

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
Transcription of the Trustee Education Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 25, 2021, 2:00pm
Electronic Meeting

Meeting called to order at 2:00pm.

Full attendance listed in the meeting minutes.

Jil Harris: Welcome everybody who has joined us. As Alex just did, I would like to welcome Matt Cooper, a new Trustee who is listening to all the meetings to get a good feel for everything that we do. So, welcome Matt. In accordance with the requirements for electronic meetings under the Freedom of Information Act, the minutes and the transcript of this meeting will be posted. Caprice, can I ask you out of curiosity where they are posted in case anybody wants to come up?

Caprice Bragg: Yes, I am happy to answer. On our website there is an area called “Who Are We” under leadership and then there is a leadership link, under which it lists the Board. That is where all the minutes and transcripts are.

Jil Harris: Great. Okay, so if anybody wants to tune back in afterwards, this place is it. In accordance with the requirements for virtual meetings we offer a public comment period. There were no requests for public comments, so we can proceed without that. I would like to approve the minutes from the last meeting so I will make a motion to approve the minutes of the Tuesday, January 12, 2021 Education Committee meeting as distributed. May I have a motion to approve?

Joan Brock: So moved.

Jil Harris: Was that Joan?

Joan Brock: Yes.

Jil Harris: Is there a second?

Betty Crutcher: Second.

Jil Harris: We got a lot of seconds. Caprice, did you capture them okay? Thank you very much. All right, dispensing with all of those pleasantries, I want to turn the meeting over to the fabulous Celeste for her to give us an update on what she has been doing in Education for the last couple of months. Thanks, Celeste.

Celeste Fetta Neff: Well, thank you. Fabulous job, I appreciate it. It is good to see everyone here on this beautiful spring day. I hope you all are doing well. I am delighted to share some updates from Education. Thank you, Stephanie, for popping that PowerPoint up. As a reminder, we are at the Education Committee meeting, and so the first thing I would like to talk with you about is to give you an update on our Black History Month initiatives from Education. We had 14 programs overall and reached over 5,000 households with our virtual programming. I am just going to touch on a couple of highlights from those programs. The first thing is our African American Read-In. This is an annual event that actually I started in 2008, believe it or not, with one work of art and one

selection. It has really blossomed since then as a collaboration between Education, Curatorial and Audience Development. This year we were delighted to welcome virtually Dr. Hermine Pinson, who we commissioned a poem from in response to the Odili Donald Odita mural *Procession*. She presented that in conversation with Valerie Cassel Oliver and Carmenita Higginbotham, the newly appointed Dean of VCUarts. Again, that was a virtual program. We did this once a week, every week throughout the month of February as a Zoom kind of presentation. It was really a success working with Paula again on this program. We were delighted to keep it going as a virtual event. A couple of years ago we added a family component to the Read-In, and for those of you who maybe have not attended a Read-In or know about it, basically, we pair a work of literature by an African American author with an African American work of art. A couple of years ago we added a family version, and this is a national event so it happens all over the country, but really we are one of the few museums to participate and kind of kick it up a notch by adding an artwork component. The family components were pre-recorded videos this year, where our early childhood team led the first part of the video with a looking activity at the work of art encouraging conversation among families. Then we had a member of the community read a book that is associated or kind of linked up with the work of art. This is S. Ross Brown, who is a local artist that many of you may know, and he read a work of art in conjunction with the Odita piece. We really saw that mural as the centerpiece for both our African American Read-In for adults and for families. The family version was very successful as an online virtual video program. We had over 1,300 views. When we are in-person, we have about 150 people, so it really quadrupled our reach. We are really pleased with how that turned out. Again, this was a great collaboration between us and audience development. Another great collaboration with Audience Development was the RVA Community Makers Program and installation. Like every year, we opened up our Open Studio Sunday to Hamilton Glass and invited him to come. We had sort of a participatory component here adapted for Pandemic times. We also had the opportunity to connect back to our Family Read-In and working with Chase, one of our great sponsors, they supplied a bag with colored pencils, an activity, and a book, one of the selections from Family Read-In. It was a great way to tie everything together. This wonderful package that was free to the community. One last thing to touch on with the Black History Month initiative is, of course, our performing arts component. Robert did a fantastic job, as usual, securing Clifton Davis for our *First Friday* event. This was a great interview with him that you can still check out on our YouTube page. Then, our Fridays' *Dance after Work* focused on hip hop dance and really talked about the history of hip hop dancing and the influence of African American culture on that movement. Again, that is available on YouTube. These performed very, very well as they usually do.

