

MINUTES OF THE APD COMMITTEE MEETING DECEMBER 4, 2013 (4th floor conference room)

STAFF REPORT

Katherine Gottschalk reported that Volgistics seemed to be going well, please contact her if there are any problems with access.

Diane Arkin asked us to remember the guards this year with our end of year holiday treats. Donations may be brought to Katherine Gottschalk's desk beginning Monday, Dec. 9.

Wil Scott reported that everything is still on track in regards to the closing of the East Building galleries. There will be some additional sculpture displayed in the Atrium. Some works will also be exhibited in the West Building Nymphaeum, which is the ground level lobby closest to the 7th Street entrance.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Béla Demeter took a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting (September 18, 2013); the motion was seconded and the minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Deb Pietras reported that the balance at our September meeting was \$936.28. Proceeds from remitted dues (\$960.00) minus expenses (\$17.14 for tea supplies and \$100 for memorial gifts) bring our current balance to \$1779.14. Seven docents remain unpaid. Dues (\$30) can be paid by check to: "NGA Adult Docent Program". Please mail your check to Deb Pietras at: 10210, Oxfordshire Road, Great Falls, VA 22066.

BOOK DISCUSSION REPORT

Betty Sullivan asked for a vote on the following books for the next book club discussion, tentatively scheduled for late June (TBA): *The Goldfinch* (Donna Tartt, 2013); *Cezanne: A Life* (Alex Danchev, 2012); *Bernard Berenson: A Life in the Picture Trades* (Rachel Cohen, 2013); *America's National Gallery of Art: A Gift to the Nation* (Philip Kopper, 1991).

A spirited discussion ensued. Wil Scott had been informed by staff that *The Goldfinch* was a "real slog". In regard to *Cezanne: A Life*, Wil suggested that this material has already been covered, perhaps better, in a previous NGA exhibition catalogue (*Cezanne in Provence* by Philip Conisbee and Denis Coutagne, 2006). Diane Arkin said that Philip Kopper was working on a revised edition of *A Gift to the Nation* and that she would try to have him speak about his book at a future meeting. It was also noted that the Wall Street Journal gave the Bernard Berenson book a good review. A strong majority selected *Bernard Berenson: A Life in the Picture Trades* for the next book club discussion.

EDUCATION

Dianne Maffia, speaking for Laura Symcak, reported that the docent-lead education session (discussed at the last meeting) is tentatively scheduled for Jan 22 at 1:00.

ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Stephanie Frasher reported that we will be touring the Evergreen Library at Johns Hopkins sometime in February (TBA). The collection dovetails nicely with the Ballet Russe exhibition that just closed at NGA. The cost per docent is \$25.

NATIONAL DOCENT SYMPOSIUM

Anne Marie Marenburg reported on the 17th National Docent Symposium, which she attended in San Francisco this October with Anna Dixon (weekend docent) and Linda Meer (school docent).

The Symposium was hosted by the de Young Museum and the Legion of Honor Museum (with support from the Asian Art Museum, California Academy of Sciences and San Francisco MOMA). There were over 400 participants, 60 of which were staff educators. These symposia are held every two years; the next two are scheduled for Cincinnati (2015) and Montreal (2017).

Institutions varied from large encyclopedic collections in metropolitan areas like the Philadelphia Museum of Arts, Museum of Fine Arts (Boston), and Art Institute of Chicago to regional cultural centers like Phoenix Art Museum, and Taft Museum of Art (Ohio).

In addition to NGA, other local museums represented were: Hillwood, Freer/Sackler, Smithsonian American Art Museum, The Baltimore Museum of Art, and The Walters Art Museum.

Anne Marie talked about numerous ideas and interpretive strategies she encountered, including: Storytelling as a tool and incorporating the work in a story; the power of “yes...and” rather than “yes...but”; an interesting approach to a tour revolving around the six degrees of separation between artists and their works (like the Kevin Bacon parlor game). Anne Marie will submit a full report on the conference to Diane Arkin.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Dianne Maffia opened a discussion on what course a docent should take when only one visitor shows up for a tour. Apparently some docents have offered the headphone-guided tour as an alternative. Wil felt that the docent should give the tour. Others concurred, with the observation that we often pick up additional visitors in the galleries. In the event of a POV tour, we can switch to a highlights tour and revert back to the POV format if more join the group. The next APD Committee meeting is scheduled for March 26, 2014

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Béla Demeter, Secretary