

Artists With Disabilities Alliance Meeting
Tuesday, July 15, 2003, 6:00 –8:00 p.m.
Outsiders & Others Gallery, 1010 Park Avenue, Minneapolis

Disclaimer 1: I am not experienced at taking minutes so this only represents the best I could do. If you have any comments or feel something of importance has been omitted, please let me know by email at: dougaj@earthlink.net or by phone at 952-945-6324. -- Doug Johnson

Disclaimer 2: I supplemented Doug's notes with a few names and details. – Jon Skaalen

The next general meeting will be **Tuesday, August 19th** from **6:00 to 8:00 pm** at the Outsiders and Others Gallery. Artists who will show or talk about their work in a "Chick Show" will be Pam Bottoms, Joy Purchase and Laurie McKiernan. In general, meetings will be held the 2nd or 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Overall, there were three items of discussion: What is the vision statement/what are the goals for the AWDA, what should the organization be named, and organizational questions.

Reminder -- please say one's name when beginning speaking in meetings.

Goals for the AWDA:

Bridget: Networking and support group, a forum for referrals and connections, information and ideas from other artists. Projects, not just talking, to make her effort to come from Duluth worthwhile. Just to be in the same room with other artists facing similar barriers is helpful.

Bill: Sharing-support group. Peer group (as he leads for people with epilepsy). Presentations by individuals or ? about their work or something else.

Laurie: Would like to meet people to work with artists with disabilities for supporting their artistic efforts. Looking for an encouragement group rather than a support group -- helping development in terms of getting art out to the public. Work toward a big project.

Terry: Would like to see a website with sales. Needs help as an artist -- develop or create markets for disabled artists. Would like less cross-talk so everyone has a chance to speak.

Unknown speaker: Would also like a website with sales. One woman who creates websites for disabled (artists?), Mari Jayn Duchene, offered to create a website for this group.

Char: Suggested that everyone write out what they'd like out of the group.

Various speakers mentioned other words or concepts to consider for the group: collective, mentoring, field trips, networking, forum for ideas, markets, projects, connections, referrals, art salons, socialize, pride, tolerance, figuring out ways we can give each other support.

Unknown speaker: We don't want to "business meeting" ourselves to death.

The question of the goals for the AWDA was given to a subcommittee so that discussion could move on. They will discuss mission and vision statements from a variety of arts organizations, as well as ideas from the WARM organization and from MAP (Management Assistance Project for Nonprofits). Please give them anything you would like as far as the goals and vision

statement of the AWDA. The subcommittee will meet **Tuesday, July 29th, 6:00 to 8:00 pm** at Interact Center for Visual & Performing Arts, 212 Third Ave. N., # 140; 612-339-5145. (Enter from Second Street North, below Moose & Sadie's.) Volunteers are Joy Purchase, Eric Peterson, Suzanne Byrne, Barbara Saunders, Paul Hanson and Doug Johnson.

One overall goal for AWDA is to become strong enough to break away from the supporting parent organizations.

Name/acronym:

For now the name of the organization is **Artists with Disabilities Alliance**. The question of a name was given to the subcommittee to create three names for consideration -- one with "disabled" in the name, one without, and one for those "on the fence." Once again, please give any input you would like to the subcommittee. The discussion carried conflicting views, especially about whether the word "disabled" should be a part of the organization's name. I'll summarize the issues by saying:

The word "disabled" could lead to artists avoiding participation in the AWDA for possibly a variety of reasons; the number one mentioned was that someone wouldn't want to be outed by participating -- becoming publicly identified as disabled. One member mentioned that a friend had already made this decision. It was also brought up that including "disabled" with art can create an instant rejection in some people -- it becomes a turn-off signal, so that the art work isn't 'viewed' (not to be too visual).

The use of "disabled" was also seen as a positive for two reasons -- interest in purchasing art by people who want to support those with disabilities, and to create a positive view of those with disabilities.

(My own comments for clarity)

The two views are obviously irreconcilable. The question seems to come down to two choices-- does the AWDA want to make an effort to include all disabled artists or is it more important to use the term disabled and to create/receive benefits from this.

It was mentioned a double name could be created that could be perceived as two separate organizations even though it isn't.

Other name suggestions included:

- * EGAD – Everybody's Got a Disability
- * ABOUT – Artists Beyond Outsiderhood United
- * Art Corps
- * AWE (Artist Working Enterprise)

Organizational details:

The idea of a subcommittee to give the group structure and to handle organizational details seems to have taken hold.

One item is finding a place to meet. Possible places to meet include: Public libraries, churches, Anderson Gallery at the Walker Art Center, MN State Arts Board, the Outsiders and Others

Gallery, Center for Independent Artists, Patrick's Cabaret, 26th Street Artists Studio, Interact Center for Visual & Performing Arts, Anodyne Artists Co., meeting room at Eric Peterson's apartment building (4440 Beard Ave. S.). Requirements for the space mentioned were: available parking, on bus line, accessible facility (and accessible materials for people who are blind), suitable for the environmentally sensitive, and non-smoking.

Other items mentioned were:

- * Put aside seeking grants until the AWDA jells more. A name isn't as important when writing grants as a mission statement/goals and also the ability to achieve these.
- * In order to receive monies the AWDA needs a fiscal agent -- another nonprofit organization to act as a go-between to receive the money and then turn it over to the grantee. This is because the AWDA has no legal structure to receive money.
- *** Identifying information people don't want released about themselves should be left off the contact list of group members. ***

Announcements:

- * Laurie McKiernan will perform in the Spoken Word Fringe at the Loring Park Dunn Bros. – Aug. 6 and 7 at 7:00 p.m.
- * Sam Jasmine, who hosts the "Disabled and Proud" radio broadcast on KFAI community radio (90.3 FM), hosts an Artist of the Month once a month. Talk about your work to the Twin Cities and the disabled community here (and over the internet also).
- * Bill Lipkin and his wife Julie accomplished the ultimate creative act – they had a baby girl a week ago.
- * Suzanne Byrne is working to complete a novel by year's end.
- * Chris Osgood had one of his songs, "Complicated Fun" with the Commandos accepted for a Target commercial.
- * Denise Martineau called art, for her, the missing link between spirituality and social justice.

Guest Speaker:

Thanks to **Yuri Arajs** for allowing the AWDA to meet at the Outsiders and Others Gallery. Yuri's next exhibits will feature tattoo artists (July 26 – August 30), youth age 13-18, lawyers, religion and homeless. To submit work for consideration for a few exhibit, simply send Yuri six images and an artist's statement. For a group show, submit a proposal that says how the group fits together, what connects the art or the artists (similar style, theme). He recently had a group showing of artists with mental illness in order to help break the stigma. Asked about having an exhibit of this group's artists with various disabilities, he suggested thinking about a proposal and examining how disability forms who the artists are; is that who you are: a disabled person who does art or an artist who has a disability.

Yuri also mentors artists with disabilities – one-on-one, hands-on, collaborative situations, often 5 to 6 hours a day, to empower the individual to do what they want to do. Ultimately, to put together a show or get into shows. Funding can come through CADI or community waivers. Application can be made through the social service world.