

National Portrait Gallery

725th MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustees held at the National Portrait Gallery on
Thursday 13 July 2006

Present: Professor David Cannadine (Chairman)
Ms Zeinab Badawi
Mr Nicholas Blake
Professor Robert Boucher
Ms Flora Fraser
Professor Ludmilla Jordanova
Sir Christopher Ondaatje
Mr David Ross
Professor Sara Selwood
Miss Alexandra Shulman
Sir John Weston

In attendance: Mr Sandy Nairne
Mr Jacob Simon

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from the Rt Hon Baroness Amos, the Marchioness of Douro, Ms Amelia Fawcett and Sir Nicholas Grimshaw.

2. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that, following interviews, a recommendation on the appointment of an artist Trustee would be going to the Prime Minister for approval. He reported that Sir John Weston wished to stand down as Chairman of the Audit Committee in due course; a further report would be made at the November meeting.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2006 were approved.

4. Matters Arising

The Director reported that the Gallery had been the underbidder for the portrait of Princess Margaret by Pietro Annigoni and that an approach had been made to Viscount Linley for the loan of the portrait. On the Southwest region museums hub, it had been agreed to enter into an arrangement but on a modest scale.

5. Director's Report

The Director reported that the relaunch at Beningbrough on 1 June, cohosted with the National Trust, had been a good occasion and that there had been a very positive reaction so far.

The fundraising campaign for the portrait of John Donne had been successfully completed and an additional donation to support conservation, framing and preparations for display had been promised. An article had appeared in the July issue of *Art Newspaper* on the different valuations for the portrait. There would be a party to celebrate the acquisition and to thank donors on 21 September. The Trustees asked that their congratulations to staff on the successful campaign should be noted.

The Chandos portrait of Shakespeare, currently included in the *Searching for Shakespeare* exhibition at New Haven until September 2006, would be included in the Gallery's *Great Britons* exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery, Washington DC, in April 2007. In the interval, in the interests of minimising movement of the portrait, it would be left on loan at New Haven until the Washington exhibition.

DCMS has recently asked the Gallery, like other government institutions, to examine how to deal with an annual 7% real terms cut in Grant-in Aid. We would need to take this exercise seriously, whether or not such a cut was likely in reality.

In response to questions, the Director welcomed support for the Anti-Slavery 200th anniversary commemorations next year and said that coverage of the Angus McBean exhibition had been very good but that visitor numbers were not as yet quite as good as we had hoped.

6. Portraits on Offer

The Trustees welcomed the portraits of John Astley and Sir George Rooke, purchased from the Knatchbull Collection which was to have been auctioned at Sotheby's 7 June 2006. The Trustees also welcomed the acquisition, made with Chairman's approval earlier in the day, of a photograph of Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas, taken at the Oxford studio of Gillman & Co in 1893, for £11,000 hammer price at Sotheby's English Literature sale, 13 July 2006.

The Trustees decided that the portrait of Lady Jane Grey was of sufficient interest for inclusion in the collection, despite not being a lifetime representation, but considered that the price was excessive. As to the portrait by Jonathan Yeo, two trustees (David Ross and Sir John Weston) declared a conflict of interest and did not participate in the Board's decision to acquire the portrait. The Trustees noted the intended gift of the Bernard Schwartz Collection, which would be held in the Photographs Collection pending consideration for inclusion in the Primary Collection.

- THE TRUSTEES delegated authority to the Chairman to approve the acquisition of the portrait of Lady Jane Grey subject to satisfactory negotiations on price
- THE TRUSTEES agreed to the acquisition of the other portraits on the appended list

7. Commissions

The Director reported on progress with commissions.

On future commissions, it was proposed that Trustees should consider selecting fewer subjects at the November meeting, so allowing more time to be devoted to achieving the best possible results. Following discussion, a number of areas of achievement were highlighted for future commissions including popular music, politics, the environment and the law, with particular thought to be given to group portraits and portraits of younger people. A note would be sent to Trustees in September requesting ideas for discussion at the November meeting.

8. Finance and Planning

Barbara Jotham introduced the 2005/6 End-of-Year Report. She reported that the surplus of £300,000 would be transferred to the Investment and Contingency Fund. The statutory Annual Report and Accounts had been prepared in a new format to meet the new accounting requirements for charities. Its presentation now related more closely to the

strategic objectives of the Gallery's Business Plan and the new format for the Annual Review. All the DCMS Funding Agreement targets had been achieved.

