED
2008 DEC -4 PM 4: 05

Agenda Item #
Date 12-10-08

Minutes
The Wolfsonian–Florida International University
Advisory Board Meeting
Conference Room, 2nd Floor
October 24, 2008

Board present: Mehmet Bayraktar, Alberto Cardenas, Jacqueline Weld Drake, Rene Gonzalez, Richard Massey, Finlay B. Matheson, Federico Sanchez, Philip Scaturro, Rob Schechter, Gary Wasserman, Robert Wennett

Board by phone: Sandra Seligman and Kevin Miller

Absent: Gonzalo Acevedo, André Balazs, Charles Cowles, Marisa Fort, Manuel Gonzalez, Susan Hakkarainen, Nina Herrick, Mike Holden, Nasir Kassamali, Nissan Kasdin, Iran Issa-Khan, Ray E. Marchman, Michele Oka Doner, Chad Oppenheim, Aurelia Reinhardt, Susan Richard, David Schwarz, Pat Wallace, Louis Wolfson, Mitchell Wolfson, Jr., Bernard Zyscovich, James Zematis

Ex officio present: Steve Sauls, Vice President Government Relations, FIU

Staff present: Cathy Leff, Regina Bailey, Jeanne Brace, Michael Hughes, Marianne Lamonaca, David Skipp

Chairman Finlay Matheson called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm.

Chairman's Report

After the unanimous approval of the minutes from the April 25, 2008 meeting, Finlay Matheson introduced new Board members Sandra Seligman and Jacqueline Weld Drake. New member Cristina Cuervo just had a baby and will join us later in the year. He introduced new staff: Jeanne Brace, Deputy Director of Finance, Administration, and Operations, and David Skipp, Kirk Landon Deputy Director of Development.

Finlay asked all the members present to help energize and engage the Board. He stated that the Board is charged with the responsibility of making sure staff has the necessary funds to complete the museum's work. He also asked the members to consider how they would evaluate Board performance.

Finlay gave an update on the status of the Miami Beach Women's Club property. In 1995 the women offered the building to the Wolfsonian when they had little funds to support the building. Micky Wolfson and the Board accepted it with a deed restriction that remains until the last member who participated in the gift agreement dies; that restriction prohibits sale only to another non-profit and allows the women access for their use. Five years ago the museum rented the property to the Hebrew Academy, and without our permission, they sublet it. Cathy Leff noted that a recent appraisal was conducted on the property.

Cathy presented a brief history of the Miami Beach Women's Club, which was formed after the hurricane of 1926 as a civic organization to raise money for displaced families. These women went on to build the first library on the Beach. Carl Fisher donated the

land for the building, and Lester Pancoast designed it. As time changed, the group became a social club. They still meet to play cards.

Finlay stated the insurance proceeds will only be about \$400,000, which is insufficient to repair the building. Our lease with Hebrew Academy expired June 30. The building was underinsured. Cathy stated that the university would like us to sell it and place the funds in an endowment, a recommendation that she supports. (Note: Micky does not support selling the property.) Finlay plans to meet with the women to discuss selling the building and removing the restrictions. Rob Schechter agreed that removing the restrictions will increase the property's value.

Robert Wennett advised against spending \$400,000 to repair the current building if it is going to be sold and stated the museum should pocket the money.

Finlay asked the Board to let him know when they would like to have their next meeting. He said that the Board bylaws require four meetings a year, but that could be change to three if the Board members agreed to only three. After discussion, it was agreed to hold meetings in October, December, (Art Basel), and April. Several Board members asked if there would be an out-of-town meeting. Cathy said travel this year was cut due to budget concerns. The Board felt that holding an annual meeting at the University Main Campus was important for university participation. Robert Wennett asked that there be a chance to meet with students and hear about their research projects as it relates to the museum. (Note: a special meeting will be planned early 2009 for this purpose.)

Finlay led a discussion on activating an executive committee; continuing the nominating, finance, and collections committees; and reactivating the development committee.

Director's report

Cathy asked Board members to review their board packages, which detailed the activities and accomplishments of the museum and staff. She reported that, in this tight budget year; she has frozen all flexible spending. In addition the staff will analyze visitor trends and adjust hours to reduce costs if necessary. She stated upcoming fixed expenses include payments for contracted exhibitions. She asked that anyone in the position to do so advance their annual donation. Sandy asked if the Board donation could be increased to \$10,000. Cathy noted that many Board members already give beyond \$7,500, and she hoped they would continue to do so.

Cathy announced that the museum was invited to submit a final application to the Mellon Foundation's College and University Museum program to enhance our teaching and research program with the university community. She noted that the Wolfsonian is among a very distinguished group of six university art museums invited to apply: the art museums at University of Michigan, Duke University, Indiana University, University of Wisconsin, and Mount Holyoke College. Past Mellon awards have been given only to Ivy League universities.

