

Minutes of the 121st AGM of the Society of Scottish Artists

Out of the Blue Drill Hall, 36 Dalmeny Street, Edinburgh

Sunday 20 March 2016

1.30pm

1. Apologies:

Dorothy Jackson, Nicky Sanderson, Margaret Bisset Graham, Annie Woodford, Ian McKenzie Smith, Janice Fleming, Olive Dean, Mike Inglis, Kate Henderson, Elaine Allison, Christine Wylie, Allan S. Beveridge, Meryl Forsyth, Tansy Lee Moir, Harry Magee, Jamie Davidson, Su Grierson, Nan Mulder, Deirdre Robertson, Stuart Duffin, Patricia Ramaer, Diane Maclean, Penny Cuthbert, Sarah McKenzie Smith, Gerry Bradshaw, Alan Kilpatrick, Peter Tudhope, Robbie Bushe, Lesley Finlayson, Irene Campbell, Molly Bullick, Susan McMillan, Jo McDonald, Diane Young, Norman Sutton-Hibbert, Gail Robertson, James Lumsden, Marlene Ivey, Rowena Comrie, Louise Ritchie, Liz Douglas, Elise Allan, Stan Brooks and Charmian Pollok.

Present:

Gayle Nelson PSSA, Sharon Quigley VPSSA, Eric Wishart, Paul Charlton, David Forster, Jean Proctor, Kirsty Lorenz, Jill Bennett, Alan Bond, Catherine Sargeant, Allan Robertson, Mark Tough, Leena Nammari, Koralia Maciej, Eona Aitken, Tessa Clowney, Miriam Vickers, Rona Maclean, Gavin Johnston, Judith Rowan, Chrissie Heughan, Li Portenlaenger, Fiona Hutchison, Jenny Smith, Katharine Aarrestad, Hanan Makki Zakari and Lys Hansen.

In Attendance:

Julia Douglas

2. Minutes:

The minutes of the last AGM held on 14th February 2015 were presented and accepted as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed Sharon Quigley

Seconded Lys Hansen

3. Matters arising

- There were no matters arising.

4. President's Address

- An SSA members' exhibition titled EMPIRE, which was curated by Gayle Nelson PSSA and Alan Bond SSA ran throughout July and August 2015 and was deemed a great success, attracting new audiences due to its non-traditional gallery context. A special event with James Robertson and Carolyn Scott was well attended, as was the Private View. The exhibition received a four star review in the Times.
- There are ten new Professional Members: Tessa Clowney, Jean Duncan, Roland Fraser, Alison Grant, Su Grierson, Ewan John, Fiona McDonald, Gillian Murray, Karen Spy and Christine Wylie.
- The SSA Annual Exhibition 2015 was held in the entire Upper Galleries of the Academy less two rooms. The Sculpture Hall was restricted to the South side only and members agreed that it had felt empty.
- The Private View, held on a Sunday afternoon, was deemed a success and it was agreed that this timing should be considered again for next year if possible.

- Invited elements of the exhibition were 10 Graduates, 20 artists from Rosalux Gallery in Minneapolis, Koralia Maciej who won the SSA Exhibition Prize in 2014 and Lise Vézina who was the winner of this year's Engramme Printmaking Exchange Prize.
- Koralia Maciej was selected at the exhibition for the Engramme Printmaking Exchange Prize and will exhibit in Quebec in May 2016.
- Juliana Capes was selected at the exhibition for the SSA Exhibition Prize and will exhibit in the SSA Annual Exhibition in 2016.
- The exhibition received considerable press coverage with 14 pieces achieved in print and online. There were reviews by Giles Sutherland, Duncan Macmillan and Jan Patience plus many smaller features.
- The Saturday Social event was also very well attended with the 5 artist talks and family friendly activities being well received.
- '*Intranquility*' is the title of an exhibition, which will take place in Ullapool this summer at An Talla Solais, from 25 June to 14 August. Six SSA Members have been selected by Rosie Lesso to exhibit. Rosie Lesso has now stood down from Council and has handed the curation and coordination of this exhibition over to Katharine Aarrestad and David Forster.
- The SSA will be exhibiting in St Andrews Art Gallery and Museum from 17 September to 19 November in an exhibition titled '*Exquisite Corpse*'. This will be an exhibition of SSA Members and invited artist's work, curated by Katharine Aarrestad and Paul Charlton.
- For the 2015 SSA Annual Exhibition the decision was made to have a digital, online catalogue because the timeline was extremely tight and the cost of a printed catalogue extremely high, with the number of copies sold the year before being very low.
- The three ESSA societies have rotated back one slot and the dates for the SSA Annual Exhibition have now been set. These will be 24 October to 26 November 2016.

