

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts  
Minutes of the Education Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, September 16, 2020, 1:30 pm  
Video Conference

There were present:

Jil Womack Harris, Chair  
Betty Neal Crutcher, Vice Chair  
Lynette Allston  
Carol Ann Bischoff  
Kelly Bisogno, Department of Education  
Kenneth Dye  
Anne Edwards  
Mary Frediani, Foundation Liaison  
Cherry Gardner  
Carolyn Garner, Foundation Liaison  
Suzy Szasz Palmer  
Monroe E. Harris, Jr., Ex-Officio  
Jim Klaus, Foundation Co-President, Ex-Officio  
Lilo Ukrop, Foundation Co-President, Ex-Officio

Absent:

Maura Bisceglia  
Gil Bland  
Satya Rangarajan  
Jennifer Sisk, Foundation Liaison  
Rupa Tak

By Invitation:

Alex Nyerges, Director  
Jeffrey Allison  
Kay Baker  
Caprice Bragg  
Natasha Campbell  
Cammy Carleton  
Stephanie Cooperstein  
Celeste Fetta  
Tom Gutenberger  
Jan Hatchet  
Hubert Phipps  
Hossein Sadid  
Michael Taylor  
Ashlin Wilbanks  
Michel Zajur

I. CALL TO ORDER

At 1:33pm, Chair Jil Harris called the meeting to order and welcomed Committee members.

## II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Ms. Harris acknowledged that there were no public comments.

## III. MINUTES APPROVAL

**Motion:** proposed by Ms. Harris and seconded by Ms. Carol Ann Bischoff to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2019 Education Committee meeting as distributed. Motion approved.

## IV. EDUCATION UPDATES

Director of Education, Celeste Fetta then reported on the accomplishments of the Education Division since the end of FY20 and throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic. She noted that the division ended the fiscal year with 2,362 programs serving 144,025 participants. She reported that the team had received the NEH Cares Grant to support virtual initiatives and have received a CHASE sponsorship. Ms. Fetta then described the various ways in which education programming was adapted for online platforms. Notable events included the online Dominion Jazz Café, CHASE Friday Nights, and the upcoming symposia for *Sunken Cities* and *The Kamoinge Workshop*. She noted that the use of virtual platforms like Zoom have led to engaging not only the audience that would have attended in-person, but also individuals across the state and country. In addition to these event, she said that educators have been hard at work creating educational content for the *VMFA Learn Site*. She reported that 100 new resources have been added since April, and at the end of FY20 the site had a 90% increase in page views.

Ms. Fetta then transitioned into discussing the classes for the fall that would be taking place in-person and online. It was noted that the Education Division has worked closely with Housekeeping to ensure that they have the appropriate safety and cleaning protocols in place. She said that the Studio School would have 15 classes and 4 workshops onsite with 13 online generating \$39,000 in revenue. She also stated that the Youth and Teen program would have 13 onsite classes with 11 online generating \$4,460 in revenue. From here she described the way that the Distance Learning Program adapted for virtual classrooms pairing live sessions with asynchronous interactive guided exercises.

Ms. Fetta then ended her report by saying that despite the temporary closure the tour guide program was still active in training new individuals.

## V. VMFA ON THE ROAD/STATEWIDE UPDATES

Jeffrey Allison, Manager of Statewide Programs and Exhibitions and the Paul Mellon Collection Educator, provided information on the VMFA Emergency Artist Relief Fund. He described the process for choosing 40 recipients from across the Commonwealth to receive \$5,000 fellowships.

He said that the panel received 353 applications from Alexandria to South Hill and from Virginia Beach to Grundy. He said that the recipients were a diverse group from every corner of the state. He described the announcement event that took place on August 25 with Governor Northam, Director Nyerges, and Trustee President Harris making remarks. He then presented the committee with examples of artwork from the recipients.

At this point, Mr. Allison provided an update of *VMFA on the Road*, noting that the inaugural exhibit *How Far Can Creativity Take You* was attended by over 82,000 Virginians from July 2019 to January 2020. He said that the new exhibition *A View from Home* was installed in February/March 2020, but the opening was delayed until July 2020. It opened at the Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History on July 14. It was well received and visitors appreciated the safety precautions that were taken. Mr. Allison then presented photos of several of the pieces from the exhibition to the committee.

## VI. OTHER BUSINESS / ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Harris took a moment to congratulate Ms. Fetta and Mr. Allison on the great strides their teams have made despite the temporary museum closure and the other hurdles that COVID-19 has presented. She noted that both teams have worked tirelessly to ensure that VMFA is able to fulfill their mission.

There being no further business, Ms. Harris adjourned the meeting at 2:36pm.

Recorded by: Stephanie Cooperstein  
Administrative and Project Coordinator, Director's Office