

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

Meeting called to order at 1:33pm.

Full attendance listed in the meeting minutes.

Jil Harris: Michael, are we ready to get started?

Michael Taylor: I think we're ready to get started. Welcome, everyone to the Education Committee meeting. We are having some challenges with WebEx. We had them earlier with the Building Committee. It's all part of the fun of going through a pandemic but we will make it work as they say and we'll keep calm and carry on. That's what my people say. I think the first agenda item was to approve the minutes. It's kind of amazing, I don't think this committee has met since December 10, 2019 but we're going need a motion to approve the minutes.

Carol Ann Bishcoff: Hey Michael, this is Carol Ann. Before you do that, when I looked at the minutes it had shown Joan Brock making a motion that I seconded, but she's not listed in the list of attendees. So if you include her on the list of attendees, then I'm happy to move the motion to approve the minutes.

Michael Taylor: I'm sure that's an easy change to make.

Carol Ann Bischoff: Okay, well then so moved.

Committee Members: Aye.

Michael Taylor: Anyone opposed? Good, we have our minutes approved. As you can imagine, going through what we've been through since December, this has been a momentous time in the museum's history and I'm just so proud of how the Education Department has reacted. They haven't missed a beat. They've done incredible programs that you're about to hear. You just wait, this is going be some meeting. We've just got two agenda items. It's really just Jeffrey (Allsion) to talk about what we've been doing on Statewide and Celeste (Fetta) about what we've been doing on Education. So Celeste why don't you take us away with your updates?

Celeste Neff: Thank you, Michael. It's great to see, in quotes, all of you. I hope all of you are doing well and your families are doing well. Like Michael said, I'm excited to share with you what we've been up to since we last spoke since the museum closed in March and then when we were back to open in July. We haven't missed a beat, been very busy. I'm really excited to just show you the highlights and each sort of area that we focus on in Education. So if you are new to the Trustee board, this is also a great opportunity to kind of walk you through all the areas we cover in Education, because I have a slide on each. So we're going get started with the first slide. Stephanie, could you advance that for me please? Just to share stats to kick us off for FY20. I'm still loving these stats. These are really great considering that we were closed and had to cancel some things. We did 2,800 programs in Education and Statewide and still served 1.2 million participants. We offered a

bit fewer programs due to the closure but we increased our participation by at least 8%. So we're really pleased still with the impact that we're able to make even during the pandemic.

Next slide, please, Stephanie. I also wanted to let you know we applied for several grants associated with the CARES Act. I'm delighted to share that we did receive a grant from the NEH, close to \$300,000, to support our virtual initiatives and staffing. I'm just so pleased that that went through and we're marching ahead with that. That covers about six months, July to December, so we're almost at that halfway point. We'll be working on our interim report for that. I'm also delighted to share we are working with our great partners in Advancement and Foundation for NEH, of course, but also with Chase, our partners, and co-workers in Marketing, Communications and Audience Development. We received a sponsorship from Chase, also focusing on Black Pathways, a program that they do to create pathways for African Americans in financial fields but non-careers, at the tune of \$225,000. This sponsorship goes to support our Fridays after Five series, which has gone virtual. Pathways is a close partnership between Education and Audience Development on several programs, including working closely with Girls For a Change, Boys and Girls Club, and a couple of our regular programs, like African American Read-In and RVA Community Makers. Chase is also sponsoring some art bags that we're working with RPS to distribute. I'll talk about that project a little bit later on. We're also waiting to hear back from an IMLS grant that we submitted through the CARES Act for technology support. This would really help bolster our capability to do virtual programming even more, adding some equipment to the theater and increasing our Wi-Fi, and bringing on some part-time staff to help us in those efforts. We also applied for an NEA Cares Grant which didn't get funded. But again, still great that we put forth that effort.

Next slide please. So going virtual, of course, is a necessity at the moment. But we also really look at it as an opportunity. So our three main goals for this were to engage current audiences, use this opportunity to attract new audiences who maybe could not come to the museum for a program or may not know about us in that way, and of course expand access to the arts. Just to echo Michael's points earlier, you know the Education team, I'm just going to brag for a little bit, is amazing. Really just answered this call to shift our entire process and delivery method to go online. I'm just so proud of the work that they are doing, that they did, that they continue to do. They have learned new skills. They have figured out how to edit, and how to film from their iPhone. I mean, they just really went for it and it just underlies that "can-do" spirit of the department.

