

# National Portrait Gallery

## 738th MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustees held at the National Portrait Gallery on  
Thursday 5 November 2009

**Present:** Professor Sir David Cannadine (Chairman)  
Ms Zeinab Badawi  
Dr Augustus Casely-Hayford  
The Marchioness of Douro  
Ms Amelia Fawcett  
Lord Janvrin  
Professor Ludmilla Jordanova  
Sir Christopher Ondaatje  
Sir William Proby  
Mr David Ross  
Professor Sara Selwood  
Professor Marina Warner

**In attendance:** Mr Sandy Nairne, Director  
Mrs Pim Baxter, Deputy Director  
Mr Jacob Simon, Chief Curator

### 1. Chairman's business

The Chairman reported that the Director had accepted a new contract, running until his retirement age. He welcomed Sir William Proby to his first Trustees' meeting and reported that Sir Nicholas Blake had been reappointed as a Trustee for a further four years. He drew attention to the success of the Trustees' dinner the previous evening.

The Chairman reported that applications were now being invited on the DCMS website for two new Trustees, one with knowledge of the field of science and engineering, the other of art and cultural history. The shortlist would be drawn up on 10 December with interviews expected to be held on 15 January. The Chairman paid tribute to two retiring Trustees, Professor Ludmilla Jordanova and Sir Christopher Ondaatje, for their great contributions to the work of the Gallery.

*Action point: Trustees to make suggestions to the Chairman or the Director concerning possible candidates for the two Trustee vacancies*

### 2. Apologies for absence and Declarations of interest

Apologies for absence were received from Sir Nicholas Blake, Sir Nicholas Grimshaw, Mr David Mach and Lord Mandelson. There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2009 were approved.

### 4. Matters arising

On minute 5, it was confirmed that the paragraph on the Information Commissioner's rejection of a complaint would appear in the minutes available on the Gallery website subject to the usual review process. On minute 4, the Director drew attention to a folder

available for consultation on the marketing campaign, *Take another look*. It is hoped that the campaign may continue between exhibitions over the next two or three years.

## **5. Director's report**

On exhibitions, the Director reported favourable press response to the research embodied in *Beatles to Bowie* and Pim Baxter drew attention to the significant level of visitor comment response to *Gay Icons*, some of it very moving. The *National Portrait Gallery/BT Road to 2012* launch had been very successful; there had been some discussion before the launch over the visibility of logos in photographs. In response to questions, it was reported that the very high visitor numbers to the *BP Portrait Award* were perhaps to be explained by higher gallery visitor numbers and better signage. On the Wikipedia dispute, there was no further information but it was intended to bring a more general report on digital programmes to the next Trustees' meeting. Candidates for membership of the Investment Committee were to be seen shortly. A successful small dinner party for the American Friends of the National Portrait Gallery had been held in New York in September; one patron had been recruited and other contacts were being followed up.

The Director reported that the Trustees would be receiving from PCS a copy of their letter to Caroline Wynter, Head of Personnel, concerning management matters where the union was continuing to invoke grievance procedures. The Director would be very happy to provide Trustees with further information and emphasised that the appropriate path for a response to the union was not through the Trustees but through the Director.

*Action point: Pim Baxter to circulate a selection of comments on Gay Icons to Trustees*

## **6. Portraits on offer**

The Chief Curator reported on a self-portrait by Van Dyck, which is being sold by Sotheby's on 9 December. It had not proved possible to negotiate a private treaty sale and the fundraising climate is a difficult one. In discussion with colleagues at Tate the priority had been to consider the national interest in securing this portrait for the Nation rather than the interests of a particular gallery. The advantages and disadvantages of a joint acquisition had been discussed. Unless circumstances changed unexpectedly, we would not be in a position to bid at auction but we would be prepared to act should the portrait become the subject of a temporary export stop. The Trustees agreed that the portrait was of outstanding importance for the collection and recognised that should the portrait become available, it would require a significant amount of the Gallery's purchase funds.