Keeping the virtual updates going, I would also like to touch on our other bigger event that happens every February. This is *ChinaFest*. I mentioned last time that it was coming up, and I am just happy to report out the success of this event. It was available as live content from February 6 to February 28. It is still available as archived content, so you can go on the website and check it out. There are 24 videos that make up this event. We reached over 12,000 households. Again, this is huge because it is even more than we did last year in-person. I think that just speaks to the reach and availability of virtual, and again that partnership with our Community members and performers that we work with annually. It has really brought us to this conclusion that we, I think, we will always have some kind of virtual component when we come back in person for Family Days. So again, we can continue to develop that online content that goes back on our resource site and reach people beyond the metro Richmond area. We really consider this a success. I am just so glad that it turned out the way it did.

Moving from programs to interpretation, I wanted to give a kind of sneak peek with what we are working on again in partnership and collaboration with curatorial and exhibition design as we

prepare for the *Dirty South* our next exhibition opening in May. This is a mock-up of the end space of the exhibition. Sometimes there is a shop there. Sometimes it is an educational component. This year will be focusing on the educational component side for the show. It is an immersive experience. We hope that it will kind of propel you into a music venue space. We will be looking a little bit closer into the influence of music and visual culture and how they intersect. Working closely like I said with Valerie and exhibition design, Courtney Morano, our Interpretation Manager, Kelsey Beckwith, who is our Project Coordinator for Digital, and Karen Getty, who is our Educator for the show. The other thing we are trying in this space is making this a no touch experience. Taking what we have learned from the Pandemic and moving forward with that, so using an overlay for these screens where you can move your hand as opposed to having to touch the screen directly. That will cut down on the germs obviously, hopefully making people feel more comfortable and maintain the technology, I think, in a better way. The projection and the space reinforces the exhibition's big idea, which is over the course of the last 100 years, the music, fine art, folk art, and material culture of the African American south have become inextricably linked and created a lasting imprint on the contemporary landscape. So how are we going to go about doing this? Here are some mockups from our great designers so that you get an idea of what the screens may look like and the interface will look like. You will see sort of each individual screen on the right there has some shorthand, and these are all of 30 southern hotspots by area. You have Atlanta, Georgia; Houston, Texas; and Miami, Florida for example. Then we have added Virginia, of course, looking at the Hampton Roads area with Missy Elliott. Step one, you can select an epicenter that you want to focus in on. Step two, each epicenter will have a landing screen, and you can choose from five videos from different genres and periods of time. As a reminder, this show looks at 100 years, so there will be jazz, blues and, of course hip hop. Then you will zero in on an example of music from that style that correlates with a work of art you just saw in the exhibition. This is designed to reinforce the experience that you just had walking through the show but diving a little bit deeper into more of that musical history.