5. Adoption of Accounts to 31st December 2014

- Examiner Eric Wishart presented the accounts to the year-end, December 2014. This was the 30th year that he had done this.
- Since it was some months since they were signed off for OSCR on 30 September 2015, he took the meeting briefly through all pages of the annual report.
- He stated that an examiner had to pay as much attention to the narrative of the Report of Achievements as to the single page of Receipts and Payments. The essence of a charity examiner's report is to confirm that he has found no inconsistency between the two.
- The accounts are currently in credit and, therefore, show that the Council and Administrator are managing the charity successfully.
- He concluded that a series of well-presented annual reports could be a plus for the organisation when seeking future funding.

6. Election of Committee Members

- Two Committee Members are standing down having completed their three year term: Alan Bond and David Forster
- David Forster will be co-opted to complete the coordination of the *Intranquility* exhibition.
- There are two new Committee Members: Professional Member, Jenny Smith and Ordinary Member, Kirsty Lorenz.
- There are still two spaces to be filled on the SSA Committee. Council are considering co-opting two further volunteers to assist with specific tasks.
- The President formally welcomed the new Committee Members.

7. Updates, Proposed Constitution Amendments and Discussion

- The SSA Annual Exhibition will once again be held in the Upper Galleries of the Academy, less two rooms (VI & VII). These will be utilised by the Scottish National Galleries (SNG) who will be losing space in the Link at that time due to an extension. They will therefore be moving their shop and café into these rooms for the duration. Though this means that the SSA will, once again, have less space than they would desire, this is not felt to be too prohibitive as these two elements may draw additional footfall to the Upper Galleries.
- It is unclear, as yet, what will be offered to the ESSA societies for their slots in 2017. It is possible that there will be the Upper and Lower Galleries offered once more for the shorter period of 7 weeks to be shared between the three societies. ESSA agrees unanimously that they do not wish to return to this arrangement, however, it may be non-negotiable. It may also be possible for one of the societies to go in at an alternative time of year.
- ESSA and the SNG are in the process of drawing up a contract for future arrangements.
- The President put the following two Constitution amendments to the members:
 - 1) A waiver for digital submission for the President and Vice President. This was felt to be too much of an additional workload at this incredibly busy time. It was felt that they should be pre-selected automatically and simply go through the final selection process within the gallery to ensure the quality of selections continues to be high. The vote for this amendment was carried.
 - 2) The constitution currently states that *'The Office Bearers shall hold Office for three years...'* It was suggested that this should be altered to *'... three Annual Exhibitions ...'* as the date of this changes annually. The vote for this amendment was carried.
- An SSA Member asked if it was necessary to have the submission date so early and requested that the time be shortened between submission and pre-selection. The President explained that the selection process takes a great deal of time as all works are looked at and voted on independently by the Selecting Committee, following which they must meet once or twice as a group to finalise the pre-selections.
- It was agreed that having the Royal Scottish Academy (RSA) exhibit in two rooms within the Upper Galleries at the same time as the SSA was unsuccessful. It was confusing to the visitor. The Sculpture Hall felt empty, though had been a quiet space for visitors to sit down in.
- The SSA Member's feedback on the digital online catalogue indicated that they felt that the production of a paper catalogue was important, particularly for archival purposes. Even though it had cost around £2,500 to produce and sales had been low, it was felt that it was important to create a paper record for future reference and for PR purposes. A document, which should be available in Universities and Libraries. Members discussed the possibility of creating 'print on demand' catalogues. It was suggested that further advertising could be sold to help cover the costs. In order to assist with the extremely short turnaround time of the Annual Exhibition, the catalogue could be about the activity of the society over the entire year rather than focusing on the Annual Exhibition.
- An SSA Member explained how confused she was over the lack of marketing of the SSA Annual Exhibition on the website of the Royal Scottish Academy. It was explained that, though the building does bare the same name as the RSA they no longer own the building and therefore have no requirement to advertise the events within the building. It was agreed that there appears to be a lack of coordination between the SNG and the RSA.

8. Any other competent business

- As the Administrator is moving to France a replacement will be found. She has been asked to continue in post until such time as a new Administrator is secured. The President, Council and Members thanked her for her exceptional work for the society over the past four years.

The meeting closed at 3.30pm