

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
Draft Minutes of the Art and Collections Committee Meeting
Wednesday, January 13, 2021, 8:30am
Video Conference

There were present:

Meg Gottwald, Chair
Edie Cabaniss
Cindy Conner
Anne Edwards
Janet Geldzahler
Martha Glasser
David Goode
Pamela Reynolds
Suzy Szasz Palmer
Monroe Harris, Trustee President, Ex-officio
Jim Klaus, Foundation Co-President, Ex-officio
Lilo Ukrop, Foundation Co-President, Ex-officio

Absent:

Tom Papa, Vice Chair
Steve Markel
Michele Peterson

By Invitation:

Alex Nyerges, Director and Chief Executive Officer
Kay Baker
Stephen Bonadies
Caprice Bragg
Stephanie Cooperstein
Sylvain Cordier
Jan Hatchette
Denise Keane, Foundation Liaison
Cindy Norwood, Office of the Attorney General
Hossein Sadid
Michael Taylor
Deborah Valentine, Foundation Liaison
Ashlin Willbanks

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Meg Gottwald called the meeting to order at 8:30am.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Ms. Gottwald reported there were no requests for public comment.

III. MINUTES APPROVAL

Motion: proposed by Ms. Pamela Reynolds and seconded by Ms. Cindy Conner to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2019 Art and Collections Committee meeting as distributed. Motion carried.

IV. MUSEUM DEACCESSIONING

Dr. Michael Taylor, Chief Curator and Deputy Director for Art and Education, led a discussion on VMFA deaccessioning, which is administered following the criteria set forth in the museum's *Collection Management Policy* and the Association of Art Museum Directors' (AAMD) guidelines. He noted that VMFA is committed to the consideration and resolution of restitution and repatriation claims, sharing that as of 2004, the museum has deaccessioned and restituted three European paintings to their rightful owners after determining they were stolen by the Nazis during World War II. VMFA has also repatriated three Native American objects to the Tlingit tribe of Alaska and currently has no outstanding claims for works in the collection. Discussion turned to the deaccessioning controversy that resulted when AAMD temporarily modified its requirement that proceeds from art sales be used strictly for acquisitions. Dr. Taylor concluded by emphasizing VMFA's commitment to adhering to deaccessioning policies and guidelines so the collection continues to be managed in a thoughtful and sustainable way.

V. EUROPEAN ART COLLECTION PLAN

Dr. Sylvain Cordier, Paul Mellon Curator and Head of the Department of European Art, presented his European Art Collection Plan. He reviewed the plan's major objectives and its goal to constantly consider the perspective of collecting and displaying European art in conjunction with VMFA's Strategic Plan in favor of an inclusive, equitable, and diverse culture of interpretation. This will include important aspects of European culture in an inclusive way that will address the concerns of contemporary museum visitors in a thematic display following chronological periods of schools and styles running from the Middle Ages to the early 20th Century. It will also inspire a contemporary American audience while retaining a strong commitment to historical scholarship and the aesthetic appreciation of exceptional works of art. Discussion then turned to the process by which the museum prioritizes, accommodates, and displays its collection.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30am.

Recorded by: Kay Baker
Administrative Assistant and Receptionist, Office of the Director and Chief
Executive Officer