

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, September 17, 2018 at 11:00 AM Eastern

PRESENT:

Sheldon Epps
Laura Penn

ON THE PHONE:

Linda Hartzell
Ethan McSweeney

ABSENT:

Mark Brokaw
Anne Kauffman
Mark Lamos

STAFF PRESENT:

David Roberts
Executive Director
Elishia Merricks
Program Associate

I. CALL TO ORDER

- a. President Sheldon Epps called the meeting to order at 11:08, welcoming the Trustees.

II. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- a. Gordon Davidson Award update – The presentation of the inaugural Gordon Davidson Award will be on Saturday, September 22, at Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles. The Awardee, Oskar Eustis, and his wife Laurie Eustis will both be present. Executive Director, David Roberts, presented the guest list reporting that the RSVP list included members of Gordon Davidson's family, the Davidson Award selection committee, and many other Los Angeles based SDC Members and industry professionals. The invitation list was compiled by collating the lists of area SDC Members, Trustees and Executive Board Members, and recommendations by Judi Davidson (Gordon Davidson's wife), Tom Moore, and Neel Keller. The award presentation will be documented by a professional photographer, although the V.I.P. dinner will not.

III. SECRETARY'S REPORT

- a. In the absence of Secretary Mark Brokaw, Mr. Epps asked the Trustees to recommend any changes or additions to the minutes from July 16, 2018.

LAURA PENN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 16 BOARD MEETING, ETHAN MCSWEENY SECONDED. MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. Fichandler Award Committee Recommendations

- i. The Fichandler Award Committee, comprised of SDC Executive Board Member **Christopher Ashley**, and SDC Members **Tom Moore**, **Allison Narver**, and **Ruth Palileo**, met on September 11, 2018 for their selection meeting. The Committee made the following recommendations for the 2018 Fichandler honorees:
 - Winner: **Loretta Greco**
 - Finalists (alphabetically): **Michael John Garcés**, **Ron May**, and **Arthur Rotch**.
- ii. Mr. Roberts spoke to the committee's desire to recommend three finalists. He stated that although in recent years SDCF had a practice of no more than two finalists, this year the committee felt that the recognition that would come with being named a finalist would benefit the region as well as the artists, all three of whom were

competitive. He added that there was past precedent of multiple finalists. The Trustees agreed.

- iii. The Fichandler Committee also recommended that the Board of Trustees consider a change in the designation 'Finalist' to something with "more significance". Mr. Roberts recommended that the Trustees do not change the title due to past practice. Ms. Penn agreed, stating that it would affect all the Finalists named previously, possibly diminishing the honor. Mr. Roberts recalled that the committee member Ruth Palileo, who was named a Finalist in 2015, shared that the recognition of being named a Fichandler Finalist brought her was in no way diminished. The Trustees resolved not to change the designation of 'Finalist'.

LAURA PENN MADE A MOTION TO ADOPT THE FICHANDLER AWARD COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION TO NAME LORETTA GRECO AS 2018 THE FICHANDLER AWARD WINNER AND MICHAEL JOHN GARCES, RON MAY, AND ARTHUR ROTCH AS THE FICHANDLER AWARD FINALISTS. SHELDON EPPS SECONDED. MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

b. Breakout Award Committee Recommendation

- i. Mr. Roberts reported that the Breakout Award Committee, comprised of **Anne Kauffman** (SDCF Trustee/SDC Executive Board member), **Mary Robinson** (SDC Member and Callaway Committee member), and **Marisa Levy** (SDC Staff, Associate Director of Member Services), met on September 7, 2018. He reminded the Trustees that the Breakout Award is focused on someone is on that tipping point of critical and professional recognition having a significant impact on their career.
- ii. He informed the Trustees that the Committee recommended **Raja Feather Kelly** for the 2018 Breakout Award. Mr. Roberts shared the committee's excitement at honoring a choreographer as the third Breakout Award recipient. The Trustees shared this enthusiasm, noting that it would be very fitting with 2018/2019 being the year that the "Mr. Abbott" Award is honoring Agnes de Mille, it seems as though it is an unofficial 'Year of the Choreographer'.
- iii. Mr. Roberts informed the committee that **Taibi Magar**, **Will Davies**, and **Stephen Brackett** were all strong contenders for the Breakout Award. This award does not have a finalist category, however, the committee recommended that SDCF staff build into the workflow keeping a record of previous artists that have been considered for the award, to be passed on to the following committee. They also recommended that the Breakout committee be formed earlier so that when committee member see productions it is always in the back of their mind so they can make note of artists throughout the year.

