

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 18, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS TO PERMANENTLY INSTALL THE ART LEAGUE'S WOODCUT TRIPTYCH AT THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA JUVENILE DETENTION HOME

ISSUE: Approval of the recommendation from the Commission for the Arts to permanently install the Art League's woodcut triptych at the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Home.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That City Council approve the recommendation of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts (ACA) to:

- (1) Accept the Art League's woodcut triptych for permanent installation at the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Home, 200 South Whiting Street (Attachment 1); and
- (2) Express gratitude to the Art League for the woodcut triptych and the Alexandria Commission for the Arts study of this gift and securing a permanent location at the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Home.

BACKGROUND: As part of the Art League's 50th Anniversary celebration, it held a special 2004 event entitled, "Steam Roller Printmaking Event" on Saturday, June 13, 2004. The project was directed by Steve Prince, an Art League instructor, with assistance from John Scott, Professor of Art, Xavier University at New Orleans. The printmaking event involved youth who collectively created a 4' x 24' woodcut inspired by Old Town Alexandria surroundings.

Prior to working with the class, Steve Prince researched Alexandria's history. He shared his research about the City with the youth to inspire them to develop images for the woodcut. Mr. Prince also asked the youth to include depictions of their life in Alexandria. Images found on the print include domestic scenes, families, dogs, townhouses, motorcycles, fish and seafood, religious symbols, the Masonic Temple with arrowheads for its archaeological site, an urban landscape, and a guitar player. Alexandria's neighborhoods are depicted through the images as are landmarks of the Art League and the Torpedo Factory.

DISCUSSION: In Fall 2004, the Art League framed the “Steam Roller Woodcut Triptych” to give as a gift to the City of Alexandria. The acceptance of art as a gift to the City of Alexandria falls under the City’s “Policy on Acquired Art”. The Policy requires the Alexandria Commission for the Arts through its Public Art Committee, to study materials presented by the donor; consider locations, installation and maintenance issues associated with the proposed gift; receive public comments on the gift and to make a recommendation to City Council.

After meeting the requirements set forth in the public art policy, the Public Art Committee recommended to the Commission for the Arts that the triptych be permanently placed at the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Home. This proposed location was enthusiastically accepted by the board of the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Home (Attachment 2). At its February 15 meeting, the Commission for the Arts voted to accept the Public Art Committee’s recommendation to accept the gift and to install the woodcut at the Northern Virginia Detention Home.

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1. Rendering of the Art League Gift of the Woodcut Triptych

Attachment 2. February 25, 2005 Letter of Support for Placement of Woodcut at the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Home

STAFF:

Kirk Kincannon, Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

Janet Barnett, Deputy Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

Cheryl Anne Powalisz, Cultural Arts Administrator, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities



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JUVENILE DETENTION COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN VIRGINIA

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



NORTHERN VIRGINIA JUVENILE DETENTION HOME
200 SOUTH WHITING STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22304

February 25, 2005

Ms. Cheryl Anne Powalisz, Cultural Arts Administrator
Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
Alexandria Commission for the Arts
1108 Jefferson Street, Box 61
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Ms. Powalisz:

The board members of the Juvenile Detention Commission for Northern Virginia were thrilled to hear that the Alexandria Commission for the Arts was interested in placing the Woodcut Triptych at our facility. They were even more excited to learn that it may be a permanent placement. They asked me to express to you and to the Alexandria Commission for the Arts their sincere thanks for considering our facility for the placement of such an important work of art.

We look forward to the placement of the triptych and will do our part to make the installation a successful experience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Krystal R. Kimrey".

Krystal R. Kimrey
Executive Director