



AgX Meeting
Sunday, November 22, 2015, noon
300 Summer Street

Present:

Billy Palumbo
Corrine Barnes
Douglas Urbank
Ernesto Livon-Grosman
Frank Aveni
Genevieve Carmel
Janeann Dill

Kimberly Forero-Arnías
Morgan Hoyle-Combs (12:45)
Nic Brynolfson
Robert Todd
Stefan Grabowski
Susan DeLeo
Valery Lyman (12:45)

Agenda

Open Studios Followup and To-Do List
Fundraiser
Finances and Member Dues Payments
Lab Finish
City Hall Meeting
Core Listserve

The group welcomed Janeann Dill, one of our two scheduled visitors. (Sarah Bliss was not able to attend.) Janeann teaches a course at Emerson College on critical thinking and writing about experimental animation. She is also founder of the [Institute for Interdisciplinary Art and Creative Intelligence](#). Janeann is very interested in becoming a member of AgX.

OPEN STUDIOS FOLLOWUP AND TO-DO LIST

The group agreed that the open studios event was successful and discussed connections made over that weekend, including Jeff Thurber, professional sound designer, Heart Punch Studio (possible field trip); Chapel Hill High School (workshop opportunities); Lindsay Metivier of Aviary Gallery (teaches photography in Waltham).

Workshops

The group agreed that workshops are a priority in order to capitalize on open studios outreach, and eventually provide a source of income. Stefan suggested member-only workshops should come first, to test out our lab and introduce members to film who have had limited or no exposure. Basic processing or camera loading would be good initial workshops. For public workshops, we need to create a workshop list, including teacher, description, and equipment and materials list; then begin publicizing them.

Workshops ideas are as follows:

- loading Bolex
- general hand processing
- basic production
- projectors
- flatbed editing
- hand painting
- cameraless
- optical printing
- working with sound
- pinhole techniques
- matte boxes and mattes
- expanded cinema
- experimental animation (Janeann and Morgan)
- downspooling
- C4I (Ethan)
- E6 (Kathryn)
- 2-day Bolex load, shoot, film, process (particularly for high school students)
- super 8
- Bolex 2-camera 3D
- 35 mm processing
- alternative processes
- digital video editing

Some of these could happen soon, others are long-term future workshops. AgX can also seek grants for expansion of the program. Valery suggested that AgX should focus on physical workshops, particularly involving analog film, as opposed to subjects that can be self-taught, learned online, or are better suited to local continuing education classes.

Gen suggested our fundraiser party, tentatively scheduled for December 12, could possibly include a workshop. Stefan suggested some kind of 2-3 hour “boot camp” such as a basic Bolex workshop might work.

FINANCES AND MEMBER DUES PAYMENTS

Doug stated that he has taken over the task of paying rent and utilities from Matt McWilliams. There are four members with financial responsibility who have monitored

the dues collection, however Doug believes that the general membership needs to comprehend what's been happening to date. The history is that AgX began renting the space in June. Matt paid our first month's rent out of his pocket, so we started out one month in the red. On top of that, on no single month have we collected sufficient dues to cover rent and utilities without individual members "padding" the account. Doug estimated that we have only twelve to fifteen members paying, and few of them consistently. Putting aside Matt's initial contribution, we are several hundred dollars short each month. In addition certain members have separately been funding lab construction. Although it's not preferable, if we can't increase dues payments, we may need to use more of the fundraiser funds for rent.

The group discussed approaches to increased dues collection. There are currently 75 people on the listserve. Some, but not all, understand our need for money. Several in the group observed that a clear structure for paying is not in place. AgX does not yet have its own website, but is instead a temporary addition to the Balagan site. The future site will clarify the structure of dues payment as well as advertising the benefits of membership.

It's important to emphasize benefits to membership, such as identifying the darkroom and providing an inventory of equipment ready to use, individual member pages on our future website, work-in-progress screenings, etc. AgX access is an important issue. Currently few AgX members have keys. Rob agreed the monitoring is an important service. It was suggested that perhaps Dana and Craig might agree to provide access to members, since they are often in the space, and be a resource to members inquiring about access. Stefan suggested that the Oxberry machines could bring people in from out of town, since not many facilities have them, and AgX could charge rental fees.

