

National Portrait Gallery

SEVEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTEENTH MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustees held at the National Portrait Gallery on
Thursday 18 November 2004

Present:

Sir David Scholey (Chairman)
Ms Zeinab Badawi
Professor Robert Boucher
Professor David Cannadine
The Marchioness of Douro
Ms Amelia Fawcett
Ms Flora Fraser
Professor Ludmilla Jordanova
Professor Phillip King
Sir Christopher Ondaatje
Mr Tom Phillips
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.

2. Trustees

The Chairman expressed the sadness of Trustees at the death of Professor the Earl Russell on 14 October. He thanked Professor Phillip King, whose last meeting this would be, for his service, and welcomed the appointment of two new Trustees, each for a period of four years, Lady Douro from 3 September and Zeinab Badawi from 11 October. He announced that his own term of office would expire in September 2005 and that Tom Phillips, as the senior Trustee, would be taking soundings as to his successor as Chairman.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2004 were approved.

4. Matters Arising

The Director drew attention to the funding obtained from the Sylvester family and from the estates of Francis Bacon and John Edwards towards the acquisition of the portrait of David Sylvester.

5. Director's Report

The Director reported that Stephen Allen would be taking a prestigious job as Head of Learning and Programmes at the National Museums of Scotland; the Trustees expressed their appreciation of his service to the Gallery and congratulated him on his new appointment. The Director reported that Howard Smith, formerly Head of Curatorial Services at Manchester City Galleries, had joined the staff for six months to replace Kathleen Soriano

while she was participating in the Clore Duffield Fellowship programme until June 2005. He also reported that Paul Moorhouse, a senior curator at Tate, would be commencing his appointment as 20th century curator in early February. The Trustees offered their congratulations to Harold Blundell on the award of the Imperial Service Medal for long and dedicated service to the Gallery.

In response to questions, the Director stated that staff turnover was not unduly high, that the favourite work of BP Portrait Award visitors was by Mitch Griffith for the second year running and that the increase in Gallery visitor numbers was in part due to the successful exhibition programme. The Evaluation Report on the new Regency display was broadly positive as to the success of the display in interpreting Regency history and portraiture.

6. Portraits on Offer

The Chief Curator reported the portrait of the Duke of Norfolk had now been acquired for the Gallery with the help of grants of £105,500 from the National Heritage Memorial Fund and £33,335 from the National Art Collections Fund. The total purchase price was £211,335 after tax remission, made up of £12,500 plus VAT payable to Christie's as their 'buyer's premium' by 2 May 2005 and £198,885 payable through Christie's to the vendor in two stages, £132,590 which was in hand for payment in the current week and the balance of £66,295 by 2 May 2005. The Trustees congratulated the Director and curators on this acquisition.

Trustees welcomed the loan of the portrait of Mary Seacole and agreed in principle to consider the portrait as a possible future acquisition, expressing the hope that the owner would give the Gallery first refusal. A maximum bid was approved of £35,000 hammer price at auction for the portrait of Edward Wadsworth. The portrait of Bernard Haitink was accepted for the collection but Trustees asked the Director to approach the artist to see if there was scope to tighten the composition.

- THE TRUSTEES agreed to the acquisition of the portraits on the attached list

Peter Funnell reported on an early portrait of Roger Fry by Vanessa Bell which had just been offered to the Gallery. The Trustees expressed approval in principle to this possible acquisition, which would be brought back to the February meeting for formal approval and for which the Gallery would seek partial external funding.

The Trustees expressed concern about the lighting of some portraits in the Board Room. The Director suggested that arrangements could be made for Trustees to view such portraits in the Conservation Studio before or during the meeting.

7. Commissions

The Trustees welcomed the reports on current Annual Commissions and Photograph Commissions.

On future Annual Commissions, amongst the priorities for 2004/5 as voted on by Trustees were Sir David Hare, Sir Michael Howard and Rupert Murdoch. The Director reported an offer may be available of an existing portrait of Rupert Murdoch by Jonathan Yeo which Trustees agreed to consider for the collection. The Chairman suggested that it would be helpful to have an idea of the medium curators thought appropriate for each proposed commission.

Some trustees expressed reservations about the current voting system and, while it was recognised that no method was perfect, the Chairman asked trustees to give the Director their ideas for improving the system so that it could be re-examined, perhaps as a staged process allowing an opportunity for proposals to be made, discussions to be held and a

vote then to be taken. The Director was asked to propose a revised process to the next Trustees meeting. In order to maintain the momentum in the commissioning process, the Chairman asked Trustees to select any of the priority list which could be agreed unanimously. Consequently, it was decided to proceed with commissions of portraits of Sir David Hare and Sir Michael Howard.

8. Finance and Planning

Bruce Jackson presented the Financial Report to 30 September 2004 which the Trustees welcomed. Plans for 2005/6 would be reviewed in the light of the outcome of the Government Spending Review. The Trustees discussed the current Planning Round, noting the change to the financial objective to include the wider management of resources, and noting progress in respect of the current Business Plan for 2004-2007.

