

Memorandum



Date: December 10, 2024

To: Chair and Members
Art in Public Places Trust

From: Marialaura Leslie, Director
Department of Cultural Affairs

Subject: Trust Resolution No. APPT 24-66 / Alexandra Fields O'Neale / Key Biscayne Branch Library / Professional Artist Services Agreement

Trust Resolution No. APPT 24-66

RESOLUTION APPROVING A PROFESSIONAL ARTIST SERVICES AGREEMENT IN SUBSTANTIALLY THE FORM ATTACHED WITH ALEXANDRA FIELD O'NEALE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$100,000.00 FOR DESIGN, FABRICATION, AND INSTALLATION OF THE ARTWORK PROJECT FOR THE NEW KEY BISCAYNE BRANCH LIBRARY (FROM MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM PUBLIC ART TRUST FUNDS)

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Art in Public Places Trust approve a Professional Artist Services Agreement in substantially the form attached with Alexandra Field O'Neale in the amount of \$100,000.00 for design, fabrication, and installation of the artwork concept for the new Key Biscayne Branch Library.

Background

A meeting of the Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) convened on November 19, 2024, to review the proposal presentations of (8) regional artists invited to propose for the new Key Biscayne branch library. This facility of 19,000 sq ft is replacing the existing library with a two-story state-of-the-art building with beautiful vistas of the surrounding lush landscape. For this project, the public art opportunity was identified as a feature wall located behind the customer service desk that connects both the first and second floors. It was envisioned that the selected artist would have an affinity for Biscayne Bay, nature, the beauty, and history of Key Biscayne.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the PAC unanimously recommended commissioning Miami-based artist Alexandra Fields O'Neale for her project concept "Currents". The proposal incorporates a large-scale site-specific installation of original wallpaper wrapping both sides and floors of the central elevator column. The wallpaper, depicting a motif of sea water with refracted light in a neutral color palette, is to be accompanied by applied individual "islands" of coiled rope that abstractly depict topographical maps of coastal islands.

The work explores and honors the history of the Saltwater Railroad network that led enslaved people to freedom through maritime escape routes during the 19th century. The artwork will reflect the courage and resilience of those who traveled these waters while also highlighting Key Biscayne's connection to this rich part of history. As a gateway to the Atlantic, the lighthouse at Bill Baggs State Park in Key Biscayne played a symbolic and geographical role in this network, serving as a point of passage toward liberation, moving a stream of enslaved lives into a new world.

The work aims to integrate local hidden histories with artistic expression to engage the community in a deeper understanding of Key Biscayne's heritage and the Saltwater Railroad's legacy.

APP staff recommends the approval of Trust Resolution No. APPT 24-66 authorizing a Professional Artist Services Agreement in substantially the form attached with Alexandra Field O'Neale in the amount of \$100,000.00 for design, fabrication, and installation services of the artwork project for the new Key Biscayne Branch Library.