



WORKS OF ART ADVISORY PANEL

Wednesday 9 December 2020

Present:

Lord Faulkner of Worcester (Chair)

Lord Crathorne

The Earl of Clancarty

Lord Cormack

Lord De Mauley

Lord Lingfield

Baroness Massey of Darwen

Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall

Lord Razzall

Apologies were received from Lord Bird and Baroness Bull.

In attendance: Patrick Vollmer (Director of Library Services), Melissa Hamnett (Head of Heritage Collections and Curator of Works of Art), Melanie Unwin (Deputy Curator), Emma Gormley (Assistant Curator), Grace Saull (Assistant Curator) and Edward McCarthy (Secretary).

2. Loan out: Magna Carta Barons update

The Head of Heritage Collections spoke to her paper.

In response to questions, members were advised that the Magna Carta Barons remaining in the Chamber are expected to receive conservation work during Restoration and Renewal, access being very difficult while the Chamber is in use. There are a number of conservation projects that can only happen with Restoration and Renewal for similar reasons.

Members were assured that the Temple Church have interpretation panels on display with the statues. A visit would be considered once the public health situation allowed.

The Panel **agreed** to extend the loan to April 2024.

3. Possible donation: Watercolour of the Palace of Westminster

The Deputy Curator spoke to her paper.

It was noted that the artwork is light-sensitive so would need to hang in an office or corridor of the Palace.

The Panel **agreed** to accept the donation.

4. Possible acquisition: John Partridge: Portrait of Lord Melbourne (1779-1848)

Emma Gormley (Assistant Curator) spoke to her paper.

The Panel **agreed** to endorse the business case for acquisition.

5. Loan in: Portrait of Baroness Benjamin

The Deputy Curator spoke to the paper.

Members were concerned that neither proposed location sees much footfall, but that the sixth floor location was a better space for such displays.

The Panel **agreed** to the sixth floor location for this display.

6. Heritage Collections Online Services

Grace Saull (Assistant Curator) spoke to her paper.

Members were keen to take advantage of virtual working to see demonstrations once available.

The Panel **took note** of the paper, and **agreed** the frequency of future updates.

7. Loan out: Cancellation of Art UK sculpture loan

The Deputy Curator provided a brief written update:

Following the impact of COVID-19, our partner Art UK have reviewed their ongoing projects. The Sculpture project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, has been reviewed, and Art UK have decided to cancel any loans of sculpture for the 'Masterpieces in Schools' programme that have not been fully planned. This means our loan of Baroness Castle of Blackburn by Ian Walters (WOA S518) to a school in Dagenham will no longer go ahead. Art UK will focus instead on a separately funded online Learning Portal. We will work with Art UK to determine what opportunities the new portal will provide to the Parliamentary Art Collection.

8. Diversity and inclusion in the collections

The Head of Heritage Collections outlined the work that had been done on diversity and inclusion in the collections since the Panel had last met. Many institutions have begun to re-examine their collections, and over the past few months the Curator's Office have been compiling the data necessary for Parliament and the Panel to make informed decisions, such as cross-checking lists of individuals and groups depicted with those who benefited from the transatlantic slave trade. In the interests of transparency, initial data have already been published, but these will be updated as research continues.

The Head of Heritage Collections reported that it was suggested that a Collections Advisory Group be established. The draft Terms of Reference would be circulated to the Panel, and the Panel may wish to nominate a member. Members were keen to ensure that external experts and specialists were engaged, and that the Group have a diverse membership.

Members also asked that the definition of “diversity” be considered carefully, for example to include not just issues raised by Black Lives Matter but also gender diversity.

The Panel **took note** of the update.

9. Lord Speaker portrait update

The Deputy Curator reported that the portrait was in storage and ready to be unveiled once an event could be arranged.

10. Future meetings of the Panel

The Panel agreed to meet on Wednesdays at around 10am.

11. Any other business

The Panel discussed the possibility of a chamber portrait, noting that Restoration and Renewal would be an obvious deadline, but also that the funding would probably be very different compared to the last chamber portrait in 1995.

Edward McCarthy
Secretary