- THE TRUSTEES reaffirmed the strategic objectives set out in the Corporate Plan for 2004-2009

The Trustees noted the need to amend the BACS agreement with NatWest.

- THE TRUSTEES approved the upgrade to BACSTEL-IP
- THE TRUSTEES authorised the Head of Finance & Planning and the Finance Manager to sign the Customer Agreement on behalf of the Gallery and to nominate Authorised Users as required

Pim Baxter reported on progress towards setting up the National Portrait Fund. The Trustees welcomed the choice of option 3, an 'internal' trust with separate Trust Board, as being the structure most likely to fulfil the objectives expressed for the proposed endowment fund. The Director said that a further report would be brought to Trustees.

9. Audit and Compliance Committee

Sir John Weston, Chairman of the Audit and Compliance committee, introduced the register of key risks and drew attention to the continued high risk relating to the challenging economic environment, other external risks (due to the continued threat of terrorism together with recent industrial action) and uncertainty regarding future Grant-in-Aid. The risk to governance and management effectiveness had also been upgraded following the British Museum's withdrawal of internal audit services (AHL Ltd, the Gallery's new Internal Auditors, will instead complete the current Internal Audit programme). While the risk of robbery and vandalism had also been upgraded in the light of recent incidents at other museums and galleries, the Committee considered that reasonable measures had been taken by the Gallery to mitigate this risk. Trustees asked that the high-level Risk Register should be circulated with their papers.

A revised version of the draft Terms of Reference of the Audit and Compliance committee was tabled.

- THE TRUSTEES approved in principle the revised Terms of Reference of the Audit and Compliance Committee
- THE TRUSTEES approved the appointment of Stephen Souchon as a co-opted member of Audit and Compliance Committee, subject to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the Chairman of the Audit and Compliance Committee meeting with Mr Souchon to confirm his suitability

10. The Chandos Portrait

Tarnya Cooper reported on the proposed conservation treatment of the Chandos portrait of Shakespeare and on the portrait's place in the Searching for Shakespeare exhibition

scheduled for 2006. There would be an opportunity for Trustees to see the portrait in the conservation studio next summer.

11. Digitisation

The Chief Curator reported on progress in making the collections available through digitisation. The Gallery needs to find £700,000 over the next five years so that 160,000 items or half the Reference Collection can be placed online by 2009. Advice from Trustees on the programme and on sources of funding would be welcome.

12. Trustees Strategic Review Day

The Director reported on the Trustees Strategic Review Day. Further investigation would be made to try to establish the number of core visitors to the Gallery who are repeat users.

13. National Strategy 2006-2009

The Trustees welcomed the report from Laura Down on progress with the National Strategy agreed by Trustees in February 2003 and on plans for the period 2006-2009, which would focus primarily on Regional Partners, Touring Exhibitions and Partnership Projects. Sara Selwood offered advice concerning the choice of a second Regional Hub as a partner.

14. Freedom of Information

Robin Francis reported on action being taken by the Gallery in order to comply with the Freedom of Information Act, which would come into full effect on 1 January 2005. The Gallery is committed to openness and already responds to many requests for information. It is not anticipated the Act will require significant change in Gallery practices but procedures are being tightened to ensure compliance.

15. Matters for Report

Reports on Communications and Development, Building and Resources, Learning and Access and Loan requests were noted. The Director drew attention to the success of Pim Baxter in revitalising the American Friends and reported on the opportunities presented by the Gallery's forward programme of exhibitions and activities relating to the United States. The Director also drew attention to the negotiations concerning the renewal of the catering contract. There was some feeling that the Portrait Restaurant needed to be more child friendly.

Appended list of portraits on offer, 18 November 2004

THOMAS HOWARD, 4th DUKE OF NORFOLK

Purchase noted

THOMAS CAVENDISH

Purchase approved

MARY JANE SEACOLE

Long-term loan approved

EDWARD ALEXANDER WADSWORTH

Auction bid of up to £35,000 hammer price approved

Two drawings by Peter Wardle

CLAIRE DOROTHEA TAYLOR PALLEY

ATHOL FUGARD

Gift approved

DEREK JARMAN
Purchase approved

JOCELYN HERBERT
Purchase approved

Fourteen photographs by Lee Miller

EILEEN AGAR

SIR FREDERICK ASHTON

LEONORA CARRINGTON

WELLES WINTEMUTE COATES

DAME IVY COMPTON-BURNETT

GILES (CARL RONALD GILES)

SIR ALEC GUINNESS

HENRY MOORE

OSCAR KOKOSCHKA

SIR EDUARDO LUIGI PAOLOZZI

DAME FLORA ROBSON

GRAHAM VIVIAN SUTHERLAND

LEE MILLER (LADY PENROSE) Self-Portrait

LEE MILLER (LADY PENROSE), Collaborative portrait taken with David E. Scherman

Purchase approved

BERNARD HAITINK
Purchase approved

ONORA SYLVIA O'NEILL, BARONESS O'NEILL of BENGARVE
Purchase approved