Next slide. So I'm going to now kind of walk through each of our departments in the museum and just talk a little bit about what each of these great coordinators and managers has done and are continuing to do. So we're going start in the programming area and highlight virtual performing arts. Some of you may remember our great Performing Arts Coordinator, Robert Phanord. That's him pictured there at the top right. He presented a few [indecipherable] but in thinking about how we bring Dominion Energy Jazz Café from an in-person experience to an online experience we worked closely with our Jazz Café partner, BJ Brown at the Richmond Jazz Society, and Robert again, using this opportunity to really reframe the program. So he's created a series, seven now, nights over the course of the last few months that combined performance with an interview. So it really gave us an opportunity to get to know the performers more and deep dive on topics. He chose the topics of the history of jazz and how it connects to the civil rights movement. So in this still at the top he's talking with Julie McKnight from North Carolina about protest music. The first session, for example, kicked off with Valerie (Cassel Oliver) talking about the song, *Strange Fruit*, which also was a great opportunity for Valerie to talk about the upcoming *Dirty South* exhibition. These have been so well received from the community and regulars and again gaining new audiences. We pre-record

them and then premiere them on YouTube on the night of Jazz. Desiree Roots and The Band is below. So that was filmed in the Pauley Center and then again launched on YouTube. Already in FY21, we've had eight programs, that's July and August, and served almost 2,000 people from those videos. So we're really pleased with the output and outcome. The jazz experience, again sort of going through that made us, made Robert, really look at Friday nights and think how we could do something similar. So all our Friday nights, First Fridays, our dance program, again on Zoom, recorded sessions through Zoom or broadcast from another studio, so it really allows us to experiment in ways [indecipherable] in person. You see our goals there for the next year. We estimate about 70 virtual arts programs, pending the length of Phase Three. If we're able to come back in person, we will restart this. But if we get that IMLS grant and are able to use that Wi-Fi there's also potential of streaming these events as we do them in person. Robert has just done an amazing job so you see him please, please give him a shout out.

Next slide, please. Virtual adult programs. So Izzie Fuqua is really taking this and running with it. We had a *Sunken Cities* lecture series that was going to be in person transfer to virtual. That's going to begin this month. Right now we're in the middle of a virtual Kamoinge Symposium and again, working closely with Sarah Eckhardt, which has been a great partnership, to put on these weekly sessions, September 3rd right through October 15th. They have really been phenomenal. I hope you all have taken the opportunity to register for these. They are free, live Webinars where we hear directly from the artists and writers from the catalog and curators about their experience. This is again, sort of a telling story, thinking about it was going to be. It got rescheduled for a later date and then had to be canceled again because of travel and all these things. So really completely reimagining this as a virtual event, taking it from a full day to weekly check-ins with these artists and live conversations has really proven to be a way to reach more people and to get a little bit more, I would say, conversational and personal with these artists on their experience. We have had two sessions so far. The next one is tomorrow. Again, it's free. Please do sign up. From the two sessions, we served already 500 people and they're from across the country. It's not just Virginia or Richmond area. We've had people from St. Louis, from New York, from Florida. Again it expands the awareness, not only of this exhibition, the Kamoinge group, but of the VMFA. I'd like to also thank our Marketing team for helping us really target market these opportunities for social media. We'll continue to do these kind of things with our history classes and gallery programs and you'll [indecipherable] again pending that Phase Three observing many more people through this kind of initiative. So again, Izzie has done a phenomenal job learning Zoom, learning how to navigate that, and moderate. Again, just building the skills.

Next slide, please. Just coming off our first ever virtual Family Day, was this past Saturday. So Family Days and outreach have also gone virtual for obvious reasons. Having 3,000 people together is not possible and sharing scissors also not possible. So Natalie again has done a fantastic job. We were also able to hire our new Family Event Assistant in the middle of the pandemic, which is also a feat. Angelique has jumped right in, was working from Maryland where she was living and moved during a pandemic and has done a great job just taking the reins and running with it. We had a fantastic experience with our full day, over 300 people registered, which we feel really good about, and people are still coming back and watching the videos. We have a wonderful partnership with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, so working with them to see this as a kickoff to Hispanic Heritage Month. They will feature our videos on their virtual Que Pasa event. Partnership is really underscored in Family Days, as always, with performers like the Latin Ballet, who did three videos for us that we're able to host on our site, and also working with the Virginia Children's Book Festival who connected us with a wonderful author who we featured on the site. We also created art bags

and worked with our partners to distribute those. So like Peter Paul Development Center, the Sacred Heart Center in Southside, and also the International Rescue Committee. We had started beginning a partnership with them right before the pandemic and so this was an opportunity to restart and reignite that conversation. We were able to deliver 50 bags to them and they can deliver that to their constituents. So we're really pleased with that. Our next Family Day is slated for November 8th. This is focusing on Egypt to tie in to *Sunken Cities* and rescheduled from June, which is usually when we have our African and African American Art Family Day. Following the same kind of format but we're also looking at ways to encourage families to come see *Sunken Cities* prior to the event to get excitement about the show, about the program, but also get people into the exhibition. Another aspect of outreach, I mentioned Chase earlier is supporting 3,000 art bags filled with supplies and information about the museum that connects back to come to *Kamoinge* and *Dirty South*. Those will be distributed via RPS to targeted schools that they feel like need that boost and the south of Richmond. We're assembling those now and we're aiming to deliver those through meal distribution sites working closely with RPS in October.

