

Minutes to the AGM of the Royal Society of Sculptors

Wednesday 24 May 2023, 3.00pm

Held as a hybrid event in person at Dora House & remotely via ZOOM

Present: Laura Ford (LF) President

Also: Mary Anstee-Parry MRSS, Pauline Antram MRSS, Marcia Bennett-Male MRSS, Barbara Beyer MRSS, G Roland Biermann MRSS, Hamish Black FRSS, Mary Bourne FRSS, Clare Burnett PPRSS, Maria Teresa (Tere) Chadwick MRSS, Denise de Cordova MRSS, Mandeep Dillon MRSS, Stephanie Douet MRSS, Deborah Duffin MRSS, Stephen Duncan FRSS, Tessa Eastman MRSS, The DnA Factory MRSS, Andrea Geile FRSS, Julie Goldsmith MRSS, Lorna Green FRSS, Pippa Hale MRSS, Veda Hallows MRSS, Alex Harley MRSS, Simon Hitchens FRSS, Nick Hornby FRSS, Simone Kennedy MRSS, Rosie Leventon FRSS, Diane McLean FRSS, Susie MacMurray FRSS, Aaron McPeake MRSS, Anne Mercedes MRSS, Rebecca Newnham FRSS, Susanne Schmidt-Nielsen MRSS, Rob Olins FRSS, Glynis Owen FRSS, Alexandra Phillips MRSS, Mark Richards FRSS, Henry Richardson MRSS, Caroline Russell MRSS, Amy Stephens FRSS, Johannes von Stumm PPRSS, Christy Symington MRSS, Diana Thomson FRSS, Patricia Volk FRSS, Diana Whelan MRSS, Robert Worley MRSS, David Worthington FRSS and Daphne Wright FRSS.

Society staff: Caroline Worthington, Director (CW) and Maria Marro-Perera, Membership Manager

Also attending: Mark Burch, Treasurer (MB), Edwina Sassoon (independent Trustee), Gordon Watson (independent Trustee) and Gareth Hughes (Garside & Co. LLP Chartered Accountants).

It was reported that notice of the meeting had been given to all those entitled to receive it. Once all proxy votes and late arrivals had been counted up, it was noted that a quorum was present and the meeting proceeded to business. With the consent of the members present, the notice of the meeting was taken as read.

1. Apologies and Proxy Votes

1.1 Apologies were received from 17 members:

Nicola Anthony MRSS, Madi Acharya-Baskerville MRSS, Gillian Brent MRSS, Julie Brixey-Williams MRSS, Dallas Collins MRSS, Prof. Brian Falconbridge PPRSS, Marios Fournaris MRSS, Malcolm Franklin MRSS, Angela Godfrey MRSS, Kate Hammersley MRSS, Rosamund de Tracy Kelly MRSS, Louise Plant FRSS, Andrew Stonyer FRSS, Almuth Tebbenhoff VPRSS, Sheila Vollmer MRSS, Julian Wild PVPRSS and Bill Price (independent Trustee).

1.2 Apologies were also received from Nick Rockett (accountant).

1.3 Proxy vote forms were received from 7 members: Madi Acharya-Baskerville MRSS, Marios Fournaris MRSS, Rosamund de Tracy Kelly MRSS, Louise Plant FRSS, Andrew Stonyer FRSS, Nick Turvey MRSS and Patricia Volk FRSS.

All have entrusted any decision to the proxy who for ease this year is the President.

2. Announcements

The President paid tribute to eight colleagues who had died in the past year.

DAVID NORRIS PVPRSS

David joined the Society in 1971 and was elected Fellow in 1980. He served as Vice President from 1983-1988. Born in Brazil, David studied sculpture at the Royal Academy schools winning prizes for portraiture and composition. From his studio in Putney, he worked on both figurative and abstract pieces in bronze and stainless steel.

ELIZABETH STUDDERT MRSS

Elizabeth joined the Society in 1999 and was a familiar face at private views. After a career teaching, she began to study art. Elizabeth was an instinctive carver, working in stone, wood and alabaster mostly from the human figure.

CHRISTOPHER ROSE-INNES MRSS

Christopher spent most of his career as Professor of Physics in Manchester until deciding in 1989 that he “would like to practice art properly before going senile”. Aged 63 he completed a fine art degree specializing in sculpture and joined the Society in 2000.

JANE MCADAM FREUD FRSS

Jane joined the Society in 1994, serving on the Board between 1998 and 2000. She studied at the Royal College of Art and was a Freeman of the Goldsmith's Company who commissioned and collected her medals – including one of her father, Lucian Freud. She showed frequently at Gazelli Art House, London and internationally at the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts.

IMMANUEL KLEIN MRSS

Immanuel was a talented composer as well as a sculptor having studied at the Royal Conservatory of the Hague and been commissioned by the John Wagenaar Foundation. He joined the Society in 2006 having decided to pursue sculpture full time.

AINSLIE YULE FRSS

In his appreciation of Ainslie, Derek Morris PPRSS wrote of his friend and colleague as a “true maker at heart – endlessly finding ways of making physical his highly original plans for works. He was drawing until a few days before his death”. Ainslie joined the Society in 1997 and was elected Fellow in 1998.