Lastly I wanted to announce two awards that our educators have won. Twyla Kitts, who is our Teacher Programs Coordinator, has been named the National Art Education Association Museum Division Southeastern Region Educator of the Year. This is very exciting, Twyla has been a Virginia Educator of the Year before, so this is kind of the next tier of recognition designed to recognize an outstanding area member from each of the four regions for outstanding service and achievement of regional service. I am on the Development Committee for NAEA. I did not score her entry. I abstained, but it is really exciting. There are a lot of nominees and to see her rise to the top is wonderful. I hosted the virtual ceremony to celebrate, so I got to do that in front of everybody. I was very glad to do so. I am just really proud of her. I think it speaks volumes the impact that she has made in museum education, working with teachers and to be recognized regionally is really something special. Also, something special is to be recognized by the Virginia Association of Museums and Sarah Rasich our Distance Learning Content Specialist has been named the Museum Educator of the Year for the State of Virginia by VAM. That just happened. They just had their conference and announced that last week. This award is given to outstanding achievement in museum education by an individual working on behalf of the organization to create exceptional experiences for school-age visitors. Again, it is a testament to Sarah and what she has done to build our distance learning program from the bottom up and continue to adapt that program during COVID to still reach an amazing amount of students and have such a positive impact on their learning.

That is what we have been up to in Education. There will be some time for questions at the end. At this point, I will be turning over the floor to my fantastic colleagues. I almost forgot to talk about

that. Well, I do not want to take up too much more time. This is a tour project we are working on with the Richmond Public Schools and their real Richmond history course. They will be featuring *Rumors of War* as the first stop on an augmented reality tour. This is a mobile app. You can see there it will be projecting the Jeb Stuart monument next to *Rumors of War*. It is a really exciting thing. We are definitely working closely with them on a tour of the entire Monument Avenue. I will have more updates on that when we next meet in June. Okay, now for real, I am going to turn it over to Jeffrey.

Jeffrey Allison: Thank you, Celeste. That was wonderful. It is great to see everyone virtually again. Let's get on with Statewide. I am really excited to share with you the winners, the Fellowship winners. We had, I think, a really diverse group of artists. I am just going to run through them fairly quickly. I will say that in the future, some of these artists will be chosen for exhibitions at Amuse, The Pauley Center and out at the airport. This year, our Professional Fellowship Juror was Dean Daderko, Curator at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston. Graduate Art History Juror was Leslie Cozzi, PhD, Associate Curator of Prints, Drawings and Photographs from Baltimore. Our Graduate and Undergraduate Visual Arts Juror was Seth Feman from down at the Chrysler. Traditionally, this is the way we structure the process with someone nationally known for the professional fellowships and then someone from within the Virginia arts community for the graduate and undergraduate. First, our professional winners. Umico Niwa and Peat Szilagyi, *Moon the Spoon* which is a sculpture created in 2020 here in Richmond. It is exciting that we have a number of works that are 3D this year. Here is Danya Smith's untitled series mixed media from out in Midlothian. Megan Angolia, *Why?* A sculpture from Chesterfield. Yoko Gushi's *Self Portrait 1* (an aged self-portrait) from out in Henrico. Federico Cuatlacuatl, *Coapan En Espera*. This is actually from a film. This is just a film still. They are from Charlottesville. Jaraz Jenkins, *Still Life* painting from Richmond. Veronica Jackson *THAT'S POP'S MONEY*, mixed media from down in Bedford. It is very interesting, Veronica was also the winner of one of our emergency fellowship awards. We wanted to make sure that we allowed all the folks who got that this past summer to still be eligible for fellowships in the traditional program. Franchell Mack Brown, *HAIKU #33*, mixed media from Henrico. Jason Hackett, *Rivers Always Meet The Sea*, crafts. Again, this is a secondary image that you see floating there, gives you more of a sense of how the 3D objects are attached to the wall. The Graduate Fellowships, starting with Tacie Jones, *Integer Vitae*, from Blacksburg. Keith Nixon, Jr. is next, *A Letter to My Mother, from My Mother*, which is actually a short film, also from Richmond. Meaghan Walsh is our art history winner from Charlottesville. We have shown the two titles of the works that she submitted, "African American Agency in Mid to Late Nineteenth-Century American Art: The State of the Field" and "The Anxieties of Modern Life: Fears of Jewish Immigration in the Popular Press and in George Luk's *Allen Street*." Then our Cy Twombly Fellowship. This is the second year that we have awarded this. This is LaRissa Rogers, *My Body is The Architecture of my Every Ancestor*. It is new and emerging media. She is from Ruckersville. Our undergraduate winners. Hien Nguyen, *The Gay Barstool*, sculpture, from here in Richmond. It says, "Have you ever seen a barstool with unstraight legs?" Hee Yoo, *Overload*, painting, 2020 from Glen Allen. Grade Solomon, *There's Something Wrong with this Neighborhood*. This is photography, and they are from Fredericksburg. Keita Heinrich, *What if I Drowned a Few Buildings in New York?*, new and emerging artist from Charlottesville. Fiona Marinaro, *Wings of Hope*, Yorktown. Bridget Hamel, *How to Go Home*. This is triptych, and it is mixed media. She is from Williamsburg. Myles Manuel, *pack* from Richmond. Again, this is a film. Olivia Offutt, *City Complex in Cologne*, drawing. She is from up in Fairfax.