Next slide, please. This is a 'Teen Stylin' thing about our teen programs, 'Teen Stylin' [undecipherable] and talk about pivoting on a dime. 'Teen Stylin' is our fashion-based program routines come and workshop their ideas and create incredible, wearable works of art. Had to shut down when schools closed and we closed. Fionnuala Bradley, the Coordinator for this program, completely pivoted that to online in a matter of weeks. Students picked up materials from the building and completed their assignments at home. Then we arranged a photo shoot for students to come in and will be instead of an in-person exhibition, will have a photo book to share. I just love this image where a student has actually incorporated a face mask into her design, again responding to what's going on with the pandemic. I also wanted to give you all a preview for an M. Lit program Fall 2020 which is coming up in the next few weeks. We've already received 37 applications, which is the highest number of applications ever for this program. Because we're doing this as a hybrid in-person format, we've actually received some applications from across the state, including Virginia Beach and Fredericksburg. So this is another great example of expanding this audience. We'll be focusing on *Rumors of War*. We're looking at creating a video resource by teams for teens of their impressions not only of the Kehinde Wiley sculpture, but monuments in general, and what's happening in the community exploring the themes of art and social justice.

Next slide, please. So moving on our studio programs team headed up by Mary Holland. I did want to point out we did, although we closed and cancelled classes, it was very important to us to continue to pay all instructors through the spring. This was a major benefit for these teachers and artists who were really facing possible and really decreased or no salary and income. We've been getting a lot of positive feedback from the faculty for doing. While Studio's programs were cancelled, Studio School really switched again to video production, filming it themselves, working quickly to produce these. We've seen a lot of viewings of these. Again we worked with the Marketing team to push these videos out in May. For example, we had 4,000 clicks and engagements with these videos, which is really outstanding and we knew that yearning for this kind of instructional video was out there. Meanwhile, Megan Endy and Alex Parrish and our Youth Studio team managed to mount the complete exhibition in our art education center which remains on view right now.

Next slide, please. So for the fall we're trying to dip our toes in the water doing some in-person classes. So I did want to alert you to that. They've already started for adults. We kicked off this Monday and then tomorrow we'll be starting for youth. I do have some updates on these numbers.

These were back in August but right now we're seeing about 24 classes running for Studio School. Three of these are going online. People are really yearning to come back in person and take classes. We worked really closely with our faculty understanding what their concerns were, what their needs were to feel safe, same with students. Then worked with Kimberly Wilson and our great Housekeeping team to really make sure that we have the safety protocols in place, and those very transparent and thorough posted on our website. I want to give a shout out to Mary and especially Megan Endy for being very thorough about this process. It's really a collaborative close relationship with Housekeeping and Human Resources to make sure that we have all of these protocols in place. Youth and teen are also doing very well for onsite classes. They're all sold out for ages five to eight. Nine through twelve is very close to being sold out. Teens are doing above average than we normally do for in-person. Again, I think that really points to an audience need and desire to do things in-person in terms of art making. So we're really excited to see how those continue and go. One person saw Mary Holland a long time student in the adult Studio programs and just expressed how happy she was to be back and how much it was important for her as part of her life. So that feels really good.

Next slide, please. So naturally as people really turned to the Internet for interaction and information we have seen a huge uptick in the use of our collection site in visitation, almost 25%, which is fantastic. It also gave us space on the collections site to again rethink how we can engage audiences when they couldn't come here onsite. So I wanted to point out two wonderful additions to the collection site. *Working Together*, putting that exhibition entirely online we were able to do at really no cost except for staff time due to the format of our fantastic collection site. This was again a cross departmental collaborative project working with Exhibitions, with the Library, with Photo Resources, Curatorial, Education to get this up and on online. You can actually see the entire exhibition online and take a video tour through there. Another installation that was [indecipherable] on view now but it was made into an installation story on collections is *American Land, American People*. So this pairs work by Native American artists with a work by an American artist and talks about the relationship of land from both perspectives. It's really a beautiful installation online and in person. The story does a lot of deep dive into these topics, including a survey which connects back to our evaluation team.

