

TO: Newport Beach City Arts Commission

FROM: Library Services Department
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PREPARED BY: Tim Hetheron

TITLE: Acceptance of the Sculpture *Sunset Years* into the City Art Inventory

ABSTRACT:

Sculptors Miriam Baker and Rhonda Jones, with support from the Balboa Island Improvement Association, have offered to donate the sculpture *Sunset Years* to the City of Newport Beach. The piece satisfies the criteria of Council Policies I-9, Art in Public Places, and I-11, Donation of Art to City of Newport Beach. The sculpture, which is estimated to have a cost of \$50,000, is being funded through private donations.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Fine Arts Ad Hoc Subcommittee requests that the City Arts Commission recommend that the City Council accept the work into the City Arts inventory.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS:

The cost of the sculpture and its shipping and installation will be paid for through private donations to the Balboa Island Improvement Association. Maintenance costs, estimated at \$250.00 annually, will be covered by Account No. 4002-8160, "Maintenance and Repair".

DISCUSSION:

Sculptors Miriam Baker and Rhonda Jones, with support from the Balboa Island Improvement Association, have offered to donate *Sunset Years* to the City of Newport Beach (see ATTACHMENT A for photos of the maquette). The piece, created by Ms. Baker and fellow artist Rhonda Jones, is a representational life-size bronze of an elderly couple seated on a bench enjoying the sunset. The piece is meant to serve as an appreciation and celebration of Balboa Island life. The finished work will weigh between 400 and 500 lbs. and measure 47" high by 33" wide by 30" deep. The work will also serve as a functional bench, which will be situated in a newly constructed plaza at the end of Marine Avenue on Balboa Island (see ATTACHMENT B). *Sunset Years* is expected to be completed in time to be dedicated at the Balboa Island Centennial Celebration on September 18, 2016.

Miriam Baker is a sculptor and Balboa Island resident. Ms. Baker's initial studies were at the Chicago Academy of Fine Art and the Art Institute of Chicago. Later, she studied painting with Vincent Farrell and Frank Tauriello. Her formal training as a sculptor also includes studies at Golden West College with Darrell Ebert; master classes at the Scottsdale Artist School with Bruno Lucchesi, Richard Macdonald,

and Blair Buswell; and in numerous workshops with Paul Lucchesi in Pietrasanti, Italy and the Artist's League in Virginia. She has also enjoyed a long career as an interior designer. In 2011, Ms. Baker was commissioned by the city of Newport Beach to sculpt a life-sized bronze figure of the late President Ronald Reagan. This piece is currently situated in Bonita Canyon Sports Park.

Rhonda Jones has studied art at Golden West and Orange Coast Colleges, and has participated in workshops with Paul Lucchesi, Blair Buswell, Stanley Bleifeld, John Coleman, Eugene Daubs and the Artist's League in Virginia. Ms. Jones owns and operates a private studio in Huntington Beach. She has had her work exhibited at Keller Fine Art in Palm Desert, the Anaheim Museum, the National Sculpture Society in New York, the Scottsdale Artist's School, Palm Springs Desert Museum, Long Beach Playhouse Gallery, and the San Bernardino County Museum of Art, among many others.

In order to recommend the gift for acceptance, the City Arts Commission is required to ensure that the gift meets the criteria of Council Policies I-9, *Art in Public Places* (ATTACHMENT C), and I-11, Donation of Art to City of Newport Beach (ATTACHMENT D).

The Fine Arts Ad Hoc Subcommittee advises the City Arts Commission that *Sunset Years* meets these criteria. Ms. Baker and Ms. Jones have proven track records that demonstrate their experience, skill and ability as artists. The aesthetic concept, quality, scale, and form of *Sunset Years*, and its appropriateness for the site, satisfy Council Policies I-9 and I-11. Infrastructure will be added to properly display the piece. *Sunset Years* is located on a site at the end of Marine Avenue in a plaza that is easily visible and accessible to the general public. The cost associated with acquiring and installing the piece is provided through private fundraising. *Sunset Years* is a hand-made original creation: it was not mass-produced from a standard design, nor is it a reproduction of an original art work. The work is solely the creation of the project artists. It adds significantly to the balanced inventory of the City's collection, representing a variety of style, design and media. The piece is consistent with and relevant to the civic interests and broad variety of tastes within the Newport Beach community and particularly Balboa Island, as evidenced by strong private fundraising for the project.

Ms. Baker and Ms. Jones have submitted a completed application and are aware of the donation and approval process. Should the City Arts Commission approve the acceptance of the piece into the City Art inventory, the donation will be presented to City Council for approval.

ATTACHMENT A: Images of *Sunset Years* maquette

ATTACHMENT B: Proposed site of *Sunset Years*

ATTACHMENT C: Council Policy I-9, Art in Public Places

ATTACHMENT D: Council Policy I-11, Donation of Art to City of Newport Beach

NOTICING:

This agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Arts Commission considers the item).