A short *VMFA on the Road* update. I just have one slide. I always love to shout out our driver, Chris Hairston, and our educators, Sukenya Best and Sean Kane, who are continuing to do an extraordinary job even across the Pandemic. It is amazing how much work Chris has put into

maintaining the truck. It has to be opened completely, enclosed and driven around to maintain it, so that it is ready for a moment's notice. Kenya and Sean have been doing a lot of live lectures and tours of the exhibition online. I am thrilled to say that starting Saturday, March 27, we are back on the road. Once we get back on the road, we will not stop. Our first stop is here in Richmond at the Cherry Blossom Festival. After that, we are going to be out on the Eastern Shore. By the end of April, we will be up in Fairfax. Something that I am truly excited about, June 21-23 we are going to the Natural Bridge. Since this exhibition on the artmobile is *Landscapes of Virginia* and it ties beautifully into our own exhibition created by Chris Oliver here at VMFA about the Natural Bridge. It is just the perfect partnership with them down there. The other thing I would mention is that we are working hard on the next exhibition which will premiere next January. We are including a portrait of Ross Brown and an exhibition that is all about portraiture. Good to have a shout out to him. My last update, I think, is we are continuing to do more and more in-person workshops and lectures, but we are also doing a lot of virtual lectures. Particularly the Williamsburg Art Center has become a real superstar with us. They have traditionally had a lot of lectures from us, and we are reaching about five times the number of people who would normally attend one of their lectures. We are getting up toward 5,500 people who eventually see that lecture out there, and that is extraordinary. I think we really want to thank Trent Nicholas who manages our Statewide programs, who has done a stellar job of working through all the technology and with a lot of our partners, including Williamsburg, who were not truly up to speed at the beginning of the Pandemic. Also thanks to our lecturers and our statewide faculty artists who have adapted their workshops and lectures, so that they can do them online, as well as around VMFA. Finally, staff because everyone has really stepped up. We are serving the state and reaching folks in Bristol as well as on the Eastern Shore, Danville, and everywhere in between. So thanks.

Jil Harris: Jeffrey, thanks to you, both you and Celeste. I am amazed yet again at how many people we are reaching thanks to your work. The numbers that Celeste put out there about, the thousands and tens of thousands of people that we are reaching through her programs is fabulous, and you as well. I am really glad to hear that the *VMFA on the Road* is getting back on the road. That is very exciting and so wonderful. Celeste I want to say, given the numbers, I was really happy to hear you say that the plan is to keep a virtual aspect to the education program, because it is wonderful the extra numbers of people and families that we are reaching who might not necessarily be able to come to the museum, for one reason or another. That is really a positive step, so thank you for that. And now, are there any questions for Celeste or for Jeffrey for a discussion?

Joan Brock: I have one question. When the artmobile goes out how many people do you expect on a daily basis?

