

Date: _____ Approved: _____

THE VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS
Minutes of the Art and Audience Committee Meeting
Held, pursuant to due notice, in The Claiborne Robertson Room
Wednesday, 15 September 2010, 2:00 pm

Presiding: James W. McGlothlin, Co-Chair
Secretary: Ms. Suzanne Broyles

There were present:

James W. McGlothlin, Co-Chair
Karen C. Abramson
Dr. Elizabeth Ann Fisher
Ms. Susan S. Goode
Ms. Barbara-lyn B. Morris
Dr. Lindley T. Smith
Ms. Mary F. White
Thurston R. Moore, Ex-Officio
Mrs. Suzanne T. Mastracco, Ex-Officio

By Invitation:

Alex Nyerges, Director
Ms. Suzanne Broyles
Dr. Lee Anne Chesterfield
Cynthia Kerr Fralin
Ms. Joan W. Murphy
Robin Nicholson
Ms. Nancy Parsons
John Ravenal
Ms. Alexis Vaughn

Absent:

Thomas F. Farrell II, Co-Chair
Dr. Elizabeth F. Harris
Ms. Stanley F. Pauley
Dr. Alvin J. Schexnider

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman, James McGlothlin, called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm and welcomed new trustee and committee member Dr. Lindley T. Smith. Mr. McGlothlin explained that he was co-chair of this new Art and Audience Committee along with Tom Farrell who had a conflict today. Mr. McGlothlin briefed the Committee on its responsibilities, the first two strategies specified in the Strategic Plan: programming and marketing. Task forces or project-oriented subcommittees will be appointed as needed from this Committee to address specific items in the business plans for each strategy as may relate, for example to initiatives in education, outreach, statewide partnerships, audience diversity and the like. The Committee may review parts of the exhibition plan but approval of the exhibition plan and schedule will remain a full Board function. Director, Alex Nyerges, pointed out that this Committee was an evolution of two major past committees, the Artistic Oversight Committee and the Education and Statewide Partnerships

Committee. Mr. Nyerges added that the Committee's oversight included key initiatives in the Strategic Plan and so each quarter we will look at how these are performing on the Strategic Plan "dashboard." He said that if anyone has agenda items for these meetings to please send them to Robin Nicholson, the Committee liaison.

II. EXHIBITIONS

Banner Exhibition Announcement – Robin Nicholson

Robin Nicholson reported that the Picasso exhibition is not yet public knowledge, but was announced to the full Board last May and the public announcement will take place within the next two weeks. Mr. Nicholson stated that this exhibition opens in Seattle in October and a number of VMFA staff members will attend to see what it will be like for us in February. Picasso will be the biggest exhibition in scale and cost and attendance that this Museum has ever offered. He said a series of internal meetings with security, exhibition design, etc. have been held in preparation for this exhibition. We expect large daily crowds similar to the last two weeks of the Tiffany exhibition when attendance spiked. He mentioned possible measures to handle the expected crowds could be to extend the hours, or have premium hours with higher ticket prices. Committee members gave suggestions that they have seen at other museums, such as allowing members to enter the exhibition an hour early. Mr. Nicholson said the main issue was the public announcement which will be sent through all the regular channels and the website which will offer on-line ticket sales and a video of Alex Nyerges. We will partner with hotels in the area and The Jefferson will offer a Picasso package.

Sally Mann: *The Flesh and The Spirit* Exhibition – John Ravenal

John Ravenal gave a brief overview on the upcoming Sally Mann Exhibition (November 12 – January 23) which he described as a thematic mid-sized show, not a retrospective. Mr. Ravenal curated the show which is the first exhibition presented at VMFA of Mann's works. He explained that Mann uses the collodion wet-plate process invented in the 1850s which produces spots and imperfections in the images. He said the body is the central motif or concept in the works in this exhibition which emphasizes her new and recent works while also selectively including earlier series. Mr. Ravenal described some of the works in each of the series included in the show explaining that some of the pieces have never before been seen. He also explained how some of the more challenging images in the exhibition would be presented in the context of her entire career to show how they were an important element of her art and creativity.

Report on China Projects – Alex Nyerges

Alex Nyerges reported on his recent trip to China with Robin Nicholson. They visited the Palace Museum in the Forbidden City in Beijing and discussed a number of future projects. They set up a seven year collaborative agreement with symposia, staff sharing of curators and conservators, and exhibition exchange. The first exhibition from the Forbidden City would come in 2013 or 2014 and we would then send them a major exhibition of VMFA's treasures. This would be the first exhibition from an American museum ever to be presented in the Palace Museum. This cultural exchange program is in line with Governor McDonnell's work on building commercial exchange with China and Senator Warner's recent export conference held here at VMFA.

III. OTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT

No further business was brought before the Committee, and the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 3:07 pm.

Suzanne Broyles, Secretary of the Museum