

## **Art Committee Minutes**

### **Zoom Meeting of 4 Nov 2022**

#### **Present:**

Bill Harris (Chair)

Paul Bristowe, Paul Edwards, Patricia Fara, William Foster, John Guy, Douglas Hedley, Glynnis Maynard, Anna Piper-Thompson, Jackie Tasioulas.

#### **Apologies for absence:**

Douglas Hedley, Louis Klee, Angus Mathieson

#### **1. Relationship between the Art Committee and Conservation Committee**

The Art Committee members agreed strongly that they wish to continue working closely with the Conservation Committee; Patricia Fara is on both Committees

**Action: Patricia to report this minute to Conservation Committee**

#### **2. Gillian Brown**

On the Committee's behalf, the Chair will send a warm letter of gratitude to Keith Brown for his donation of £5000 and his gift of an oil portrait of Gillian Brown by their daughter, Sarah Brown Fleming. The picture is currently being framed, and the Committee will then discuss the best place to hang it.

**Action: Bill to send letter of thanks and add item to the next agenda**

#### **3. Conservation (attached items 1 and 2)**

The Committee warmly welcomed the Bursar's involvement and the financial foresight of the Finance Committee. The Art Committee's three tasks were discussed:

- a) *To review and update the Clare Art database with the aid of a temporary employee, whose job description we are to write.*

There is a typed copy of an incomplete list prepared by Anne Hughes using a computer program that is now obsolete. The new inventory should include: title, artist, current location and small photo of every picture; brief note of its condition. It is essential that the person appointed should have uninhibited access to every room in College, including those occupied by Fellows.

**Action: John Guy will write a draft and get approval from the Bursar. He will then approach the Fitzwilliam & the Hamilton-Kerr to find a suitable student**

b) *To produce an asset strategy (what to hang, store, loan, sell) and a prioritization list for conservation*

The Committee discussed the pre-circulated priority list drawn up in conjunction with the Conservation Committee and Jonathan Miles (Trumpington Gallery). Main factors under consideration were: the commemorative value of the painting to the college, the monetary value of the painting, the aesthetic value of the painting, whether or not we could think of a suitable place to hang it, and the estimated cost of conservation. The Committee agreed on the following **short-term priority list of top nine for conservation and rehanging**

1. Lady Elizabeth de Clare: top priority, currently being conserved. Approx. cost of conservation £2000
2. Hugh Latimer: painting a good copy; the frame is valuable; rehang in Latimer Room on back wall. Approx. cost of conservation £1200

3. John Tillotson: excellent painting of an important person; should replace the portrait of Thomas Henry Cole in Small Hall. Approx. cost of conservation £1350
4. William Butler  
Beautiful, valuable painting of major donor; rehang in SCR. Approx. cost of conservation £1,500
5. Isaac Bargrave  
Valuable painting by a good artist, rehang in SCR .Approx. cost of conservation £100
6. Robin Matthews  
Lovely modern impressionistic painting; rehang in the Master's Lodge.  
Approx. cost of conservation £300
7. John Moore  
A fine large painting: Bishop of Ely who bequeathed medieval manuscripts to the University Library; rehang in the SCR. Approx. cost of conservation: unknown
8. William Whiston  
Excellent contemporary painting of an important Fellow; rehang in SCR. Approx. cost of conservation £1500
9. Martin Folkes  
A small and not wonderful copy. Needs cleaning; rehang in SCR. Approx. cost of conservation £700

**Action: Chair to recommend this priority list to the Finance Committee**

- c) *The Committee discussed the longer-term priorities at some length, although no definite conclusions were reached.*

Factors to bear under consideration include: not giving undue prominence to some historical characters (eg Cornwallis); conserving the College's heritage; value of picture relative to value of frame and the cost of conservation; possibilities of loaning or selling; necessity of adequate boxing and storing provisions (in particular, big pictures (eg Cornwallis, Tillotson) will not go down T basement stairs)

**Action: Committee members to continue discussion by email**

#### **4. Rehangng**

The members agreed with the Conservation Committee recommendation that the portraits of Bob Hepple and Tony Badger should be hung in the Gillespie Centre, eg Riley Auditorium

**Action: Patricia to relay this information to Conservation Committee**

#### **5. Thirkill Room**

The members agree with the Conservation Committee recommendation that the Thirkill room be kept free of College 'worthies' as 'a place for appreciation of the College art collection'. The Committee noted that some extremely valuable paintings (eg William Nicholson's *Mushrooms*) are out of public view in particular rooms. Their insurance cover needs to be updated and their value included in lists of College assets.

**Action: Chair to inform Bursar of this point**

#### **6. T-Basement**

T basement needs to be refurbished so that it can act as an effective safe storage space for unhung pictures. In a subsequent discussion, the Senior Tutor suggested that the Estates Committee could fund this work

**Action: Chair to inform Bursar of this point**

### **7. Clare 'Fourth Plinth'**

The Committee warmly welcomed the idea of allocating a space where pieces of art by current members of the College could be hung on a rotating basis. Anna Piper-Thompson was very much in favour of encouraging student participation, and sensibly suggested that the size of the available space be specified in advance; staff should also be invited to contribute – this is a collective initiative of the entire College. A small and representative sub-committee would be needed to judge the entries.

**Action: Chair and Deborah Hoy to identify a suitable space**

### **8. Care of Sculpture**

From the Conservation Committee, Donald Hearn is concerned about the arrangements at Clare for caring for the sculptures outdoors. This needs to be done professionally.

**Action: Chair to ask Sophie King to attend University Conservation Meeting and seek advice**

### **9. Fiftieth anniversary of the admission of women**

William Foster reported that several women's portrait photographs have been successfully hung in the foyer of the Forbes Mellon Library. The sculptor of *Hommage* has reportedly offered to sell it to the College for £30,000 instead of £500,000. Jackie Tasioulas suggested that the Browns' generous donation of £5000 could be used to seed a Fellows' fund for raising the rest of the money. The Finance Committee should welcome this addition to College assets.

**Action: Chair to verify purchase price and consult Bursar**

### **10. AOB**

The Chair reported that this is definitely his last year in office. The Committee agreed that the next Chair should be younger than the current members

**Action: Chair to consult Master about recruiting volunteers**