CHARLOTTE MAYER FRSS

Charlotte was a member of the Society for over 40 years and described sculpture as her life. Born in Prague, she escaped to England in April 1939. She subsequently studied at Goldsmith's and the Royal College of Art. Charlotte returned to sculpture having raised her family drawing inspiration first from the skyscrapers of New York and later rings of billowing smoke from Battersea Power Station. She was still making work aged 93 for a solo show at Pangolin age at the time of her passing.

We were also recently notified of the death of **JOHN ALDUS MRSS** in early 2022. Born Gérald John Ducimetière, in 1995 Gérald changed his name to John Aldus and the following year moved from Switzerland to London. He lived and worked in Hampstead. He is perhaps best known for “Tokens” in Camden which saw him embedding copies of the fragments attached as identifiers by 18th century mothers to the clothes of the babies they abandoned at the Foundling Museum. John joined the Society in 2017.

Stephen Duncan FRSS spoke about Jane McAdam Freud who had served on the Council with him. He explained how her work had changed significantly following a reconciliation with her father shortly before his death.

Johannes von Stumm PPRSS noted that in the late 1990s/early 2000s Charlotte Mayer had been a passionate advocate for the Society retaining Dora House.

Members took a moment to quietly remember David, Elizabeth, Christopher, Jane, Immanuel, Ainslie, Charlotte and John.

3. Presentation

Mark Waugh of the Art 360 Foundation spoke about archive legacy planning for artists building on the introductory leaflet sent to members in November 2022.

After several questions from members, the President thanked Mark for his presentation and he left the meeting.

4. Minutes of the 2022 AGM held on 17 May 2022

The President presented the minutes for adoption and asked if they were accurate.

RESOLVED That the minutes were an accurate record and be signed by the President

5. Matters Arising

There were none.

6. Election to the Board

On behalf of the Board and Society's members, the President thanked Amy Stephens FRSS for her contribution both as a Trustee and member of the building committee. The President also thanked Nicola Anthony MRSS in her absence for her work as a Trustee and for championing equality, diversity and inclusion at Board level.

The President was delighted that five candidates had been nominated and thanked them for coming forward. She announced that Andrea Geile FRSS and Andrew Stonyer FRSS had been elected.

RESOLVED To appoint Andrea Geile FRSS and Andrew Stonyer FRSS to the Board.

RESOLVED To extend the term of Almuth Tebbenhoff FRSS as Vice President for a second term

The President then explained that the Board was recommending the extension of Almuth Tebbenhoff's term as Vice President to ensure stability and continuity while many new Trustees joined the Board.

RESOLVED To extend the term of Almuth Tebbenhoff FRSS as Vice President for a second term

7. Treasurer's Report, Audited Accounts & Appointment of Auditors

7.1 MB introduced the accounts noting that the Society had experienced a good year. Significant funds had been raised and spent on the Saving Dora House project and this was reflected in the accounts.

Gareth Hughes (Garside & Co. LLP Chartered Accountants), the auditor, simply noted in addition that while the cash balances are down, there is still a healthy £300k available. The stability and, indeed growth, of membership was a highlight of the year.

There were no questions or comments from members and so the Treasurer recommended members adopt the accounts.

RESOLVED To unanimously receive the audited accounts of the Society and the Board's report for the year ended 31st December 2022 and the auditor's report thereon

Gareth Hughes then signed the accounts.

RESOLVED To unanimously appoint Garside & Co LLP Chartered Accountants as auditors of the Society for the period commencing upon the conclusion of the meeting until conclusion of the next general meeting at which the accounts of the Society are laid and to authorise the Board to fix their remuneration.

8. Director's report

The Director gave her report for the year.

9. President's address

The President then addressed members.

10. Any Other Business

The President introduced several pieces of additional business.

She explained that the Board had recruited a new, independent Trustee with legal experience and that they recommended Jane Reeves to members. Jane is currently Governor of the University of Lincoln and also has experience at Board level with two membership organisations – the RSPB and Kew Gardens. The President asked members to approve the Jane Reeve's appointment with a show of hands. There was unanimous agreement.

The President then explained that the Board wished to recommend the extension of Gordon Watson's term as an independent Trustee for a second term. The President asked members to approve with a show of hands. There was unanimous agreement.

Ahead of the meeting, Stephen Duncan FRSS had requested a discussion around membership recruitment and selection. He led a conversation around the current criteria and selection process noting that he wished to see more representation. Alex Harley MRSS and Aaron McPeake MRSS agreed that, in their experience, those who are turned down for membership are both disappointed and disheartened. The latter wondered whether there should even be criteria for membership. Johannes von Stumm PPRSS responded by reminding members that Henry Moore had been rejected for membership and that if there was no criteria then the Society's raison d'être would be lost.

Stephanie Douet wondered whether any feedback could be given to unsuccessful applicants. Clare Burnett PPRSS noted that in her long experience of sitting on the membership selection panel, sometimes the quality of both application and work can be poor making feedback potentially uncomfortable. Barbara Beyer MRSS said that no decisions are taken lightly and every application is discussed against the criteria which is being interpreted by the selection

panel. Tere Chadwick wondered whether there could be workshops to support people considering making an application.

Denise de Cordova concluded by saying how much she had enjoyed the new member profiles on social media which demonstrated much wider diversity.

There being no further business the meeting was brought to a close.