Jeffrey Allison: We have instituted the same precautions on the artmobile as we have at the museum. Everyone is six feet apart. We are both pre-scheduling visits, as well as allowing people to come on board if no one scheduled. We are doing about 100 to 200 people a day. We expect that to increase. It is not so much our limitations, as it has been that we have been working smaller events. I think when we get to the Cherry Blossom Festival, and certainly when we get to Natural Bridge that will continue to increase, and we also are extending our hours. We are doing from nine in the morning till seven or eight o'clock at night, when possible. That will also increase the visitation.

Joan Brock: And how long do you stay in one location?

Jeffrey Allison: It could be one day in Richmond, but when we go to Natural Bridge we will be there for four days. When we go to Bristol, it will actually be six days, because we work with a tremendously large region down there.

Joan Brock: Who coordinates all the visitors?

Jeffrey Allison: We work very closely with our statewide partners. One of the magic things about the program is that we spent so many years, building up partnerships with museums, art centers, community centers and art clubs around the state that we go directly to one of our partners, and they work with us. We have to do a site visit to make sure that we have the perfect place to park this giant 53 and a half foot long truck so people can access it. Most often there are other events taking place that we have become part of. Sometimes we are the central event and sometimes we are just one of a number of things that are taking place. Obviously, if we are at Natural Bridge, we are going to do a lot of PR about being there. People are going to love coming out to the Natural Bridge anyway. When we are out on the Eastern Shore, we work very closely with an art center and also the library system on the Eastern Shore. We have a wonderful partner there, and they schedule up and down the entire length of the Virginia part of the Eastern Shore.

Joan Brock: Do you have to factor in cost for insurance?

Jeffrey Allison: The wonderful thing about that is we are part of the state, so we have a Certificate of Insurance that we share with each partner before the visit is finalized.

Joan Brock: How long have you been doing it?

Jeffrey Allison: We started in October 2018, so this is just the second exhibition. Unfortunately, it was scheduled to open exactly a year ago, so what we did was we created a virtual tour. We have been doing everything we can. We have had a number of visits since July, and this past summer, we were able to do some more. We are in the process of creating a second virtual tour of the exhibition that will be online that people can access anytime, as well as some additional interviews with some of the artists that are featured.

Joan Brock: This is a great idea, and I am glad you keep the long hours for people's work schedules.

Jeffrey Allison: Absolutely, when we are there, our reason is to be there and to be open for the public. There is actually a Virginia Librarian's Association that has their annual meeting this year in Williamsburg, and we are going to have the artmobile there. It is an association conference, and they are actually doing it in person, as well as virtually. We are going to be open until nine o'clock on the first evening to ensure that folks can get in and see it.

Joan Brock: Good work.

Alex Nyerges: Great question.

Carol Ann Bischoff: Yes, hi. Everything just keeps getting better and better. All the work that everyone does in the Education Department. I have a question about Natural Bridge. Is there a fourth grade component, an education component that you all, are working with to develop with that exhibition? If so, can you tell us about it?

Jeffrey Allison: I think there are two answers to that, and I am going to turn it over to Celeste for the second part of that. We do have an educator guide that is available for the *Virginia Landscape* show that is onboard the artmobile right now, and that is easily accessible. For the Natural Bridge exhibition at VMFA we have a ton of new resources on our *Learn* website as well, but I will let Celeste speak a little bit more about that.

Carol Ann Bischoff: Thank you.

