

LAW OFFICES
RICHARD S. E. JOHNS
174 9th AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94118

RICHARD S. E. JOHNS

(415) 640-3240

rsejohns@yahoo.com

February 24, 2023

San Francisco Board of Supervisors
City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton Goodlett Place
San Francisco, California 94102

Re: Appointment of Victoria Gray to the San Francisco Historic
Preservation Commission

Honorable Supervisors:

I write in support of the appointment of Victoria Gray to the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission, Seat 4, Historian. I have had the honor to hold this position for the last 12 years and believe that she will be a credit to the Historic Preservation Commission and to the City and County of San Francisco.

Victoria Gray is a Vice President and Director of the Trusts & Estates Department as well as Head of Office for Bonhams Auction House in San Francisco. She holds a BA in Art History from Bucknell University and completed intensive Art Historical research studies at Syracuse University in Florence, Italy. She has been a practicing Art Historian for 20 years. Specifically, in 2002 she joined the Trusts & Estates Department of Sotheby's Auction House in New York working with large public and private collections including extensive collections of North American art. In 2003 Victoria returned to San Francisco where she has continued her work with North American art including that of California. Since 2005 her duties have included full-time experience in research, writing, interpreting, and other related professional activities in the field of art history several professional institutions where she has worked.

The qualifications for Seat 4 are: “an historian meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for history with specialized training and/or demonstrable experience in North American or Bay Area history.” The Secretary’s standards are satisfied by a bachelor's degree in history plus at least two years of full-time experience in research, writing, teaching, interpretation or other demonstrable professional activity with an academic institution, historical organization or agency, museum, or other professional institution.

Victoria meets the Seat 4 qualifications because of her art history degree from Bucknell University and work experience at Sotheby’s Auction House in New York, and Bonhams & Butterfields Auction House in San Francisco since 2003. Her academic training and work experience meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for history and include demonstrable experience in North American and Bay Area histories.

Much of her experience has focused on historic interiors and their significance in the Bay Area and North America, as well as historic research and scholarly essays surrounding important Bay Area estate collections. She has demonstrated experience with histories focused on San Francisco and the Bay Area, including Asian-America and Native American cultures, and as Bay Area civic monuments and murals. She has handled the collections of historically important San Franciscans, including Helene and Charles Templeton Crocker, one of the founders of the Central Pacific and later Southern Pacific Railroad, and Charlotte and George Schultz, which included important California paintings. She advised, researched, and handled the auctions for the relief sculptures from the Palace of Fine Arts as well as several longtime San Francisco institutions: Henry Africa, and Eddie Rickenbacker. Victoria worked on a feasibility study for the Diego Rivera mural located in the San Francisco Art Institute, as well as the archive of the Grabhorn Press Building at 1335 Sutter Street, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

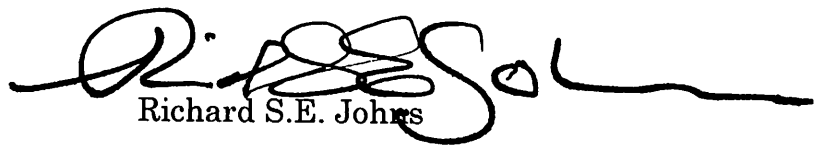
Her expertise in historic interiors, artifacts, and objects would provide the Historic Preservation Commission with an important and unique perspective that it currently does not have.

Victoria Gray was born and raised in San Francisco. While this is not a qualification for Seat 4, I have found that having a long history in San Francisco to be extremely useful in serving as the historian on the Historic Preservation Commission.

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Victoria Gray has a personality that will mesh well with the other Commissioners. She has demonstrated the ability to work in a respectful and collaborative manner as part of a team, which I believe will further the collegial atmosphere that has been an important feature of the Historic Preservation Commission for many years.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. S. Johns", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

cc: Victor Young

From: [Leslie Wright](#)
To: [ChanStaff \(BOS\)](#); [DorseyStaff \(BOS\)](#); [EngardioStaff \(BOS\)](#); [MandelmannStaff@sfgov.org](#); [MelgarStaff \(BOS\)](#); [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#); [Ronen, Hillary](#); [Safai, Ahsha \(BOS\)](#); [Stefani, Catherine \(BOS\)](#); [Walton, Shamann \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Young, Victor \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Letter of Support for Victoria Gray, Historic Preservation Commission
Date: Friday, February 24, 2023 11:07:21 AM

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Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,

My name is Leslie Wright, and I am Chairman, North America of Bonhams & Butterfields. I am writing in strong support of Victoria Gray for the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).

This year marks 20 years that Victoria has been with our company. A true impact player on the Bonhams team, Victoria has been an integral part of the US Trust & Estates group and the respected leader of our San Francisco office.

Victoria's work has focused primarily on historically significant San Francisco and Bay Area collections, interiors, civic monuments, and murals. She has contributed to San Francisco institutions in her research for the Wells Fargo museum on Montgomery Street and assistance in deaccessions from SFMOMA, De Young Museum, and Legion of Honor. She has worked closely on collections for historically important Northern California families including the Sutro Family, the Crocker Family, and the Dollar Family.

Her experience and care in working with historic artifacts and collections, especially those from Asian-American and Native American cultures, has facilitated the availability of important collections so they can take their place in San Francisco and Bay Area history and continue to be shared with generations of residents to come. This includes work on the Ella Cain Collection of Mono Lake Paiute Basketry, deaccessions from the San Francisco Art Museum, the exceptional and rare Ming collection of Elinor Majors Carlisle, and the collection of the late Cecelia Chiang.

Victoria's contributions to the research and preservation of San Francisco and Bay-Area collections, as well her ability to be a reliable resource to San Francisco institutions, has established Victoria as a seasoned and true San Francisco enthusiast. Victoria's commitment to honor and preserve San Francisco and Bay-Area heritage and history are a credit to her name.

Victoria is tenacious, diligent, passionate, and her enthusiasm is simply infectious. Over the last 20 years working with her, I most appreciate her collaborative spirit and leadership. This appointment would allow her to serve the entire city of San Francisco in a deep and significant way.

Sincerely,

Leslie Wright, Chairman

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