Next slide, please. Again thinking about how we can reach more people, including teachers and students for switching to an online experience, the Learn Site was and is always important, even more so during closure and continuing into now. We saw a 90% increase over last year, at least for the Learn Site, which is tremendous. A lot of that has to do with people looking for it but again getting that push out through emails and social media was really important to bring attention to that too. The recent upgrade with [indecipherable] that increases the interactivity of the site. So you see here an example. If you go to our site, you can kind of click through a timeline or do a game or take a quiz. So this makes it a much more engaging and active site for users. We know that gamification is a way that people can feel like they're more engaged and learn in different ways. So that was really important for us to try. The team has created a 100 new resources since April which is astounding. So we now have about 400 free resources on the site. We're aiming for 60, at least 65 more. I know we'll do more because they just keep coming. I also wanted to point out that we moved *It's Egypt*, our interactive gallery, completely online. It was due to open in March of 2020 and we know it did not. Because we are in Phase Three, which really limits any kind of touch screen activity or interactive activity, it is yet to open. We're hopeful that we can just shift *It's Egypt* to the next slot for interactive gallery exhibitions and open that in 2021. So we'll continue to keep you posted as we continue to navigate those requirements for Phase Three and learn more about how we can adapt

those interactives. I know the Science Museum just opened so I'm interested to talk with them about how that is going and how they've mitigated some of that touch screen and manipulatives for their audiences.

Next slide, please. Of course *This is Learning* really paved the way for us to go online. We have learned a lot from that experience and really look to Sarah Rasich and Maggie McGurn, our team there, to really train us on an education to really run with this kind of format. What we did do is adapted for virtual classrooms. What that means is historically the teacher would log on to the program for the whole entire class. Well when students switch to virtual they're individually logging on and we want to make sure we're following safety protocols for working with children online. So we still want to go through the teacher for that process. So now the teacher starts the session and we come on as a guest, for example. The other thing that we heard is a need for more asynchronous or pre-recorded guided videos that teachers could just give to students to do on their own instead of relying on a connection when that connection could be weak from that individual student or they could be on Webex, just kidding. So there's ways that we can work around that to make it as seamless and enjoyable as possible. The other thing the Distance Learning team is working on is collaborating directly with [indecipherable], including being a content provider for GoOpenVA. We just premiered yesterday a session and virtual Virginia Professional Learning Portal that focuses on creative thinking and training teachers to use the museum collection across the curriculum. Really excited to launch that, think we're the first institution to do so working with DOE and we're going to be in constant contact with Virtual Virginia gleaning information from those teachers. Sarah is going to work directly with them and this will really help inform future resources and programs. The image on the screen is just one of those videos, called *Take a Closer Look*, which is that guided looking activity. Those again are on YouTube and also on our website.

Next slide, please. In Early Childhood Laurie Coffey is leading again an inventive, creative and go-getter kind of team. They created a series called *Creative Connections*, a virtual series basically translating the early child experience to a virtual one. They have created 15 videos already. This is one of our instructors, Corrine, from her house. So again, I just reiterate here, using her own iPhone, figuring out the setup, doing materials and just really going for it. They've distributed these videos to 600 email subscribers that they have on their own list. What's great is families are watching them, doing the projects and then taking pictures of their kids with their projects and sending them back to our educators. So we know it's working. We see the results. It's a great way to continue to engage our audience and hopefully they tell their friends and their friends tell their friends and we see a ripple effect. We also started a new series called *Little Eyes Look* where they take an image and through that same kind of guided looking process that Distance Learning is doing, guide the three, four or five year-old through looking and responding to works of art and they've selected objects from *Working Together* to do that process. So again we're continually connecting back to that exhibition and hopefully driving attendance to that. The plan moving forward for Early Childhood is continuing to do these virtual recordings, maybe do from the galleries, maybe some readings from the galleries between nine to ten or when we're open. We're looking at a plan for in person by November, possibly using the tent that's out on the Pauley Center and thinking about reconfiguring the classroom, of course, change for social distancing

Next slide, please. Teacher Program. So again this is a real overlap from Early Childhood but also Distance Learning and thinking about professional development. Over the summer, collaborating with Distance Learning we did a Virginia Beach virtual professional development, our first one, serving about 90 teachers. That was again interactive as a webinar and talking about resources. We

continue to partner with the VDOE for professional development, encouraging them to use our learning site. The same with metro Richmond schools. As we look ahead for the fall, keeping our Teacher Advisory Council really hearing from them, and [indecipherable] and our user about what teachers need in this moment where they are completely again shifting to virtual, flipping models, classroom models, flipping [indecipherable] models, using tools. How can we support them in this process? And what we're hearing from them again is the need for that asynchronous material, pre-recorded video so they can share those during independent learning time for those students. It's a real challenge right now to coordinate all of your students' tech and your own tech and then figure out how to bring someone in virtually to do a lesson. So for DLP that means we're getting a lot more requests from colleges, rather than through 12. So that's been interesting and I will be interested to see how that evolves over the next few months.

