

National Portrait Gallery

SEVEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTEENTH MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustees held at the National Portrait Gallery on
Thursday 8 July 2004

Present:

Sir David Scholey (Chairman)
Professor Robert Boucher
Professor David Cannadine
Ms Amelia Fawcett
Ms Flora Fraser
Professor Ludmilla Jordanova
Professor Phillip King
Sir Christopher Ondaatje
Ms 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, Sir Max Hastings, Mr Tom Phillips and Professor the Earl Russell.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2004 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

The Director reported that the Gallery hoped to acquire the second drawing of Drue Heinz by David Hockney approved at the last Trustees Meeting.

4. Director's Report

The Director drew attention to two tabled documents: the final version of the Business Plan and the newly published Annual Review. He reported that the Review Day on 16 September would be similar in format to last year's and would be devoted to the theme of how do we define and measure success. There had been a very positive public reaction to the BP Portrait Award despite some lukewarm responses from art critics, about which Trustees expressed some concern. The Chairman asked for the results of the Visitor Choice vote to be passed to Trustees following the end of the exhibition. He commented on the striking increase in attendance this year, both for the Gallery and for the Portrait Award. He raised the matter of the government target of 2.5% efficiency savings throughout government and Trustees expressed concern at the potential adverse impact of this target on the work of the Gallery should it translate into a reduction in government grant.

5. Financial and Planning

Bruce Jackson tabled an amendment to the Statutory Accounts following finalisation of the accounts in discussion with the auditors. Following these adjustments, the final operating deficit stood at £245,000 while the amount transferred to the Investment and Contingency Fund had been reduced to £175,000. He drew attention to the notional capital charge of

£812,000 shown in the Statement of Financial Activities; the risk remained that increases in capital charges could have an impact on the level of cash Grant-in-Aid the Gallery receives. The Trustees noted the changes to the wording of the Reserves and Investment Policies and noted the Financial Report May 2004.

- THE TRUSTEES approved the Statutory Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2004
- THE TRUSTEES approved the allocation of £200,000 from the Investment and Contingency Fund to specified projects in line with the Gallery's Reserves Policy

6. Audit and Compliance Committee

Sir John Weston, Chairman of the Audit and Compliance Committee, reported on the recent review of the Risk Management Register, noting that the Committee was satisfied that risks were being kept under regular review. He drew attention to the three most highly rated risks, relating to the external economic environment, other external risks and funding levels, and to two risks at the next level: Government regulation, where Customs & Excise had advised that bodies such as the Gallery would be able to opt out of the exemption not to charge VAT on admission charges; and physical disaster, where the Gallery had revisited its risk assessment for the South London picture store in light of the MoMart fire in East London. Bruce Jackson reported on the Internal Audit Tender process. The Gallery had received reassurance from AHL Ltd that the loss of a member of their audit team would not adversely affect their service.

- THE TRUSTEES approved the recommendation that AHL Ltd be appointed to provide Internal Audit services to the Gallery for three years from 1 April 2005

7. Portraits on Offer

The Chief Curator reported on the portrait of David Sylvester by Larry Rivers, approved for purchase at the February Trustees meeting. Towards the cost of just over £105,500 (calculated at exchange rate of \$1.80), we have the offer of £35,000 from the Art Fund. We propose to use the annual gift from Jayne Wrightsman for this portrait as being by a major American artist, and as a way of demonstrating to her the importance of her support. We have three approaches outstanding to those with an interest in Sylvester and still hope to obtain some further support, possibly in the form of an additional grant from the Art Fund, before the portrait goes on display in September.

- THE TRUSTEES agreed to the acquisition of the portraits on the attached list for the Primary Collection with the exception of the ten colour prints by Horace Ov  which were approved for the Photographs Collection

8. Commissions

The reports on Annual Commissions and on Photograph Commissions were noted.

9. 150th Anniversary

Pim Baxter described preparations for celebrating the 150th Anniversary in 2006. The Director reported that he had had conversations with the commissioning editor of Channel 5 concerning a series on the history of portraiture. The Gallery was considering an exhibition of Treasures from the collection for showing at our sister institution in Washington DC in autumn 2006 following their reopening.

The Trustees welcomed the Anniversary fund-raising plans but felt that there was a need to adopt a more coherent approach to the opportunities the occasion presents to telling the story of the Gallery. We need to identify what particular stories the Gallery is asking people to reconsider and how best to realise this, whether through exhibitions and display of the collection, publications or events. Trustees agreed that there should be a preliminary

discussion on what the Gallery should be trying to achieve at the Review Day on 16 September, to be followed by a more detailed report at the Trustees Meeting on 18 November.

10. Beningbrough Hall Project

The Chairman welcomed Dinah Casson of Casson Mann to the meeting. Lucy Peltz reported that the regional Heritage Lottery Fund officer had broadly welcomed our proposal which would greatly extend access at Beningbrough. The outcome of the application should be announced in March 2005. The Chairman emphasised the importance of 'double branding' at Beningbrough so that the role of the Gallery should be immediately apparent as well as that of the National Trust. Dinah Casson and Lucy Peltz described the scheme to the Trustees, explaining the nature of the hang and the variety of means of interpretation including new IT facilities and a sound guide. The Trustees warmly welcomed the proposals.

11. Long Term Loans

The Director said that this report formed the first stage in the process of reviewing long-term loans to other institutions and that it was a prelude to a programme of actively seeking to place additional works on long-term loan. The Trustees welcomed the report.

Concerning loans to the Gallery the Chairman suggested that we should seek right of first refusal to such portraits should they come on the market.

12. Matters for Report

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

13. Any Other Business

It was suggested that we should experiment with readings and events in the Bookshop once this space has been refurbished.

Appended list of portraits on offer, 8 July 2004

ELISABETH BERGNER

Gift accepted

Twenty-seven prints by Jorge Lewinski for Transfer to the Primary Collection

Transfer approved

Three bromide prints by Markéta Luskacová

JOANNA MARIE DREW

ROBERT JACOB ALEXANDER SKIDELSKY, BARON SKIDELSKY

DAVID WIDGERY

Purchase approved

Ten colour prints by Horace Ové

MICHAEL ABBENSETTS

ULRIC CROSS

MARSHA HUNT

ISAAC JULIEN

KWAME KWEI-ARMAGH

ERROL LLOYD

GEORGINA MASSON

MICHAEL X (MICHAEL ABDUL MALIK)

DEREK WALCOTT

THE LIME: SAMUEL SELVON, JOHN LA ROSE, ANDREW SALKEY

Purchase approved for the Photographs Collection

JOHN CORNFORTH

Gift accepted

DAME JUDITH OLIVIA ('JUDI') DENCH

Purchase approved, with funding from JP Morgan through the Fund for New Commissions

T FOR THE BEATLES: John Lennon, Sir Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Ringo Starr

Purchase approved