Celeste Fetta Neff: Thanks, Jeffrey. Fourth grade is a big deal with Natural Bridge, and what it covers for sure. Our distance learning educator, Sarah. The award-winning, I should say, Sarah is of course, doing distance learning on that show, which is great because Wi-Fi does work in that space, which is nice. Then also resources, like Jeffrey mentioned, some things that actually already existed, that we can apply to Natural Bridge, especially around *Progress*. It has a lot of connections, so we make those connections back to our permanent collection, as well. Then the video content, so we have a lot of video content around Natural Bridge. One is actually a tour that is almost done being edited with Chris Oliver that we worked on with Sarah and Courtney, so that will be made available to schools, of course, and online. I think that will be really helpful again, especially as schools are not doing in-person field trips right now. We are not really offering that. We are not getting the requests, so that will bridge that gap, no pun intended. Then we also have a great lecture, the opening lecture that Chris gave as a virtual lecture that is available on our website as well, so that is an immediate resource, especially for high school and college. Pioneering fourth graders, if they want to listen to that, I am sure like my daughter would probably do that. That is where we are, and I think the great thing about this show and the scholarship that Chris has provided, as well as the working relationship with Chris and the designers has been so great. He is always willing to kind of brainstorm with us and look for ways to continue to develop content, because a lot of this work is borrowed. There is work from our permanent collection, so I think that we can continue to develop things as we move forward, again hearing from educators and what their needs are and students and what their needs are. I would also say at the end of the show, I do not know how many of you have gotten a chance to come see it, there is a component, at the end that Sarah, Courtney, and Chris worked on together, which is amazing. It has a digital wall with iPads, phones, and screens. We, again working with our colleagues in marketing and communications, put an all call out to the public to send their images of Natural Bridge in to the museum, and then we have compiled those onto the screen. They rotate through these images that show families over generations, and how they interact and document the Natural Bridge, just like artists have documented it. Then we have these great discussion questions that are posed, along with these images to encourage viewers to think about how we keep track of our journey or where we go and what we see. What we visualize and how we do that digitally compared to artists who are working in the 18th century or 19th century and painting. I will say, I had the chance to go through the show a couple weeks ago, and it is stunning. Again, if you have not seen it, please come see it. I overheard a family in front of that wall, and the mom said, "Remember, we went here? You know we took a picture here." It is working. I mean to see it, it is to see it in action there. I think we can definitely use those kind of query and discussion questions. Those will be incorporated into resources as well, so there is a lot of what's going on.

Carol Ann Bischoff: A big scout troop trip happens at Natural Bridge, so I do not know if the museum ever does any outreach with you know any of the scouting boy or girl in Virginia, but that is a big, very popular trip for them.

Celeste Fetta Neff: That is great to know. I think Jeffrey that is something to keep in mind with when the artmobile is there. That would be a nice.

Carol Ann Bischoff: My daughter, you know, they all sell cookies the girls. One year they used the cookie money and they went to Natural Bridge. They did a number of other activities in that area, but it is just something else to think about especially while you are there Thank you. That is wonderful.

Celeste Fetta Neff: You are welcome. Good question, Carol Ann.

Suzy Szasz Palmer: I have a question for us when we go live I know everything that you are doing virtually is just incredible, but I am wondering what is your thinking about the planning for when particularly school groups and other kinds of groups may be able to come in to VMFA, and how that is going to need to be modified? You know, all of those things.

Celeste Fetta Neff: Thanks, Suzy. We are working through that right now. I am really understanding and trying to anticipate what the demand is going to be like. Again, I think speaking with teachers, what we are hearing and making some assumptions is that fall is still going to be scaled back in terms of field trips. I think, both economically for schools, but I think also maybe operationally there may be still some hesitancy to move to a different location. We are also working closely with our colleagues at other institutions in Richmond. There is a museum education roundtable group that meets quarterly. At the next meeting for that, I will really pose that to our peers and get a pulse for what these like organizations are doing, so we can sort of be on the same page with that and understand protocols and approach. I think that will help inform us, and so, looking ahead we are thinking spring will start to see a pickup and maybe some self-directed things will pick up from private schools in the fall. I do not like to be so wishy washy, but it is best to treat each month as a different step. Each time there is a new announcement from the governor, we figure out what to do. EO72, you know we keep an eye on that as the updates come in. You know we really work with of course our colleagues, and Kimberly has been so fantastic in helping us interpret that and understand what that means for us. That is what our feeling is right now.

Betty Crutcher: Given the growth in numbers of persons really enjoying the exhibits, do we see a growth in membership of our families and children?

Celeste Fetta Neff: That is a good question, Betty. I do not know. I will have to look into where our membership levels are for that Member group. Does anyone else, know the membership report?