This also, and I'll talk a little bit on the tour slide too about what that means for tours, but the plans for fall, they are doing again virtual workshops, two different kinds of formats. And I will sing Twyla's praises more specifically in a second, but she's also done a great job in thinking about how you flip that model for VMFA teacher workshops. So we're doing two formats. One is called a Mini Institute where we take an [indecipherable] registration over Zoom for about ten teachers where a VMFA educator talk about a topic. In this case we're going to be focusing on John Lewis and his beloved community, again drawing upon that wonderful Draper archive, and the teachers will then take this idea or this theme, go away for about three to four weeks and create a lesson or resource using our collection. Then we come back together to share that out. So it's a way again to deeply engage with a set of teachers but also continue that relationship and conversation to see how they're using the collection which is what we're excited about. Then we'll do a series of webinars which is about a 50 minute presentation focusing on the five [indecipherable] for a profile of graduates for the VDOE. So I'm doing one, for example, in November. I'm revisiting *Monuments and Memorials*, the session I did back in January with two RPS teachers, and we'll bring them back and talk about what's happening now, it's certainly has changed since January. I do want to give Twyla, I'm very excited to share with you all that she's recently been named, this week, the VAEA 2020 Distinguished Fellow. This is a huge honor. I'm very excited for her. Since 2012 they've been giving out this award, congratulating and recognizing professionals' contribution to the entire field of our education. She's the first and only museum educator to receive this award. So this is huge. It's a testament to what she has done for teachers across the state since coming on in 2005. An impressive stat: she's had a 1,000 teacher programs serving over 32,000 teachers since her tenure here. Most of those programs she developed and presented herself. So again, if you know Twyla or see Twyla, please give her congratulations on that.

Next slide, please. Again it ties into teacher programs, DLP and hearing from schools and thinking about our Tour and Tour Guide Program. As you know, we were right in the middle of training provisional and getting ready for them to tour *Sunken Cities* when we had to close but that doesn't mean we haven't stopped working with our tour guides. Again a real shout out to the Tour Services team headed up by Karen Getty. They continue to engage with tour guides, sending newsletters, having trainings, and really have just done a great job again keeping up to date with this really important cohort of volunteers. We're also looking for ways that we can take advantage of adult programs, these pre-recorded sessions or lectures, and use that content in different ways for training. We are suspending onsite touring probably through December. That is based on audience need and requests but also keeping in mind what our volunteers are comfortable with. We really need to listen to what their needs are and comfort levels are and match that with audience need. We're just not getting a demand for in person touring at the moment, especially from schools. As you know they're

virtual. Those who are in session are not doing field trips, we're finding, so we're kind of coming up with inventive ways to showcase the collection. Again responding to [indecipherable] saying that they need and so really deep diving on some resources online, creating eight units, for example, on our Learn Site using that gamification, quizzes, and map features that really deep dive into the most popular topics that we offer: Mali, Greece and Rome, China, Egypt, Virginia studies for example. I will say for provisionals, just so you get a sense of where we are in terms of numbers, we started out with about 95 [indecipherable]. Before we closed in March, we did lose about nine, opted out or discontinued the program for personal reasons. Really since we went virtual only four more have withdrawn from the program, not because we were virtual but because you know life happens and other things came up for them. So this is a really good rate of attrition when we think about this training program. I'm really pleased with that. I think that says a lot about our team keeping everyone engaged.

Michael Taylor: Celeste, you're running up to your time limit.

Celeste Fetta: Okay. That's my last, one more slide. I'm almost, this is it.

Michael Taylor: Okay, it sounds good.

Celeste Fetta: Okay. So just real quick. Yeah. So *Sunken Cities* we're coming up with inventive ways. Don't worry about engaging people with that, amazing resource online for teachers and I'm working on a video to share with them as well that takes you through the exhibition and a Q and A with educators. Evaluation. I do want to share we had three part-time staff who were furloughed April through June but they all have returned. So we're ramping up our evaluation process for *Sunken Cities*. Preliminary findings are showing that people really love the show and also are really grasping the concepts we wanted them to grasp for this exhibition. We'll do a deeper dive on that after data has been analyzed and share that with you. Also, just real quick. We're working closely with VCU through a shared donor to provide a graduate student assistantship. That assistantship will be carried out with our Evaluation Team around *Sunken Cities* and our permanent Egyptian collection. I'm again, really proud of the team. We've been very busy and we'll take questions at the end after Jeffrey speaks. A shout out to Jeffrey and his team. You know I'm amazed at what they're able to accomplish during this time. It's also been really great to think about all these virtual options and how they [indecipherable]. So I'm going to turn it over to Jeffrey to talk about Statewide.

