



# Advisory Committee on the Government Art Collection

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## Summary of the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 14 November 2013 at the Government Art Collection

### Present

David Verey, Chairman

David A Bailey, Iwona Blazwick, Penelope Curtis, Penny Johnson (GAC), Sandy Nairne, Nicholas Penny, Clare Pillman

GAC: Julia Toffolo, Adrian George, Clive Marks

### 1. Apologies for absence

None received, all Committee members were in attendance.

### 2. Minutes of the last Committee meeting held on 18 July 2013

The Minutes were signed, along with the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 1 October.

### 3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the last meeting

The Director reported that she had been unable to obtain a further discount to that offered by Rebecca Hossack for the 10 photographs by Phil Shaw, *Londonesi Subterraneis*.

The GAC has temporary custody of an album of photographs of the 1943 Tehran Conference, removed from the British Embassy in Tehran in 2012 for safekeeping. It will be returned to the FCO once a digital photographic record has been made.

### 4. Interim report on money-raising options for the GAC's acquisitions

The Director brought the Committee up-to-date with developments. The Chairman noted that a 'patrons' group might be formed. Iwona Blazwick queried the possible expectations of those becoming involved in this way. Clare Pillman agreed that if things progressed to such a stage guidelines would need to be drawn up in order to enable the GAC to retain its political neutrality. Sandy Nairne stressed that potential members' reward for supporting the GAC in this way would solely be the promotion of the UK. He suggested that the next step forward should be to test the feasibility of a 'patrons group' by approaching individuals with specific projects in mind. He also pointed out that the administration of such a group required sustained resources in terms of staffing and time which the GAC does not have at present

Nicholas Penny was concerned that members of the Committee who are museum directors might be presented with a conflict of interest if they were encouraged to approach the same people who regularly donate to their own institutions.

The Chair and the Director confirmed to Penelope Curtis that although the Chair had asked the Minister for an increase in GAC funding for acquisitions, the Minister remained keen to explore the option of a 'patrons' group, despite the fact that the Committee had previously expressed reservations about the idea. Clare Pillman confirmed that while there was no expectation of an increase in the GAC's acquisitions funding in general, equally there was no desire to end it altogether.

Further options for developing the Collection were discussed:

- David A. Bailey suggested encouraging donations and bequests from artists and collectors.
- Iwona Blazwick suggested that private collectors might be willing to lend works which would otherwise be in storage.

Penelope Curtis noted that the perceived neutrality of the GAC was an important strength for the organisation, and that steps should be taken to avoid damage to that reputation.

## 5. Acquisitions

### 5.1 Future Acquisitions

Sandy Nairne suggested that the list should also contain photographers. David A Bailey said that he would be happy to liaise with the Director to produce a suitable list for future consideration.

### 5.2 Acquisitions for consideration

The following works were approved for acquisition,

Marcus Coates (born 1968)

Five works from the series **Ritual for Reconciliation** 2013 to be chosen by the Director.

**Kestrel (Falco Tinnunculus) England**

**Squirrel Treefrog (Hyla Squirella) USA**

**Golden Silk Orb-Weaver Spider (Genus Nephila) USA**

**King Vulture (Sarcoramphous Papa) England**

**Ostrich (Struthio Camelus) Spain**

**Nazca Booby (Sula Granti) Galapagos Islands, Ecuador**

**Galapagos Land Iguana (Conolophus Subcristatus) Galapagos Islands, Ecuador**

**Sally Lightfoot Crabs (Grapsus Grapsus) Galapagos Islands, Ecuador**

**Bighorn Sheep (Ovis Canadensis) Canada**

Pigment on Hahnemuhle 100%  $\alpha$ -cellulose, laid finished rice paper, 60 x 48 x 9 cm, Edition 3 / 3

£3,630 (£4,270 (unframed) less 15% discount plus VAT), Kate MacGarry, London

Jim Lambie (born 1964)

**Metal Box** 2013

Aluminium and polish steel sheet, gloss paint, 61 x 61 x 17 cm

£24,000 (£25,000 less 20% discount plus VAT), Modern Institute, Glasgow

Lucy Skaer (born 1975)

**Me V** 2012

**Me VI** 2012

**Me VII** 2012

**Me VIII** 2012

**Me IX** 2012

Resin, celluloid, Each 23.5 x 15.5 x 4 cm

£21,000 (\$40,000 less discount \$32,000 exchange rate of £1=\$1.60 plus 5% import VAT), Murray Guy Gallery, New York

Tessa Traeger (born 1938)

**Chemistry of Light No.8 glass negative c.1890 12 x 10 in 2012**

silver gelatin emulsion in decay, 84.4 x 118.9 cm, Edition of 5

£3,840 (£4,000 (unframed) less 20% discount plus VAT), Purdy Hicks Gallery, London

**6. Government Art Collection 2013 – 14**

The Director's update on accommodation, team and upgrade of database was noted by the Committee.

**7. Director's report on GAC activities since 18 July 2013**

This was noted by the Committee.

**8. AOB**

The Director noted that this was Julia Toffolo's last Committee meeting as she was taking voluntary redundancy from the GAC, leaving at the end of December 2013. The Committee warmly thanked Julia for her hard work, commitment and service to the GAC and wished her well in her new enterprise.