



San Francisco Public Library
100 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102 - 4733

MEMORANDUM

Date: November 16, 2020
To: San Francisco Library Commission
From: Michael Lambert, City Librarian
RE: Maya Angelou Artwork at the Main Library

The San Francisco Public Library is bringing forth an update about the San Francisco Board of Supervisors' legislative action to improve the depiction of women in the public realm and, more specifically, to create an artwork (sculpture) honoring Dr. Maya Angelou at the San Francisco Main Library.

The specific ordinance, "[Maya Angelou Artistic Representation at Main Library - City Policy Regarding Depiction of Women on City Property - Women's Recognition Public Art Fund](#)," was passed by the Board of Supervisors in October 2018 and signed by Mayor Breed. The focus of the legislation is to rectify the inequity in women's representation in elected office, leadership roles, and in the public realm.

Last year the first selection process for this project did not result in an award of the commission to an artist. There was a profoundly different interpretation between the Arts Commission's and the legislative sponsors' understanding of the wording of the Board of Supervisors' resolution directing the creation of a "significant figurative representation of Dr. Angelou." It became clear after the selection process that the legislative sponsors' intent and expectation was for a more traditional figurative statue.

For this reason, the Arts Commission re-posted a revised RFQ. The revised RFQ stated that the goal of the project is to honor Dr. Maya Angelou with the creation of a 3-dimensional statue depicting Dr. Angelou.

As outlined in the ordinance, "the Library Commission shall appoint an individual, who may be a member of the Library Commission, to serve on the Arts Commission's review committee for the artist. Additionally, in selecting the design and location, and in overseeing the construction and placement of the artwork, the Commission shall solicit input from the Library Commission and the City Librarian, or his or her designee." During the Library Commission meeting on December

19, 2019, The Library Commission took action to appoint Library Commission President, Dr. Mary Wardell-Ghirarduzzi, to serve on the Arts Commission's review committee for the artist who will create the sculpture honoring Dr. Maya Angelou at the San Francisco Main Library.

The Visual Arts Committee of the SF Arts Commission convened on October 21 to revisit the status of the project and engage with the artist, Lava Thomas, identified as the top choice from the earlier review committee. The Visual Arts Committee moved the item to full discussion at the SF Arts Commission meeting of November 2. The SF Arts Commission met on November 2 and took action to terminate the Request for Qualifications issued January 24, 2020, for an artist to design and fabricate a sculpture to honor Dr. Maya Angelou. The SF Arts Commission also took action to approve the August 9, 2019, Review Panel's recommendation for the proposal by Lava Thomas for the sculpture to honor Maya Angelou, which will be sited at the Main Library, and to authorize the Director of Cultural Affairs to enter into an agreement with Lava Thomas for an amount not to exceed \$250,000 to design, fabricate and deliver the sculpture to the City. The Arts Commission unanimously adopted both Resolutions.

This update is provided in order to keep the Library Commission apprised of the status of the Dr. Maya Angelou Artwork Project.