Jeffrey Allison: Okay, thank you Celeste. It's been wonderful to see everyone virtually today. It's been a long time coming and I know I've certainly missed seeing all of you that I've gotten to know over the past years and it's great to meet new people, even if it is virtually. I was really excited to have Celeste go first in this meeting because so much of what she's been discussing overlaps brilliantly with Statewide. Our teams have always worked very closely together but certainly with this move to reinvent everything that we're doing and making it virtual or available online. It's had a tremendous impact on what we're doing statewide. We truly are serving every person in Virginia, especially in regions like Wise, Virginia and out on the Eastern Shore. So it's been dramatic for us and like Celeste and her team, or our team since we're already working together on it, we've been working very closely with our statewide faculty who are now doing virtual live lectures. A lot of our statewide faculty are beginning to do workshops, hands-on workshops virtually and we're returning to in-person lectures and workshops when it is possible. We work very closely with our statewide partners to ensure that all the same safety precautions are being done there that are taking place here on site as we now start to have new programming here. So it's been great. I'm going to do a deep dive

in a moment on just two programs that hopefully people are excited about. But I want to mention two other things. One is that we have created a number of videos, including a great video tour of the VMFA Artmobile and the new exhibition. I'll talk about that later. Just this week we've really finalized a wonderful opportunity. This fall in November would've been the first year that the Pocahontas Reframed Film Festival would have taken place completely at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. We've worked so closely with Brad Brown, he is the Director of the festival, and his board and others. Since its inception, we've always hosted one day of the festival here and had the major reception. This is a festival that features Native American filmmakers, artists, directors from all over the United States, Canada, and Mexico coming to Richmond. It's the largest Native American film festival on the East Coast. We were so excited when they decided to work with us to do the entire festival onsite here. It would have been magnificent. Of course due to the pandemic, for a number of reasons, we decided to postpone that to 2021 but we're going go ahead with a virtual film festival, very shortened, in November on the same days that the festival would have been here live. So we're really looking forward to that. I imagine that we'll reach out again across the state and probably across the nation and internationally given the filmmakers that are involved. I think we'll see a lot of people that would never have had the opportunity to attend it live.

So next slide, please. I'm going to move on. You know one of the biggest things that we were able to do is the VMFA Emergency Artist Relief Fund 2020. Natasha Campbell, who is the Coordinator of the Fellowship Program who works with me and the Statewide department, did a tremendous job working with us to make [indecipherable]. Next slide. We provided, 40 artists across the state got a one-time fellowship of \$5,000 which is extraordinary. The map says it all. It really was truly statewide. It reached every possible way that we look at diversity in terms of the artists themselves, the location, nationality, types of art work as well. All of the decisions were made based on the quality of the work just like the regular Fellowship Program but also, of course, the statements of need.

Next slide, please. We had a total of 353 applications from Alexandria to South Hill and from Virginia Beach to Grundy. If you know where Grundy is, that's extraordinary too. Valerie, Natasha and I were the jurors. It was exhilarating to see the artwork and heartbreaking to read all of the letters of need. It really was. It's the hardest thing I've ever done in terms of juroring or judging anything. I really shout out to Valerie and to Natasha for working through this. I want to just look at some of the artwork, not all of it. If we go to the next slide, here are all the recipients. As you can see with that list just how diverse the locations are and the diversity in terms of the artists. You'll see that we did have five artists who chose not to be named. So we just included them here to again show their location in places like Monroe, Burke Virginia, Leesburg, Floyd. It's really phenomenal.

Let's look at some artwork. This is *OBELISKKK* by Veronica Jackson who's an amazing African American artist living down in Bedford. Really, I think a remarkable piece that again goes to, it's a very timely piece as well. And next, *Scent in the The Wind*, by Soomin Ham from Fairfax, Virginia and then I'm just going show you these works. The next slide is *Lotus Set* by Wendy Werstlein down in Floyd, Virginia, so really looking to include fine arts crafts people. I think was real [indecipherable] as well and Floyd has a huge contingent of artists who, really an international set of artists, who've all settled down in Floyd, it's particularly a fine arts crafts mecca. Next slide, please. *For Those We Have Lost* by Lorie McCown from Fredericksburg Virginia. A remarkable piece, again the idea of working with fabric and textiles. Next slide. *A forgotten allegory of souls*, by S. Ross Brown here in Richmond. I think just a remarkable painting as well. I think he came to the remarkable reception we had with Governor Northam here onsite celebrating the artists and those awards. It was such a great

opportunity to have he and his wife, the Governor's office got behind this project fantastically, they came out and made great remarks, as did Monroe (Harris) and Alex (Nyerges). I think those who were there, it was tremendously empowering in a way. The other thing that I'll say for those of us who were there, it's just amazing how loud the locusts were that morning. You can watch the footage of that event online. Next artist, next slide rather. Susan Jamison, who's a remarkable artist from Roanoke, Virginia. She's one of the participants who came out, it was so great. Veronica Jackson drove up from Bedford. So we really had participation on the day with the Governor from throughout the state as well. The next slide. Then Kimi Layeni from Hampton, Virginia.