Corrin suggested using a completely separate system to notify members to pay dues. Stefan has already set up MailChimp which could be used for that purpose.

Defining "Membership" and a Core Listserve

The group identified defining "membership" as essential. Doug suggested that a member is someone who (a) pays dues, (b) attends meetings and contributes through service, (c) both. The group agreed that we need a core listserve of members vs. interested outside parties. Stefan and Gen will work to create a membership form which will ask applicants to commit to a certain monthly contribution and a certain level of service, such as hours per month. Gen suggested that the form could also include preferred service areas or areas of interest. That way, individual members currently involved in those activities could follow up with the applicants.

The group reaffirmed the earlier decision that dues payments be based on a sliding scale, although with a base amount, such as \$20 per month. Previously we had decided on a student rate of \$25 per month.

Ernesto raised the issue of whether individual members should identify their films as AgX productions. The group agreed that any film produced with AgX facilities should be identified as such, as well as any work the filmmakers want to identify as AgX.

Fundraiser and Other Income Sources

Ethan and Gen are looking into the [Massachusetts Cowork Program](#), grants to support collaborative spaces. Gen met the administrator at an event, who encouraged her to submit an Expression of Interest. Gen thinks she can complete the form in the next day or so. Rob plans to talk with Dan Blask from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) about grant programs for organizations, and apply for AgX. Workshops were also mentioned as future sources of income.

Gen reported that there are 17 days remaining of the fundraiser campaign. The current level is over \$4,000. It is possible to continue raising funds after the official end, however a portion ($\pm 8\%$) of all funds raised goes to Indiegogo. Other organizations, such as Canyon Cinema and Microscope Gallery, raise money without a fundraiser program, however they are better known than AgX. Gen, Stefan and Brittany have focused on content for the fundraiser with the goal of posting to Facebook every day at a minimum. The fundraiser subgroup has also worked on getting press coverage. Janeann suggested updates to the Indiegogo site itself and also the use of Twitter. She also suggested personal outreach to all donors, including asking them to encourage friends of theirs to contribute.

Note that unless AgX members want a particular perk it's better to make dues payments rather than contributions to the fundraiser, because Indiegogo charges a fee.

Amanda Justice is working on member profiles to feature on the site, where members can say why AgX is important. Members willing to be profiled should contact her. Doug noted that only 2 people have chosen the DVD as a perk and we should probably at least name the filmmakers included. The fundraiser page currently has embedded videos of past workshops, but should also include some member films.

Membership in Other Filmmaker Organizations

Gen recently visited both AS220 and Dirt Palace in Providence and reported on membership options. AS220 allows various "pay as you go" and limited time memberships, such as 3- and 6-month memberships which require volunteer hours in exchange for blocks of time. She will provide a summary to the group. Valery suggested that some in the group, including herself, are out of town part time, and would benefit from monthly membership blocks. Both AS220 and Mono No Aware were mentioned as possible mentors to AgX.

BOSTON CITY HALL MEETING

Doug reviewed draft talking points for the November 23 meeting with John Crowley, Curator/Exhibitions Coordinator, City of Boston, and Tom Johnston, Director of Programs. Kim, Rob and Doug will meet them at 1:30 PM at City Hall.

The group fleshed out the talking points, as follows:

Who We Are:

- Kim, Rob, Doug
- Balagan (history & cultural contributions)
- Handcranked
- 75-person Listserve

What AgX Offers:

- Workshops
- Facilities to Filmmakers & Photographers (including graduating students)
- Screenings (Balagan, Post Office Square Screenings, etc.)
- Cultural Exchange & Outside Filmmakers
- AS220, Mono No Aware (models & audience draw)

What AgX Needs:

- Grants & Funding
- Promotion & Support (supporting AgX = getting what AgX offers)
- Screening Opportunities
- Equipment Donations (Strand projectors)
- Future Space

NEXT MEETING & OTHER SCHEDULING

The next meeting was scheduled for Saturday, December 19 at 1:00 PM at AgX in Waltham.

The fundraiser officially ends Monday, December 7. The fundraiser party date is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, December 12.

The next work-in-progress screening will again be organized by Susan and is scheduled for Sunday, January 10, possibly from 4 - 7:00 PM. Valery will organize a February work-in-progress screening, date to be determined.

End of Meeting Notes

Notes by Douglas Urbank