Cathy discussed a number of fundraising activities for the year. This year the museum will not have a large scale gala. It will sell two limited-edition portfolios *Thoughts on Democracy*. They will be sold for \$7,500 each or \$12,000 for both portfolios. This project, if successful, will raise about \$250,000. Also on February 21 and 22, Chateau Mouton Rothschild will host two fund raising dinners with famed chef Daniel Boulud as well as a wine auction. The first dinner will benefit FIU School of Hospitality and Tourism Management and the museum, and the second will benefit the museum only. In addition Alliance activities brought in \$100,000.

Gary Wasserman and Sandy suggested the museum also follow a highly successful Cranbrook fund raising model and auction off collection conservation opportunities or a fellowship.

Curators Report

Marianne Lamonaca reported on current and future exhibitions. She noted as a result of presenting the current exhibition *American Streamlined Design: The World of Tomorrow*, Mrs. Stewart donated over twenty objects to the museum. Currently curatorial staff is organizing an exhibition of Dutch graphic designer Wim Crowel for Art Basel 2008. She thanked Board member Richard Massey for bringing this idea to her attention and for working with staff to make it happen. *Mouton Rothschild: Paintings for Labels* a collection of artist designed wine labels will opening February 2009. This exhibition will coincide with FIU's Food and Wine Festival. In addition, she is working with former Board member Fred Sharf's collection to curate for spring 2009 the exhibition *The American Automobile Scene*.

Marianne thanked Board member Rene Gonzalez for sponsoring staff travel to meet with the staff of the Hammer Museum and the Getty Foundation and also view the exhibition *Between Earth and Heaven: The Architecture of John Lautner*. The Wolfsonian presents this exhibition in the Fall 09. Marianne stated it is a costly exhibition with an exhibition fee of \$50,000, transport fee of \$50,000 and probably \$100,000 for programs and installation. Richard Massey asked if our exhibition will include a Florida component to validate the work of Florida modernists. Marianne said she is developing this area of the exhibit. Other future exhibitions include *Rhythms of Modern Life: British Prints 1914-1939*, organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York), and *Speed Limits*, co-organized by The Wolfsonian-FIU and the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal.

Marianne discussed the upcoming Modern Spirit in Latin America Colloquium organized by The Wolfsonian-FIU, the University of Miami, School of Architecture, and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. This event is in preparation for an exhibition on modernism in Latin American architecture that she, Jean-François Lejeune, University of Miami and Barry Bergdoll, curator of architecture for the Museum of Modern Art, are planning for The Wolfsonian and MoMA. Discussion will include modernist architecture of Argentina, Brazil, Columbia, Mexico, Venezuela, and Cuba. She invited everyone to attend. Cathy stated the Rosa and Carlos del la Cruz, Craig Robins, and Board member Bernard Zychovich are underwriting parts of this colloquium and events.

Cathy reminded Board members that the Wolfsonian's *Pochair* exhibition is now at the New York School of Interior Design. Cathy noted that the Collectors Council has raised \$45,000 to date for the curatorial department.

Nominating Committee

Rob Schechter reported that the nominating committee has received eight nominations for the Board's six openings. So far, Sandy, Cristina, and Marisa Cisneros-Rizzon have accepted. The Board unanimously ratified their appointments. He is continuing to meet with the other nominees and will let the Board know when they accept. Rob noted the nominating committee will meet at any time if anyone has potential new members.

Finance Committee

Robert Wennett reported that finance committee met to review cash flow analyses of the current budget. He said the current budget is on track but has a very tight expense column. He suggested that the committee initiate an accounting policy that protects the museum from any future crisis. Cathy asked that the Board to consider making their commitment early this year.

Collection Committee Report

Marianne reported that since Fred Sharf went off the board there has been no member involvement in the collection committee. Jackie said is she is collector of American Illustrators and is willing to participate with the committee.

New Business

Marianne asked that the Board help the museum acquire a new truck. She stated that many times the curatorial staff must postpone work until a rental van can be fully packed with objects. Finlay asked the Board to support this endeavor.

Cathy thanked Gary Wasserman for underwriting most of our Art Basel activities. She asked the Board to let her know who they suggest be invited to the Friday Art Basel VIP event. In addition, she thanked Gary for the Smart car project with Cranbrook, Wolfsonian, and Smart cars. The Wolfsonian will have eight smart cars for guest transportation during the fair. Each car will have quotes on democracy on them by important artists, architects, and designers, such as James Rosenquist, Campana brothers, and Zaha Hadid.

Finlay asked the Board to ratify his appointment as Chairman. The Board unanimously approved his chairmanship.

Cathy invited everyone, after the meeting, to a tour of the new exhibition *American Streamlined Design* with Marianne followed by a brief reception.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30.