Next slide again. What I want to talk about is the VMFA on the Road for the 21st Century. It's extraordinary that we were able to reach 82,000 Virginians between July 1st and January when we closed the first exhibition and took the end of January and February through early March to install the next exhibition. We were literally on the road to our premiere of the new show the week after we had to close down for the pandemic which was just a killer, if you understand. Next slide. The new exhibition is *A View from Home: Landscapes of Virginia*. I'm very honored to have been able to curate that exhibition. What that slow down before we could go out in person did was give us the opportunity to finalize some remarkable artist interviews, videos. We were able to expand it, to shoot on-site with artists like Brian Palmer and Hulle Moore. One of those videos is featured in the upcoming Afrikana Film Festival here in Richmond. It's the video, *Brian Palmer* and I'll talk a little bit more about him when we get to his piece.

Next slide. Extraordinarily we actually are on the road, at least somewhat. We're also doing virtual tours. We premiered the exhibition at Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History on July 14th and we incorporated all of the same precautions that we're using here at the main museum. We have hand sanitizer stations both inside and outside the truck. We limit the number of people on board. We have timed tickets. We work very closely with our partners to ensure that all of that is followed. We have free masks outside if someone doesn't bring it. We have one of our team onboard the truck to ensure that people follow social distancing. I must say it's been going remarkably well. We're fortunate that the truck has one entrance and one exit. We did shut down all of the interactive parts of the exhibition. We're running the videos that I talked about on a loop constantly. We're not using the head pieces to listen to them and that's unfortunate but we do have a brand new video on the outside of the truck as well that showcases the entire program.

Next slide, please. People were so thrilled to come out and you won't believe how excited they were that the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts brought permanent collection, real works of art to them at this time. It was the most joyous occasion you could ever imagine. This is a couple, so it's okay that they're elbow bumping. People were just overwhelmed. Next. The works span a time period from 1837 to 1840 all the way up to just last year. This is George Harvey's *Scenes of the Baltimore & amp, Ohio Canal at Harpers Ferry*. In 1837 Harper's Ferry was part of Virginia and he's standing in what's still part of Virginia so I think that it's okay to be included in this exhibition.

Next slide. This is Brian Palmer, *Evergreen Cemetery*, 2019. Brian is an internationally known photojournalist. He's teaching at the University of Richmond. He has relatives from Richmond and several years ago he and his wife became part of a movement to restore two African American cemeteries in Richmond's east end, including Evergreen Cemetery. As you can see here when he made this photograph, is overgrown with kudzu. Kudzu is such a remarkable symbol in the South. James Dickey wrote wonderful poems about kudzu back in the day. His video that we shot with him out at the cemetery, walking around, he's an incredibly passionate social activist as well as a

remarkable artist and teacher, it is one of the most important videos we produced. I think again, it relates so well to this time period. He talks about African American cemeteries. Maggie Walker is buried in the cemetery and it has never gotten state funding. It has never gotten really what it deserves in order to be taken care of. I want you to look at our video. It's on our YouTube channel. You can go through the main website and find it. I think you, too, will find it to be very moving. Next slide, please.

Michael Taylor: Jeffrey, you're nearing the end of your time.

Jeffrey Allison: Next slide. I think I'm getting very close to the end here. I just wanted to close with Hullie Moore's *Appalachian Trail and Mist*. I think we all want to go through that beautiful image and follow that trail into the sunlight and get through to the end of this pandemic when we're all joining the art live in person and we can all sit in a room again. So sorry. There we go. Questions?

Michael Taylor: Thank you, Jeffrey. Questions from the committee members? Thoughts? Reactions?

Alex Nyerges: Michael I'm just going to add in to Jeffrey and to Natasha, Valerie's not on this call, and to you. I have to tell you the effort we made to give out forty \$5,000 emergency grants may be the most important thing we do this year in light of the pandemic and the fact that we have, thanks to John Lee Pratt, the resources to do it. It was an enormous undertaking. They worked really hard and I can tell you, I'm good authority, that they were brought to tears when they were doing the judging. Three hundred and fifty-three applications. We only gave out 40. I wish we could have given out 353 but congratulations everybody because that's a mark of who we are as Virginia's art museum. Then you think about where we are in 2020 and all that is swirling around this in terms of social justice and you look down that list and you see equal numbers of men and women, people with Latino names, we're represented with people from other cultures, African American artists, representative of the diversity of what Virginia is today. So congratulations to all of you on that.

