

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts  
Draft Minutes of the Art and Education Committee Meeting  
16 March 2016, 10:00am  
Norfolk Waterside Marriott, Chesapeake Room

There were present:

Susan S. Goode, Co-Chair  
Karen C. Abramson  
Anne Battle  
Tyler Bishop  
Kenneth Dye  
Cynthia Kerr Fralin  
Margaret N. Gottwald  
Sara O'Keefe  
Michele Petersen  
Charles H. Seilheimer, Jr.  
Shantaram Talegaonkar  
William A. Royall, Ex-officio

By invitation:

Dr. Lee Anne Chesterfield  
Jody Green  
Cameron O'Brion  
Dr. Michael R. Taylor

Absent:

Ivan P. Jecklin, Co-Chair  
Mary Anne Carlson  
Richard B. Gilliam  
Frederica P. Gray  
Terrell Luck Harrigan  
Keith Kisse  
Paul Monroe  
Dr. Claude G. Perkins  
Pamela C. Reynolds  
Mary Gray Shockey

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Goode called the meeting to order at 10:16 AM

II. MINUTES APPROVAL

**Motion:** proposed by Mr. Royall and seconded by Ms. Battle that the minutes of the December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Art and Education Committee be approved as distributed. Motion carried.

III. MELLON FOUNDATION GRANT FOR THE CENTER FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN ART

Chief Curator & Deputy Director for Art and Education Michael Taylor outlined his division's plans for the funds that will be included as part of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Grant that recently was awarded to VMFA. Dr. Taylor reported that portions of these funds will be put forth towards the use of

new technology—such as X-Ray or CT-imaging—for the study and conservation of art objects from VMFA’s African Art collection. Important types of objects from the collection to be considered for conservation include terracotta objects and Ethiopian metalwork. Dr. Taylor anticipates that this will lead to significant, scholarly publications and media attention that will align with the Strategic Plan and enhance VMFA’s reputation in the Museum community.

#### IV. EXHIBITIONS UPDATE

Dr. Taylor presented a summary of 2016 exhibitions for the committee. He noted that *Rodin: Evolution of a Genius* recently closed on March 13, 2016, and made all of its financial and attendance projections. Currently, the statewide *Thomas R. Schiff: Virginia 360°* exhibition is on display in the Evans Court Gallery and is part of a plan to develop more internal exhibitions that will travel across Virginia. This exhibition will travel to several of the Museum’s statewide partners and develop VMFA’s brand and reputation for excellence across the state.

Coming up in June, *Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic* will open and it will serve as a resource for encouraging attendance amongst African American visitors—a goal of VMFA’s Strategic Plan. Dr. Taylor noted that technology and programming specific to *Wiley* is under development. *Gordon Parks: Back to Fort Scott* will run concurrently with *Wiley* and features the photographs of Parks who was the first African American photographer to work for LIFE magazine.

In November, *Jasper Johns and Edvard Munch: Love, Loss, and the Cycle of Life*—an exhibition organized in partnership with the Munch Museum of Oslo, Norway—will open to the public. John Ravenal, former VMFA Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, curated the exhibition, and Dr. Taylor anticipates that it will build an important, national reputation for the Museum due to its groundbreaking scholarship.

Lastly, Dr. Taylor noted important purchases for the VMFA Archives, including the purchase of 35 photographs and the personal archive of Louis Draper, who was a co-founder of an African-American photography collective called Kamoinge. VMFA won the bid over both the Smithsonian and Duke University, and Dr. Taylor announced that there will be an exhibition associated with this important, new collection in 2019.

In response to questions from Mr. Royall and Ms. Abramson, Dr. Taylor noted that a full exhibition schedule through 2020 would be provided to the committee.

#### V. EXHIBITION PLANNING WHITE PAPER

Dr. Taylor presented a copy of the Exhibition Planning White Paper to the committee and explained the importance of the document. He said that it stresses the importance of cross communication and meeting deadlines. To recalibrate the organization, the white paper focuses on a timeline for success and working further out on the development of exhibitions. Mr. Royall expressed his admiration for the white paper, and it was enthusiastically endorsed by the committee.

#### VI. DIVISION STAFF SEARCHES

Next, Dr. Taylor gave an update on staff searches for two positions at VMFA. He noted that his division continues to work on the search for the Director of Exhibition Planning. This position will help to implement the initiatives outlined in the white paper, which was developed through a retreat with TDC—the Museum’s strategic planning consultants. Currently, the search has been narrowed down to three very qualified candidates. Dr. Taylor reported that VMFA is conducting a second search for the open position of the Sydney and Frances Lewis Family Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art. Lastly, Dr. Taylor

reported that Dr. Leo Mazow has been hired to serve as the Louise B. and J. Harwood Cochrane Curator and Head of the Department of American Art with a start date of June 25<sup>th</sup>.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS / ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Ms. Goode adjourned the meeting at 11:09 AM.

Recorded by: Jody Green  
Administrative Assistant for the Director's Office