LAURA PENN MADE A MOTION TO ADOPT THE BREAKOUT AWARD COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION TO NAME RAJA FEATHER KELLY AS 2018 THE BREAKOUT AWARD. LINDA HARTZELL SECONDED. MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

c. Callaway Award Announcements

- i. Mr. Roberts reminded the Trustees that the Callaway Committee, selected by the Board of Trustees, retains selection authority.
- ii. Winner in Direction: **Anne Kauffman** for *Mary Jane*
 - Finalists in Direction (alphabetically): **Taibi Magar** for *The Great Leap* and **Leigh Silverman** for *Harry Clarke*.Winner in Choreography: **Susan Stroman** for *The Beast in the Jungle*.
 - Finalist in Choreography: **Josh Bergasse** for *Smokey Joe's Café*.

- iii. Ms. Penn stated that the two winning artists as worthy of the Callaway Award with two quite extraordinary productions. *Mary Jane* was a harrowing production, that outside of the hands of a gifted director wouldn't have been a success, and the choreography of *The Beast in the Jungle* was beautiful.
- iv. Mr. Roberts reminded the Trustees that the Callaway Awards will be presented alongside the Breakout Award and the Fichandler Award at the SDCF Awards evening on Sunday, November 11, 5:30 PM EST. Ms. Penn added that the starting time allows Kevin McCollum to attend. She informed the Trustees that she and Mr. McCollum would be sending out five letters with \$50,000 requests to support the Rachel Rockwell Fund. The letters, under SDCF letter head, will be sent to Universal, Warner Brothers, Fox, Disney, and Jordan Roth, from his personal email. The letter states that he has pledged \$25,000 and will raise to \$50,000 if they each match his \$50,000. The aim is to announce the Rachel Rockwell Scholarship Fund at the SDCF Awards. Mr. Roberts thanked Ms. Penn for her efforts in spearheading the fundraising efforts. Ms. Hartzell questioned if there is any expectation for when the first recipient would be selected. Ms. Penn stated that SDCF staff would need to put together a proposal. She speculated that perhaps the scholarship would be \$10,000 a year with \$2,500 going towards administrative costs. Ms. Penn stated that she would forward the solicitation letter to the Trustees. Ms. Hartzell noted that she has a connection who would be eager to contribute to the Rachel Rockwell Scholarship Fund once it is set up.

d. Callaway Committee – new members

- i. As a follow up to the approved Board action via email last month, the following SDC Members have joined the Callaway Committee as part the incoming FY19 class:

- Shelley Butler
- Nelson Eusebio
- Darren Lee
- Maria Torres

At that time, the Trustees also approved the extension of one year to Committee member Amy Saltz.

- ii. Mr. Roberts informed the Trustees that in the intervening period, FY18 Committee members Saheem Ali and Adrienne Campbell-Holt, opted to step down, due to work schedule conflicts. Along with Committee Chair Pam Berlin, Mr. Roberts reached out to additional prospects on the slate, who were either interested but unavailable, did not meet the director-to-choreographer ratio, or left us without enough institutional knowledge of committee workings. Pam Berlin approached outgoing Committee member Richard Hamburger to see if he would extend by one year. He happily accepted pending the Trustees' action.

ETHAN MCSWEENY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXTENSION OF SERVICE BY ONE YEAR TO RICHARD HAMBURGER. LAURA PENN SECONDED. MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

- iii. Mr. Roberts added that the total committee members for the Callaway Committee is currently at ten members. The critical number SDCF aims for is eleven members due to the quantity of shows the committee are seeing, and for a show to be eligible six members have to have seen it. We've stressed the need for the committee to see as many shows as possible. Ms. Penn recommended SDCF staff reach out to Kyle Donnelly. Mr. Roberts confirmed he would reach out to Kyle Donnelly, and

requested, if she accepted, for her service to start immediately, with affirmation from the Trustees in the October Board meeting.

e. Other Awards updates

- i. Mr. Epps stated that, including Oskar Eustis as the Davidson Award Winner, the slate of 2018 awardees is extraordinary. The high caliber names gives weight to the SDCF Awards and in doing so also gives weight to the SDCF fundraising aims.
- ii. Mr. Roberts suggested that Oskar Eustis, as the face of SDCF lifetime achievement, present the Fichandler Award to Loretta Greco. Lee Sunday Evans, the FY18 Breakout Award Winner, will be presenting the Breakout Award to Raja Feather Kelly.