Jil Harris: Michael, do you have any idea about that or Alex?

Alex Nyerges: Not specific, not exact numbers. There is a correlation between the two.

Michael Taylor: We can get those to you. I know we have been seeing members, so we can check that and double back to you.

Betty Crutcher: Or, I can just attend the Fiscal Oversight Committee?

Michael Taylor: That too would be good to see you there, Betty.

Celeste Fetta Neff: It is a great question, thank you for asking it. It is very good for me to keep in mind.

Jil Harris: I wanted to ask a question that piggybacks on Suzy's question about school groups. What I was wondering was that I am sure there are plans being developed for when all of the classes and classrooms and all that will be reopened. Is there any update on that that you can share with us?

Celeste Fetta Neff: So we are running studio classes and have been since winter. Now, we will be doing summer camps this year. Our summer camp program which is morning and then afternoon sessions have been going great. The protocols are working, and we have lowered class size, so we adhere to the distancing. The number of students there go along with code regulations, and so we are full steam ahead with that. I think the difference there is that it is individuals signing up. With the younger groups those classes are being held as well. This has slowly returned to on-site. I think what we have seen there, because it is adult and child more of a hesitancy to come back on-site. Again, as the positivity rate continues to decline and vaccines continue to rise, we are seeing that shift for that age group from virtual to wanting to come on-site. That has just happened, I would say, in the last three weeks. We have seen that return, so we will move forward with the same kind of protocols that we have in place for youth, and those will pick back up, hopefully in June.

Jennifer Sisk: Jil, it is Jennifer. I have got a question following up on Betty's point. It may be more membership oriented, but it is something I have been thinking about as well. The whole notion of how we have been thinking. If there is any way to create kind of a new hybrid category of membership. Are any other museums doing this to try and get some income off all the people that are enjoying our virtual programming?

Jil Harris: Who wants to take that one?

Michael Taylor: I can say that, or maybe Alex can too, we have been discussing it. I think this is sort of a brave new world that we are in, and I think that there is a philosophical debate, of course, because we love reaching the people we are reaching. The Kamoinge Symposium, which would it have been on site and to Celeste's point, we would have had 200 people for two days. We were having exponentially more than that. We were reaching a national audience, and we were thrilled with that. I think everyone on this call is really on the same page. We want to capture those people. We want to make them members, because we believe what we are doing here is so extraordinary and you should be a member and join and attend these events. Whether we monetize them more than that is where the question is now, and we have been refraining from that. It might change, but the idea of yes, you can attend an African American Read-In, but it is going to be \$15. That goes against our outreach and community mindedness. We are a free museum, and we are open 365 days a year. We love that, and we feel we are really making inroads in terms of bringing in new audiences, but all this is to say, to the theme of both presentations, is we are just navigating this and doing the best we can. It might change in six months, but I certainly feel we have an opportunity here to really increase membership if we maintain this commitment. I think part of that as Celeste knows, is we have to live stream out of our theater if we do get back to having public programs. That is going to take an investment of capital, but I think it will pay off. The long answer is, I do not have a clear strategy on that, and I do not think anyone does.

Alex Nyerges: I am going to add an addendum. Everything you said was spot on. Monetizing the online programs is not on our list of things to do, because we are very proud to be free and open

365. I think one illustration serves best how we end up reaping the rewards by building the membership program. People invest in and give to those organizations, they believe in. It is an emotional thing. In the days before we reopened and went free 365, we had 7,000 household members. We have 35,000 household members, contrary to everybody saying, if you go free, you will have the membership go down. We have proven that wrong. I suspect that the more we do online and the more we do free and then when we expand, the more we will see people flock to us and want to be members. Then they will support us. Where we also see that happening is with gifts of a planned giving nature and giving of art. Those are the kinds of rewards that we will reap. It takes a long time. One has to be patient, but already we have seen that work. We are going to continue following that model.