In considering offers for the collection, the Trustees noted the importance of cultivating good relationships with potential donors of portraits. The Trustees offered their congratulations to Terence Pepper, Curator of Photographs, on the success of the *Beatles to Bowie* exhibition.

- THE TRUSTEES agreed to the acquisition of the portraits on the appended list, and noted the three portraits accepted by HM Government in lieu of tax and now received by the Gallery

## **7. Commissions**

The Trustees welcomed the report on current commissions. They noted that a few commissions took longer to complete for particular reasons.

## **8. Finance and Planning**

**8.1 Management Report.** Sir William Proby reported on the Management Report to 30 September 2009, following his review with Nick Hanks, Head of Finance and Planning. The current year budget was in good shape, driven by high visitor numbers, although Picture

Library income was down and low interest rates were reducing investment returns. Income was ahead of forecast and costs well down, notably in Learning & Access where there were significant underspends but this appeared to be a matter of timing rather than cost savings. Key Performance Indicators were satisfactory with good visitor numbers and satisfaction ratings although UK Adult BME visitors were lower than hoped for.

Nick Hanks reported on the mid-year review of 2009-10 corporate objectives, which indicated that the Gallery was on track to deliver the vast majority of the activities and projects outlined for the year. On encouraging BME visitors, the Director drew attention to the forthcoming Indian Portraits exhibition and to the recently acquired portrait of Mary Seacole. On the need to improve retailing results, especially from the bookshop, the Director said that the Trading Company was considering two reports, the space study produced by CRAM and the retail report by Selina Fellows. The Trustees noted the contents of the Management Report.

**8.2 Budget context and the Draft Corporate Plan.** Sir William Proby welcomed the cautious approach embodied in the paper on the Corporate Plan, Budget Context and Recession Planning. Nick Hanks reported that cost savings had been identified as well as income earning initiatives. We were looking for across-the-board budget cuts (2% in 2010-11 and 5% against non-salary expenditure in 2011-12), as well as giving further consideration to various future scenarios. The Director drew attention to the potential to save costs on the storage of portraits. The levels of government and sponsorship income remained uncertain. On capital allocations, we were less vulnerable than some museums since currently we receive relatively little. The Director reported that the Shadow Culture Minister had expressed the wish to maintain free museum admission and to give National Museums greater independence, for example on year-end carry forwards.

The Trustees welcomed the paper on the Corporate Plan and drew attention to the need for the Gallery to position itself to take advantage of opportunities that may offer themselves beyond the immediate economic downturn. Trustees asked about rethinking the Trustees' Dinner and noted the contribution that overseas loans make to exhibitions.

## **9. Audit and Compliance Committee**

David Ross, Chairman of the Audit and Compliance Committee, reported on the recent review of the Corporate Risk Register, noting that the Committee was satisfied that risks were being kept under regular review. Cash handling procedures had been tightened up and a review of alternative cash collection firms led to the conclusion that the Gallery should continue with the existing supplier. The Corporate Risk Register had been reformatted so that Green scored risks came at the end of the register in summary detail.

'Loss/infringement of intangible assets' remained at Amber in the light of the Wikipedia dispute. Other risks which had been highlighted in the recent review included 'Failure to deliver a major exhibition', rated at Green, 'Damage to the collection resulting from increased visitor numbers' and 'Reduction in funding levels from DCMS', increased from Green to Amber. Two new risks had been added to the register, 'Environmental Conditions in the Frame Studio' at Amber and 'Failing to renew the East Wing lease' at Green.

Good progress had been made with the implementation of internal audit recommendations and also in the implementation of recommendations arising from the National Audit Office's Audit Completion Report following the audit of the 2008-9 accounts.

## **10. Health and Safety report**

Judith West reported on improvements to the management of health and safety and to the recording of accidents. She said that further steps were being taken to reduce the number of accidents on the stairs and that additional training on visitor management was being provided to support staff in the light of recent incidents of verbal abuse.

