

BERNAL HEIGHTS BRANCH LIBRARY MURAL – SFAC & SFPL TIMELINE

August 20, 2009 - The Library Commission originally asked the Arts Commission for permission to restore the Arch Williams mural on the Cortland Street side of the Bernal Library, and permission to paint over the mural sections on the East and South sides of the library in August 2009 (library resolution #2009-04).

October 21, 2009 – Motion passed at Visual Arts Committee meeting “Motion to approve the request from the San Francisco Library Commission to revitalize the mural by Arch Williams and others on the façade of the Bernal Heights Branch building, and to remove the murals on the sides and back of the building due to their deteriorated condition.”

November 2, 2009 - At the November 2009 Arts Commission meeting, Commission President PJ Johnston continued approval of the VAC motion indefinitely, at the request of the City Librarian as well as Supervisor Campos. This means that the Arts Commission has never approved the removal or restoration of any of the murals at Bernal Library.

April 5, 2010 – At the April 2010 Arts Commission meeting, Director of Cultural Affairs Luis Cancel reported that “Supervisor Campos has worked with the community and the Library Commission to craft a compromise solution, which hopefully will lead to the creation of artworks incorporating the history and values of the past with those of the current community.”

July 21, 2011 – The Library Commission passes Resolution No. 2011-04 “endorsing the proposed Bernal Heights Library Art Project and forwarding the endorsement to the San Francisco Arts Commission for approval”

August 17, 2011 – At the August VAC meeting, commissioners approve the conceptual designs of the proposals by Precita Eyes and Rubin Rude, with stipulations to adjust the color palette and provide material samples before final approval. (Arts Commission passes Resolution No. 0912-11-245 in September 2011).

ISSUES

Arts Commission has jurisdiction over the removal of artwork on city property and the placing of artwork on city property. The scope of this project has changed since it was initially brought to the Arts Commission in 2009 – the Arch Williams mural on the Cortland Street façade is no longer being “revitalized” or restored, it is being completely replaced by a newly commissioned artwork.

In order to proceed with approvals for the design of the new murals, permission needs to be granted by the Arts Commission for the removal of the old murals first. All we have received from the library is a resolution supporting the design of the new murals, no acknowledgement of the removal of the Arch Williams murals.

We are requesting that SFPL Commission re-submit their request for Arts Commission approval of the removal of Arch Williams original murals at Bernal Heights Library, with explanation as to why they support replacement versus restoration. Also, SFPL should complete due process as recommended by CAPA & VARA, as well as install an acknowledgement plaque for the removed murals (ex. Dewey Crumpler @ Bayview Rec).