Jennifer Sisk: Right, thank you.

Cammy Carleton: I have a quick question it Cammy Carleton. I was wondering once a ticketed exhibition is concluded, do we have some kind of a video that allows people to see the exhibition that they missed it online?

Michael Taylor: I am happy to tell you that, yes. We have been very successfully now doing these guided tours of exhibitions. I think that is important for people who cannot get to see it, but they can also live on our website. I think that there are a record of the exhibitions, but they can also be used educationally. As was mentioned, we are doing that with Natural Bridge which is so great. I think in the future, you know in this in this hybrid world that we have, you will see the exhibitions that you want to see, but some of them, you will experience virtually. I do not think there is anything wrong with that, I still prefer to see the real art. Good question Thank you any other questions for Jeffrey and Celeste, our award-winning educators?

Anne Edwards: I have a question for Jeffrey.

Jeffrey Allison: Go right ahead

Anne Edwards: Jeffrey, a year ago the artmobile was scheduled to visit Culpepper and Rappahannock county. That did not happen because of Covid. Are they back on the schedule?

Jeffrey Allison: They are not currently on the schedule, because the weird thing about the artmobile, hopefully something will change soon, is that even if we park outside of school it is considered a field trip. The schools will not allow the students. I mean it sounds insane to me, but as soon as that changes we will be able to come back to the schools that we had planned on and hopefully do the other events with you. Absolutely.

Anne Edwards: Okay, great.

Carolyn Garner: I have a question, when you continue with Cocktails with a Curator, and it has been so successful, but I believe that people who are in the Circle Level only get to see two. Do they just choose two of those programs? Is that correct?

Michael Taylor: I believe, so. I think Tom can probably speak to that more than me, but they have been phenomenally successful. I do not see why they would not continue. In fact, we have kind of expanded a little bit. We have had Cocktails with a Conservator and Cocktails with an Educator. I

just think again, as part of this hybrid world that we are moving into only one of them was made fully available to everyone. I think that was Peter Schertz, because it related to *Sunken Cities* and that had more than 1,000 people on the on the call. I think it is a benefit of high level membership, but Tom do you know?

Tom: You are right, Michael. What we did was Cocktails with Curators has been for upper level members to live stream, but we did have Peter Schertz do his presentation. Like you said, we had over 1,000 people. Typically we have anywhere from 150 to 200 on. What we have also done is use the Cocktails with Curators recordings and shorten them up a little bit. We now are using those as upgrade opportunities and renewal opportunities actually for general membership. We will send a message and say here are two programs that you get as a general member. It is taped, but then, if you upgrade to this other level, then you will see these live. We are using those as upgrade opportunities, but also to recycle the content, since it is great content. We are pushing it out taped to general members, and then just the original question or a few minutes ago, we have got a plan to do virtual programming. It is actually going to be hybrid. We have got the tent that we are setting up again at the end of this month, so we are going to offer opportunities for people to come in and see a lecture or something live with a limited audience. We will also have it streamed from the tent as well, so we are planning for next year is to continue virtual but also probably have hybrid models along the way. We are kind of figuring out that programming now.

Michael Taylor: Carolyn, I think our next Cocktails with the Curator is with a very young and up and coming curator. It is on Hungarian born American photographers, and it is Alex Nyerges. Tune in for that if you can. The short answer is we are going to keep going as long as there is demand. I think if the demand falls away, you know we are happy to stop it. As Tom just said, if you have 200 people who look forward to learning more about what the curators are doing, what the educators, are doing, what the conservatives are doing, I see no reason to stop that. I think people like it, they get a glass of wine. They have their dinner, and they sit down and listen to someone like Sylvain talk about his plans for the galleries. I think it is great.

Jil Harris: Anyone else have any more questions? If there is no other business, I think we can adjourn at this point. Thank you everybody for attending.

Meeting adjourned at 2:51pm.

Transcribed by: Kay Baker
Administrative Assistant and Receptionist, Office of the Director & CEO