Monroe Harris: I want to piggyback on that too, Alex. It was absolutely fabulous [indecipherable] to everybody who participated in that, it was absolutely wonderful.

Michael Taylor: Thank you, Monroe.

Jill Harris: Michael, this is Jill. I just want to super congratulate Jeffery and Celeste on the work their teams have done. I'm absolutely blown away and amazed at what's been going on in the museum in the Education department and what they've been able to produce and accomplish. You guys, I really appreciate, and I want you to pass this along to your staffs, appreciate their flexibility and creativity and coming up with all these programs. It's really, really important. I'm really amazed at the volume and the quality of what you're doing. So thank you.

Michael Taylor: Thank you. You know, this is our finest hour. I also think with the digital outreach we are now reaching a national audience. So if there's one silver lining, it's that.

Betty Crutcher: You know, I echo all that has been said. In fact I thought, what have we learned or what have we learned that's really exciting about what we can back combine you know in terms of the pandemic? Even when we get out of it, what can we continue to do? How we can think about that from an educational point of view so that we don't lose some of the things that really works for us?

Michael Taylor: I agree. I think there will be lessons. I know that Celeste and Jeffrey think about this every day. This pandemic isn't going away quickly so we have to pivot. I loved the summary of the educator with an iPhone. I mean how great was that? The [indescribable] can be really amazing.

Michel Zajur: I'd like to also congratulate the Education team. What they did for Que Pasa was just wonderful. We're hoping going to get a lot more viewers to the VMFA website to view that too throughout the Hispanic Heritage Month.

Celeste Fetta: Thank you, Michel. It was great to work with you all and we really appreciate your support.

Jim Klaus: I just had a question. There have been some great content online for members in terms of the lecture that you all have been doing. Has there been any thought of editing them down and putting them on YouTube? Some of them in support of the *Sunken Cities*, some of them just general curator talks? Some other museums have been putting those up and I think they're nice drivers of views and also people coming in to see what's being talked about.

Celeste Fetta: Yes I can speak to kind of a public programming. So for Kamoinge, for example, we are recording each of those sessions and they will go on our Learn Site which can also be accessed through YouTube. We're going to be doing the same for the *Sunken Cities* lectures that are coming up for that series. So for public programs, for sure. For member programs, I'm not sure where we are on sharing those. I love the idea of clips. That's really a great idea.

Michael Taylor: The programs we are doing, as you know, a series called Cocktails with the Curator, which is for the upper level members. One of them though, we expanded for the full membership and we had 1,000 registrants. That was for Peter Schertz talking about the *Sunken Cities*. We do see great opportunities to push this material out on YouTube. We do that, as Celeste said, for the virtual Jazz Café. I think the more the merrier and the challenge at the beginning of this pandemic was how to create digital content rather than live performances and events and classes. Now I think the challenge is going to be editing all this and pushing it out even further. So it's a great question, Jim.

Celeste Fetta: Yeah. I would say I didn't give a shout out to Travis Fullerton and being down a videographer halfway through this process, he did all the editing. Again it speaks to the great collaborative nature of our co-workers here. We're also hoping, I think they just hired a new videographer. So once we have that person back hopefully we'll be able to edit more content and get that out quicker.

Jeffrey Allison: Yeah and I just want to chime in with Statewide now that we're starting to do video lectures. We have two types. One is working directly with statewide partners that are the usual full-length lectures that we would do if we were on-site live. The other though, we're going to do a series that are no longer than 30 minutes. A lot of times we're finding that that's kind of a good length of time for a program for people just to watch online. So we're going to have, as we move through this, we're continuing to develop new types of programs in somewhat different styles, as it were, to continue reaching out to greater audiences. Those shortened versions will be available on YouTube as well.

Michael Taylor: Great. Okay, any other business?

Carol Ann Bischoff: I have a quick question for Celeste.

Michael Taylor: Sure.

Carol Ann Bischoff: The Teacher Advisory Council, is that representative of education districts around the Commonwealth?

Celeste Fetta: Great question. So it has a pretty far ranging reach, not across the entire Commonwealth. I think we go as far as Fredericksburg, Williamsburg. It goes kind of closer to Metro Richmond in a way in about an hour distance but I think that's something else we can look at now that we're getting this kind of virtual experience. We can definitely pull from further afield to look at that. I think too, working with Jeffrey, we have a lot of great connections with our partners that can also help us with that and do help us with that already.

Michael Taylor: Great. Well thanks everyone for listening and for your feedback. As I said, we're all very proud of what education and statewide have done. They've stepped up to the plate and exceeded everything that we could have imagined. Enjoy the rest of your day. Thank you for attending this meeting I think we can call it to conclusion.

Meeting adjourned at 2:36pm.

Transcribed by: Kay Baker
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