

TO: WeGO Board
FROM: Linda Davis, Chair, 2018 Traveling Show
RE: Preliminary Report and Recommendations for Future WeGO Shows
DATE: October 13, 2018

The 2018 WeGO Traveling Show is installed at its final venue, at the Willamette Heritage Center (WHC) in Salem. If you have not had a chance to see it yet, this will be your last chance! It will be there until Dec. 8. It has had rave reviews at all locations.

A final Show report will be written by the Spring WeGO meeting if not before. However, I did not want to wait until then to provide some thoughts about future shows as it is not too soon to start thinking about it and perhaps put it on the calendar.

The previous WeGO Traveling Show, "Threads to New Worlds" was in 2013. Thus, we have had five years between shows which probably seems about right. If we want to keep the same 5-year interval, we would be looking at 2023 for the next one.

The 2018 Committee was organized in the summer of 2015, a little over three years before the submittal date. **This was none too early!** If the next show is to be in 2023, you will want to have a committee in place no later than by mid-year 2020, before the ANWG 2021 Conference. This might seem ambitious but it would be desirable to at least have a chair appointed in 2020. Having a chair identified by 2020 could be an advantage as this person could attend the conference, network with exhibitors and provide some advance publicity about the show.

The primary factor that drives an early timeline is finding suitable venues and at least getting preliminary interest if not approval. Competition for venues and dates is becoming greater and is especially difficult in the Portland area. Portland has very few public, nonprofit art centers or galleries and is now even one fewer since Marylhurst has closed. The pre-eminent venues for us would be either Contemporary Crafts or Oregon College of Art and Craft (OCAC). Both have long planning calendars and tough standards but I think it is possible that we could get scheduled in one of these locations with enough advance contact and discussion. I attempted to see if we could have the show accepted at OCAC but we were a bit too late as they schedule out three years ahead and their interest was lukewarm; Contemporary Crafts did not return my phone calls! I think our track record and reputation with the 2018 Show will be impressive to these venues now and we might have better luck with enough advance contact.

I believe the success of the 2018 Show can be attributed to two factors:

1. The venues, all of which are public, nonprofit art centers or galleries. This raised our professional image and increased interest by weavers to enter. These galleries have professional staff who understand the business and process and do a lot to assist with the show in terms of hanging and publicity, at their expense.
2. Having fewer venues than in previous shows provides more time for exposure in the local area and beyond. It also cuts down on the amount of work for the committee!

My final report will have more details on all these issues with information that can be of use to the next chair.