V. FUNDRAISING UPDATE

a. Lead Contributor update

- i. Ms. Hartzell thanked the SDCF staff for distributing the donor fundraising packets and Mr. Roberts requested that Trustees contact the SDCF for their donor packets if they haven't already.
- ii. Over the month of August, Ms. Hartzell had communicated with the other Trustees and each of them have agreed to make one to two approaches before October. She stressed the importance of thanking donors as they come in, alongside recognizing the donors in printed materials, e-blasts, and on the SDCF website. Ms. Penn also suggested that Lead Contributors could be listed in the SDC Journal. Mr. Roberts confirmed that SDCF has begun to incorporate the 'Thank You's' previously mentioned into the workflow.
- iii. Ms. Hartzell also asked to be informed of any upcoming SDCF events that Trustees can invite donors too as a way to cultivate donors who would be excited to be involved in the events. She recommended that Trustees should always be present at SDCF events.
- iv. She recommended that the Trustees review the original donor prospects list created with fundraising consultant Christine O'Connor, as some Trustees have indicated hesitation in approaching some of the prospects assigned to them at this time.
- v. Ms. Hartzell indicated the importance of starting the end-of-year giving before other organizations begin. This includes making the individual giving request to the SDC Board. Mr. Roberts suggested that this request is presented with the "Mr. Abbott" requests in mind, ensuring that the intersection of the SDCF end-of-year giving and the "Mr. Abbott" asks do not damage each other. Ms. Penn suggested that the Trustees consider combining the two requests of individual giving (\$250 annually/\$22 monthly) with the "Mr. Abbott" ticket to lessen the quantity of solicitations being made. The Trustees were in agreement with this recommendation. They continued to discuss that perhaps the SDC Board is presented with a 'menu' of ways to be involved with the Foundation, including the annual gift and the "Mr. Abbott" ticket, along with options to indicate their interest in being a mentor, or participating as a speaker, panelist, or guest in other SDCF programming.
- vi. Since the update last month, fundraising efforts continue among the Trustees. We are currently at a commitment of 5 gifts at \$5,000. Mr. Epps recommended that SDCF use the names in the 'Leading Contributors' group to invite the SDC Board to join as an inspirational call to action in the first year to support the Foundation in its independence.
- vii. Ms. Hartzell also noted that many of the names on the original donor prospect list are artistic directors and believes that they may not give at the Lead Contributor level, however, she would like to make a directed ask to regional artistic leaders. She would

like to begin a campaign in this vein before the “Mr. Abbott”. Ms. Penn stated that there has been a specific push to artistic directors for the “Mr. Abbott” in recent years, as part of an ‘affinity group’ push, and some have been responsive. She also stated that this year it isn’t just going to be a push for the artistic directors to give to the “Mr. Abbott’ but to attend. Mr. Roberts suggested that SDCF creates a specific ‘menu’ of options aimed at artistic directors, giving them the option to nominate an artist to host an Observer or a Fellow, or nominate a candidate to be considered for the Denham Fellowship. Ms. Hartzell requested that SDCF provide details of donors gifts indicating if they are individual giving or “Mr. Abbott” related.

b. “Mr. Abbott” 2019 Gala Planning

i. Leadership in place:

- Mr. Roberts thanked Ms. Penn for her work in driving the “Mr. Abbott”/ SDC 60th Anniversary over the last year.
 - Internal Co-Chairs confirmed: Mark Brokaw, Rachel Chavkin
 - External Co-Chairs confirmed: Bob Wankel, Phil Smith, and Ted Chapin
 - Honorary Co-Chairs (past Abbott-winners) confirmed: Jack O’Brien, Kenny Leon, George C. Wolfe, Hal Prince, Lynne Meadow, Marshall Mason, and James Lapine. The Trustees discussed the additional past “Mr. Abbott” winners who also agreed to be involved: Kathleen Marshall, Susan Stroman, Jerry Mitchell. Mr. Roberts noted that there is a significant amount of enthusiasm from the past “Mr. Abbott” winners asked to be honorary co-chairs.
- ii. **Commission Panel/Committee in place:** Karen Azenberg, Josh Bergasse, Donald Byrd, Ted Chapin, Graciela Daniele, Maija Garcia, JoAnn Hunter, Sam Pinkleton, and Susan Stroman.
- iii. **Special “Mr. Abbott” Award honoree confirmed:** Victoria Traube. Ms. Penn noted that Victoria Traube was extremely honored to be given the special “Mr. Abbott” and listed the people she has worked with that she will engage in the event, such as Concord Music Group, ICM, Mandy Patinkin. Ms. Hartzell also noted that Mandy Patinkin is connected to Lori Oakey.
- iv. **Location and Date:** FIAF: French Institute Alliance Française, Monday, March 25, 2019
- v. **First press release** scheduled to go out on Tuesday 9.18.18. The New York Times will have an exclusive on this story and will be following the story as it evolves over the next couple of months.

VI. TREASURER’S REPORT – Ethan McSweeney

a. Cash Flow snapshot

- i. Treasurer, Ethan McSweeney invited David Roberts to speak to the Cash Flow snapshot with regards to the leadership giving push. Mr. Roberts stated that he would be working on the “Mr. Abbott” looking at the related timelines and the fundraising prospects. In response to the last Trustee meeting, Mr. Roberts highlighted that he had moved the first income stream for the “Mr. Abbott into December. Savings are being project for the SDCF Awards. In line with the board’s direction the approved transfer was decreased to \$52,500. Some of the cash flow lines are ‘place-holders’ and they will be updated as they come in.
- ii. Although the cash flow is in a much better position than last time the Trustees met, Mr. Roberts indicated that there are still some concerns. There was a miscommunication on the FY18 Bob Wankel “Mr. Abbott” gifts, and missteps in

subsequent follow up. Mr. Wankel bought a table as a Silver sponsor and was solicited by Michael Wilson to make an additional gift to boost the sponsorship to a Diamond level. An in-the-room donation was made by Mr. Wankel, and this was confused with the previous additional solicitation. There is some difficulty with reconciling the gift as Mr. Wankel is now significantly involved in the FY19 “Mr. Abbott” and SDCF needs to approach this very delicately.

- iii. Mr. McSweeney noted that line 164 of the Cash Flow indicates the \$10,000 pledge is included, and strongly recommended that it be adjusted.
- iv. Ms. Penn requested an update on the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grant report. Mr. Roberts informed the Trustees that he is planning to submit the grant report earlier and made a conservative estimate of receipt of funds based on FY18 dates. Mr. McSweeney noted that the Cash Flow is at a low point on line 171. Ms. Penn speculated that with the early submission of the NEA report this may ease the low point of the Cash Flow in October. Mr. McSweeney also questioned the likelihood of receiving \$25,000 “Mr. Abbott” gifts in November, December, and January. Ms. Penn noted that it is possible, but at the point of this meeting the “Mr. Abbott” co-chairs haven’t identified exactly who these gifts are from. She followed up with the suggestion for the “Mr. Abbott” co-chairs to be brought into the SDCF Cash Flow conversation to use it as a motivational tool to set goals with SDCF’s Cash Flow in mind.
- v. Mr. McSweeney also noted that SDCF needs to repay the transfer by the end of the fiscal year, so it would be useful for the Cash Flow snapshot to reflect the payment. Mr. Roberts agreed and committed to extending the Cash Flow snapshot to extend through the end of the fiscal year.

b. Investments update

- i. Ms. Penn recommended that before the Trustees agree to do something more aggressive with SDCF’s investments that research is conducted into other not-for-profit investment plans. She noted that the current 70%-30% investment policy is quite aggressive in the industry. 50%-50% seems very aggressive. History, as with her experience in establishing the Marshall Mason fund, indicates that donors might be deterred by an aggressive investment plan.
- ii. Mr. McSweeney suggested that due to the complexities of this decision the Trustees take more time to consider the options. Mr. Roberts agreed that the meeting with the SDCF investment advisor was a first step in a long-term plan. He brought two supporting documents to the attention of the Trustees from the advisor. He also noted that this moment illustrated a good example of what skills and networks SDCF staff and Board need to consider when vetting prospective Trustees in the medidum and long terms.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

WITH NO OBJECTIONS, SHELDON EPPS MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.