### **11. Gifts and Hospitality policy**

Nick Hanks presented the revised policy to the Trustees. The Director drew attention to the discussion at the Audit and Compliance Committee at which it was recommended that gifts of works of art from artists to Trustees should be recorded in the Register of Interests.

- THE TRUSTEES approved the Gifts and Hospitality policy

### **12. Matters for report**

Reports on Communications and Development, Resources, Learning and Loan requests were noted.

### **13. Any other business**

In response to a question, Pim Baxter reported that the Gallery was seeking to renew Herbert Smith as Spring Season sponsor after 2010 and expected to hear from the Arts and Humanities Research Council shortly on the outcome of our application for support for the project, Making Art in Tudor Britain.

### **Appended list of portraits on offer, 5 November 2009**

Three paintings accepted by HM Government in lieu of tax through Anthony d'Offay  
**6877 NATALIE BEVAN**, artist and collector, 'Supper', painting by Mark Gertler, 1928  
**6878 STANISLAWA BEVAN**, painter, painting by Harold Gilman, c.1913  
**6879 SPENCER FREDERICK GORE**, painter, painting by Harold Gilman, c.1911-12  
Acquisitions previously approved and now received

**6880 THOMAS HOLCROFT**, dramatist and writer; **WILLIAM GODWIN**, philosopher and novelist, drawing by Sir Thomas Lawrence, 1794  
Bequest from the late Kenneth Garlick approved

**6881 LYDIA LOPOKOVA (LADY KEYNES)**, dancer, pencil drawing by Christopher Wood, 1924  
Purchase from Art First at £2,500 approved

**6882 PATRICK CAULFIELD**, painter, printmaker and teacher, self-portrait drawing, 1983  
Gift from John Morton Morris approved

Seven vintage photographs by Andrew Lanyon

**P1341-2 (William) Sydney Graham**, poet, two photographs, May 1968, June 1969

**P1343-4 Roger Hilton**, artist, two photographs, April 1966, May 1968

**P1345 Bernard Howell Leach**, potter and writer, 1966

**P1346 Karl Martin Weschke**, artist and art lecturer, undated

**P1347 Nancy Wynne-Jones**, artist, 1966

Transfer from the Photographs Collection to the Primary Collection approved; purchased from Andrew Lanyon for £1000 for the Photographs Collection

Three vintage photographs by Robert Whitaker

**P1348-9 The Beatles: RINGO STARR, JOHN LENNON, GEORGE HARRISON, SIR PAUL McCARTNEY**, pop musicians, two photographs, October 1964 and 1965

**P1350 GERRY MARSDEN**, pop musician; member of 'Gerry and the Pacemakers', photograph, 1965

Purchase from Robert Whitaker at £11,500 approved, funded from Gift Aid donations from visitors

**TRACEY EMIN**, artist, silkscreen print by David Bailey, 2006 (printed 2009)  
Gift from David Bailey approved

**6883 SIR ANTHONY SHER**, actor and writer  
Pencil drawing by Andrew Ratcliffe, c.2001  
Purchase from Andrew Ratcliffe at £150 approved

**6884 JOHN WHITAKER ('JACK') STRAW**, politician, pencil drawing by Emma Wesley,  
2009  
Purchase from Emma Wesley at £500 approved

**6885 SIR MICHAEL DAVID ('MIKE') JACKSON**, General; Chief of the General Staff, oil  
painting by Brendan Kelly, 2009  
Commission from Brendan Kelly at £9000 approved

**6886 SIR WILLARD WENTWORTH WHITE**, singer and actor, oil painting by Ishbel  
Myerscough, 2009  
Commission from Ishbel Myerscough at £16,500 approved, funded by J.P. Morgan  
through the Fund for New Commissions

**6887 TRACEY EMIN**, artist, silkscreen print by David Bailey, 2006 (printed 2009)