



ASSOCIATION
FOR ART
HISTORY

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018

18 October 2018

17:45-18:15, Toynbee Hall, London

Welcome and review of the year

Sarah Philp, trustee and Director of Programme and Policy at the Art Fund, stood in for the Association Chair, Christine Riding, to welcome members to the AGM and deliver a review of the year.

There were no resolutions put forward for this meeting. The meeting itself presented itself in a new format, decoupled from the annual conference. Sarah noted that the afternoon had already been busy with various group meetings and that the annual lecture was to follow the AGM.

Sarah highlighted that this was the Association's first year with a new name, visual identity and a new CEO. On behalf of the trustees and members, Sarah thanked Pontus Rosén, former CEO, for seven years of dedicated and engaged service. She also welcomed Greg Perry to his first AGM.

Sarah explained the changes that had taken place in the Association over the past year, including the move from an interest group structure to wider networks and project communities. She highlighted the already up-and-running new DECR project board that had formed out of the former Student group under leadership of Caroline McCaffrey-Howarth.

Reflecting on the recent annual conference, Sarah noted that it was the best attended in the Association's history with over 700 delegates attending the Courtauld/Kings event.

In recent years, the Association had significantly increased its following on social media and its reach through digital communications. Last year the Association had its greatest-yet reach online with a 760% increase in Twitter following since 2012, and a 4400% increase in Facebook following.

To conclude the formal business of representing the Chair, Sarah thanked our former Honorary Secretary Pat Hardy, in for the tremendous work in the change of our Articles of Association, as well as Kate Aspinal, former chair of the Freelance and Independents Group and Trustee, for her dedicated and critical work. New trustee positions including a new Chair would be filled in 2019.

Summary of annual accounts

Neil Frey, Hon. Treasurer, presented a short summary of the annual accounts and the developing financial status of the Association. Neil reported that the Association had an unqualified audit report for 2017 from MHA MacIntyre Hudson.

Neil explained that the Finance and Risk Management Committee of the Board of Trustees oversees the financial standing of the organisation. Management accounts

are produced quarterly. Neil commended the work of the Association's first in-house financial officer, Elizabeth Nkhuwa, who began in 2017. The FRMC also keeps the Association's auditors (MHA) under scrutiny and makes recommendations to the board as whether they should be retained or whether this service should be put out to tender.

The Association reached a new contractual arrangement with the publisher of its journal Art History in 2017 which has provided a steady and positive income stream. Spending on our charitable activity went up in 2017 in line with increased income. A focus for increased investment was on a new CRM system, website and rebranding work. The Association still plans to draw down reserves in 2018.

Overall, the AAH has a healthy cashflow and a good level of reserves.

Recent and ongoing activities, future outlook

Gregory Perry, CEO, spoke to members about the Association's efforts to refine the audience groups it wants to serve; to revisit the AAH's mission statement from 2010 in light of its name change; articulate a vision and values for the organisation and to create a strategic plan for the next three years. One focus would be on advocacy to support people in the field; this includes awareness raising and influencing on issues which have an impact on the subject. Another aim would be to ensure that our programmes effectively serve the priority audiences we have identified. The work of the AAH should be underpinned by a sustainable financial model as well as governance and staff structures to help us realise the goals in our strategic plan.

GP reflected on his first six months in post: shortly after his start the university strikes in relation to the pension crisis hit, and GP was inspired by the people who looked to their subject association to represent their interests and those who came together at the conference to speak about the AAH's role in this matter and within the subject. From this came the creation of a new advisory committee on Higher Education matters which formed during the year. Other networks including museum and gallery professionals and undergraduate students would be formed in the coming year.

Trevor Horsewood, Campaigns Manager, subsequently explained the Association's recent work to map art history in schools and universities. The current undergraduate course map (on the AAH website) shows 303 AH-related courses in 176 combinations at 42 institutions. TH stressed the importance of the Association's work to understanding art history as it is taught and experienced via single honours programmes, combined honours programmes and in studio practice.

GP opened the floor for questions and noted the keynotes speakers for the 2019 Annual Conference in Brighton; that the AAH would offer bursaries to attend the conference and that the 2020 conference would be held in Newcastle.

Meeting closed 18:30.