

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
Minutes of the Education Committee Meeting
Tuesday, December 3, 2024, 10:00am
Claiborne Robertson Room

There were present:

Jil Harris, Co-Chair
Betty Neal Crutcher, Co-Chair
Ken Dye
Emily Franklin, *virtual (personal-residence)*
Marcia Gilliam
Marianne Little, *virtual (personal-residence)*
Amanda Qreitem, *virtual (personal-residence)*
Anne Smith
Michel Zajur
Lynette Allston, Trustee President, Ex-officio

Absent:

Gil Bland
Rooz Dadabhoy
Anne Noland Edwards
Ann Goettman
Kirsti Goodwin
Bill Keyes
Rupa Tak

By Invitation:

Jeffrey Allison
Dayal Baxani
Maura Bisceglia
Nan Boyd
Caprice Bragg
David Cary
Stephanie Cooperstein
Celeste Fetta
Cherry Gardner
Carolyn Garner, Foundation Liaison
Jan Hatchette
Karen McGill
Sally Marvin
Whitney Murphy
Marie Royce
Michael Taylor
Iya Tsytkot

I. CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Jil Harris called the meeting to order at 10:03am.

II. MINUTES APPROVAL

Motion: Proposed by Dr. Betty Neal Crutcher and seconded by Anne Smith to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2024 Education Committee meeting as distributed. Motion carried.

II. STATEWIDE UPDATES

Jeffrey Allison, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts's (VMFA's) Manager of Statewide Programs and Exhibitions and Paul Mellon Collection Educator, reported that since July, the artmobile had several successful residencies serving over 275,000 people, including Day of the Dead in Hampton and Powwow at Genworth Financial Headquarters in Richmond. Other artmobile news included a fond farewell to driver, Chris Harriston, who has been named Coordinator for VA250's mobile museum program, which is set to launch in early 2025. VMFA is grateful to Harriston for agreeing to stay on as adjunct faculty to ferry the artmobile to residencies and train a new driver. Allison shared that over 400 applications were submitted to the Fellowship Program received over 400 applications and awardees will be announced in February. Additionally in February, Fellowship Exhibitions onsite and at the Airport will rotate.

The 8th Annual Pocahontas Reframed Film Festival (PRFF) returned to Cheek Theater on November 22nd and 23rd. Ticket sales increased 31% for a total film audience of over 500 people across the festival's two venues (VMFA and Virginia Museum of History and Culture). New this year was a Family Powwow co-hosted by PRFF and VMFA, which drew 4,000 visitors.

III. EDUCATION UPDATES

Celeste Fetta, Joan P. Brock Director of Education and Assistant Deputy Director for Education, Statewide and The Library, reported that through a sustained effort by the Tour Services team working closely with Visitor Services and Exhibition Graphic Design, VMFA is now recognized as an Autism Friendly destination, certified by the Autism Society of Virginia. A refreshed access page on the website, including an access guide and sensory map, as well as additional information for a range of audiences on visiting the museum is now available.

VI. AAMD INTERN SURVEY

The committee was introduced to and participated in a visitor research activity, led by Zac Van Schenck, VMFA's first Association of Art Museum Directors intern. Annually, placements are only given to ten museums in the country. Van Schenck's project focused on the best way for the museum to communicate the importance and expectation of not touching works of art to families with young children. Based on reviews of Early Childhood Education classes, observation and interviews with families and VMFA Museum Associates, Van Schenck presented the following recommendations on improving access and communication with this demographic: increase moments of exhibition interactivity

throughout the galleries; increase/move security staffing closer to entrances; increase/make more prominent signage; and offer family-focused training for museum associates. The Education department will meet in the future to discuss how the recommendations can be incorporated into the museum experience.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved by the committee at 11:03am.

Recorded by: Stephanie Cooperstein,
Executive Administrator