



Board of Trustees

Minutes

VABT(20)78

Date: 27 November 2020

Time: 14.00-16.30

Venue: Via video conference

Present: Nicholas Coleridge CBE, Chair
Jonathan Anderson
Martin Bartle
Allegra Berman
Dr David Bomford
Dr Genevieve Davies
Ben Elliot
Nick Hoffman
Amanda Leveté CBE
Steven Murphy

Professor Lynda Nead
Kavita Puri
Caroline Silver
Amanda Spielman
Marc St John
Dr Paul Thompson
Nigel Webb
Anthony Misquitta (*Secretary to the Board & General Counsel*)

In attendance Dr Tristram Hunt, Director
Dr Antonia Boström, Director of Collections
Sophie Brendel, Director of Audiences
Dr Gus Casely-Hayford OBE, Director of V&A East
Dr Helen Charman, Director of Learning & National Programmes
Jane Ellis, Director of Finance & Resources
Jane Lawson, Director of Development
Tim Reeve, Deputy Director & Chief Operating Officer
Judy Roberts, Director of People & Change
Dr Pip Simpson, Director of Design, Estate & FuturePlan
Alex Stitt, Director of Commercial, Digital & Exhibitions
Nick Marchand, Head of International Programmes, for item 8
Tim Allan, Chair of V&A Dundee, for item 9
Leonie Bell, Director of V&A Dundee, for item 9

Apologies: None

Minute taker: Julia Downer, Directorate Office Manager & Governance Officer

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interests

1.1 Nicholas Coleridge welcomed Trustees to the meeting.

1.2 It was recorded that Nick Hoffman has been appointed to the Board of the Samuel Courtauld Trust. There were no other declarations of interest in the agenda.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 24 September 2020, and the Confidential Annex relating to that meeting, were approved by the Board.

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. Director's Report

- 4.1 Tristram Hunt, Director, paid tribute to John Clarke, Curator of Himalayan and South East Asian Art, who had died recently.
- 4.2 The Trustees were briefed on the work undertaken to enable the museum to reopen on 2 December 2020, following the temporary closure from 4 November 2020. The V&A Collection at World of Wedgwood will remain closed in the short term due to Tier 3 restrictions.
- 4.3 It has been announced that, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the V&A is in a period of collective consultation on proposed redundancies. This reflects the effects of the closure, the lower levels of visitors, both from the UK and overseas, over the short and medium term, as well as the reduced audience capacity and demand due to social distancing measures which have severely impacted on the museum's operations.
- 4.4 V&A Dundee has received additional in-year support of £1m from the Scottish Government.
- 4.5 The Trustees were briefed on the work being carried out at the Museum of Childhood since its closure for redevelopment in March 2020, and examples of recent acquisitions were shared with Trustees.
- 4.6 HE Teferi Melese Desta, the new Ethiopian Ambassador to the UK, had visited the museum to meet the Director and view the Maqdala Crown.
- 4.7 The Trustees received an update on the ongoing work around decolonisation.
- 4.8 Images of the newly restored Raphael Court, which will reopen on 13 January 2021, were shared with the Trustees. The gallery has been successfully recast using state of the art digital and interpretation work to transform the experience for visitors. The research undertaken as part of the project has enabled a major new study of the Raphael Cartoons.
- 4.9 Recent staff appointments include Dr Pedro Gaspar, Head of Conservation, and Kate Parsons, Director of Conservation and Collections Care & Access.
- 4.10 The Trustees were briefed on the implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review, which had been announced on 25 November 2020.

5. Finance

5.1 Financial Report

This item has been recorded under a Confidential Annex. Its contents are exempt from disclosure under S.(43)2 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because publication would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of the V&A and its supply chain.

6. Remobilisation Update

This item has been recorded under a Confidential Annex. Its contents are exempt from disclosure under S.(43)2 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because publication would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of the V&A and its supply chain.

7. Development Update

7.1 Jane Lawson, Director of Development, briefed the Board on recent development activities which included an overview of the capital campaigns underway.

8. International Strategy

8.1 Nick Marchand, Head of International Programmes, joined the meeting and spoke to a paper which had been circulated in advance.

8.2 The international strategy was set out, following a briefing at the January 2020 Board meeting on the strategic framework for China and North East Asia. The work will be expanded to identify and take forward a wide range of new opportunities and partnerships, both cultural and commercial, taking an integrated and coordinated museum wide approach in the development of a business plan.

8.3 The touring exhibition *Fashioned from Nature* will open in December at Design Society, Shekou in China.

8.4 The Trustees thanked NM for his presentation and endorsed the strategic work being undertaken.

9. V&A Dundee

9.1 Tim Allan (Chair) and Leonie Bell (Director) of V&A Dundee, joined the meeting to update the Trustees on the activities being carried out in Dundee.

9.2 The Board was reminded of the very successful first two years of operation, before V&A Dundee was temporarily closed due to COVID-19. Prior to closure, visitor numbers were considerably higher than anticipated, and the economic benefits locally in Dundee as well as across Scotland have been substantial. In response to the pandemic the Dundee Cultural Recovery Fund has been set up to support cultural institutions in the local area, with V&A Dundee leading the fund raising.

In addition to the recent appointment of Leonie Bell as Director, Claire Eva has joined as Director of Audiences & Media.

- 9.3 The closure of the museum has provided an opportunity to reflect on progress so far, and evaluate future opportunities, both in terms of the public programme and outreach to the surrounding areas. The aim is to establish new cross sector partnerships within the cultural sector and reinforce V&A Dundee's role as a focal point for Scottish design.
- 9.4 The Board thanked Tim Allan and Leonie Bell for their presentation and congratulated them on the achievements of V&A Dundee.

Amanda Spielman left the meeting.

10. Chairman's Report

- 10.1 On behalf of the Board, Nicholas Coleridge, Chairman, thanked Steven Murphy (SM) whose term as a Trustee comes to an end on 31 December 2020. SM was particularly thanked for his work in extending the museum's reach in China as well as his contribution towards digital strategy.
- 10.2 The Board commended the Executive Board on the work carried out during the period of closure, including the refurbishment of the Raphael Court and the Dorothy and Michael Hintze Gallery.
- 10.3 A number of Trustees had recently visited the site of the Collection & Research Centre, which forms part of V&A East, to view the considerable progress made in recent months.

11. Any other business

- 11.1 Nick Hoffman, Chair of the Audit Committee, briefed the Board on the meeting held on 17 November 2020: the Risk Register had been reviewed, and the museum's preparations for Brexit had been examined and agreed.
- 11.2 The next meeting is scheduled for 28 January 2021.
- 11.3 There was no further business.

12. Reports from Committees

- 12.1 **Trustees' Audit Committee:** The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2020 had been circulated in advance.
- 12.2 **Trustees' Building Strategy Committee:** The minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2020 had been circulated in advance. This was the first meeting of the newly formed committee.
- 12.3 **Trustees' Collections Committee:** The minutes of the meeting held on 09 September 2020 had been circulated in advance.

- 12.4 **Trustees' Finance Committee:** The minutes of the meetings held on 17 September 2020 and 04 November 2020 had been circulated in advance.
- 12.5 **Trustees' Investment Committee:** The minutes of the meeting held on 04 November 2020 had been circulated in advance.
- 12.6 **Trustees' Research Committee:** The minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2020 had been circulated in advance.

Julia Downer
27 November 2020

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Signed
Nicholas Coleridge, Chair