The audit opinion included an 'emphasis of matter' paragraph on a possible contingent liability, disclosed under Note 21. Further advice regarding the Gallery's income generation had been received in a recent meeting with our tax advisers. Some concern was expressed about the potential conflict of interest in the National Audit Office in their relationship both to the Gallery and to HM Revenue and Customs. Sir John Weston, Chairman of the Audit and Compliance Committee, reported that the Committee had examined the Annual Report and Accounts and was happy to commend them to Trustees.

- THE TRUSTEES approved the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2006

9. Audit and Compliance Committee

Sir John Weston reported on the recent review of the Risk Register and drew attention to the minutes of the Audit and Compliance Committee's meeting of 29 June. There was further work to be done on how best to incorporate risk appetite into the Risk Register and the draft risk policy was to be revisited to improve clarity, before being presented to the Trustees for approval in November. He added that under risk C3, a PAYE audit was now to be held at the Gallery in August.

10. Trustees Handbook

The Trustees welcomed the new edition of the Trustees Handbook. The Director reported that DCMS is proposing to give further 'conflict of interest' advice in the light of the acquisition at Tate of a work of art from a Trustee. The Director invited any further detailed comments from Trustees, to be forwarded to him.

11. Collections Care and Storage Plan

John Wykeham set out the nature of the available options. There were potential financial advantages of working with Tate and other museums in partnership. In addition, a joint approach to government for support from such a partnership was more likely to meet favour. The Director warned that it was conceivable that Tate might not go ahead with their plans, in view of their other building priorities, but that the Gallery was in a position to pursue other options.

- THE TRUSTEES agreed in principle to such a partnership and gave approval to the negotiation of Heads of Terms with Tate for submission to the November meeting

12. Annual Exhibitions Report

The Chairman welcomed Sarah Tinsley as Head of Exhibitions and Collections Management. Following a presentation by the Director and Sarah Tinsley, discussion focused on the importance of benchmarking, visitor comments and market research in exhibition pricing, on the nature of the influence of pricing on visitor numbers. In considering criteria for success, it was worth considering an exhibition's lasting achievements.

13. Research

Peter Funnell introduced his report by referring to issues of capacity for research. Discussion focused on the importance of the Arts and Humanities Research Council knowledge transfer programme and the Higher Education innovation fund, the need to establish or continue partnerships other funding bodies such as the Wellcome and the Paul Mellon Centre, the possibility of opening potential research seminars on portraiture to

outside scholars, the importance of cataloguing as being seen as a research resource and the possibility of inviting Professor Philip Esler, chief executive of AHRC, to address a group of staff and Trustees on AHRC priorities and programmes.

14. Displays

Paul Moorhouse introduced the four main themes of his report. The Director added that the proposals applied more widely than the 20th century displays. He noted that the First Floor Landing would not be used in future for a continuous display of royal portraits.

15. Matters for Report

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

16. Any Other Business

It was requested that dates of meetings for next year should be circulated as soon as possible.

Appendix

List of portraits acquired since the previous meeting or on offer, 13 July 2006

JOHN ASTLEY

Purchased with Chairman's approval for £56,103

SIR GEORGE ROOKE

Purchased with Chairman's approval for £32,083

LADY JANE DUDLEY (née GREY)

Purchase approved in principle but acquisition to be subject to negotiating a lower price, to be approved by the Chairman

Two drawings by Grace Black
(JULIA) ELEANOR ('TUSSY') MARX
MARY ELEANOR BENSON

Purchase for £1000 approved

JOSEF HERMAN

Intent of bequest approved

Seventeen drawings by Barry Fantoni

Dave Allen

Arthur Askey

Ronald William George ('Ronnie') Barker and Ronald Balfour ('Ronnie') Corbett

Antony Kenneth ('Tony') Blackburn

Richard Austen Butler, 1st Baron Butler of Saffron Walden

Kenneth Arthur ('Ken') Dodd

Richard Gilbert ('Dick') Emery (two drawings)

Bruce Forsyth

Russell Harty

Sir Edward Heath

Frankie Howerd

Sir Ludovic Kennedy

Sir Freddie Laker

Sir James Wilson Vincent ('Jimmy') Savile

Alan Donald Whicker

Harold Wilson, Baron Wilson of Rievaulx

Gift accepted

SIR STEVEN GEOFFREY REDGRAVE

Commissioned portrait approved, fee to artist £21,250 plus equipment costs £1,800

(KEITH) RUPERT MURDOCH

Purchase for £10,000 approved

Bernard Schwartz Collection

Gift to Photographs Collection noted