



department for  
**culture, media  
and sport**

**Government Art Collection**  
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# Advisory Committee on the Government Art Collection

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Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 7 March 2007 at the GAC premises

## **Present**

Chairman: Julia Somerville

Members: Alan Davey, Stephen Deuchar, Margot Heller, Penny Johnson (GAC Director), Sandy Nairne, Charles Saumarez-Smith, Sarah Shalgosky

GAC: Julia Toffolo, Clive Marks

## **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Dr Penelope Curtis.

## **2. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

Charles Saumarez-Smith's name was added to the Minutes of the last meeting (held on 22 November 2006). The Committee then approved the amended Minutes which were signed by the Chairman outside the Meeting.

## **3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting**

A decision on sculpture for the garden of the Washington embassy was being postponed pending the arrival of the new Ambassador.

## **4. Acquisitions**

*Acquisitions since 22 November 2006*

The Committee noted the Director's list of acquisitions since the last meeting.

The Committee had agreed by correspondence between meetings for the GAC to bid for **The Crossing Sweeper** by William Powell Frith, lot number 46 at Christie's on 28 February 2007.

The Committee approved the purchase of two works from the 7 piece series **Today's Question** by Eva Weinmayr: -

## **31 MPH A Crime**

### **How Should We Deal with Foot and Mouth**

## **5. The Public Catalogue Foundation (PCF)**

Before discussion began, Charles Saumarez-Smith declared an interest. The Director explained that the GAC had been in discussion with the publishers who were keen to produce a catalogue of the paintings held by the Government Art Collection, which they saw as an essential part of their comprehensive nationwide reference work. The PCF estimate the cost of publication to be £60,000 and were looking for half of that from GAC/DCMS. The remainder might be raised by the PCF.

## **6. British Embassy, Doha**

The Director presented the proposed works for the new British Embassy in Doha. The Committee agreed that Jonathan Parsons' proposal should proceed.

## **7. Home Office Building, Marsham Street**

The Director gave a verbal update on the remaining two projects for the Home Office.

A technical difficulty involving the engraving of the paving stones has occurred with the Emma Kay project and is currently being investigated. The HO has received an FOI request for the release of all texts submitted in year 1 of this project. The Committee counselled against the release of any texts until the year 1 selected texts have been engraved on site.

The cancellation of the Eva Rothschild sculpture by the Home Office was discussed.

## **8. Update of New Building and Refurbishment Projects**

### *Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA), 50 Queen Anne's Gate*

The Committee viewed the initial proposal by Conrad Shawcross for a sculpture in the atrium. The artist is considering adding elements to the work over time. Sarah Shalgosky noted that the cost of any ongoing maintenance should be covered by the DCA.

### *British Embassy, Sana'a, Yemen*

The Director showed images of the recently installed commission **One Thousand Four Hundred and Forty to Zero** (stainless steel, nylon, acrylic resin) by Jenny West, in the atrium of the new British Embassy, Sana'a, Yemen.

### *DCMS Refurbishment*

Images were also presented of commissioned work by Henna Nadeem, Simon Faithfull and Catherine Bertola for the glass partitions in the meeting rooms.

## **9. United Kingdom Supreme Court**

Middlesex Guildhall is being refurbished to become the UK Supreme Court. The GAC was asked by the architects, Fielden & Mawson and Art Panel, to assist in the implementation of the art strategy for the building. The Committee confirmed the GAC's view that, given the short timescale and the fact that the GAC had no involvement in drawing up the strategy, it would be inappropriate to become involved at this stage. However, the Director said the GAC would be happy to give advice on future art for the building.

### **10. London 2012 Olympics**

The Director reported that the GAC was actively pressing for public art to be included on the agenda for the Olympic Park, and she suggested two ways in which the GAC could contribute to the London 2012 Olympics: Commission a photographer to accompany the torch in the world cities it visits and commission an artist to work with the GAC website and archive.

The Committee recommended that any web-based programme should be interactive and the projects should include young people. This might be achieved, for example, by having an apprentice accompany the photographer, linking projects to Key Stage 2, or getting young people to produce their own image of Britain.

### **11. Director's Report of GAC Activities Since 22 November 2006**

The Committee noted the contents of the Director's report.

### **12. Date of Next Meeting**

The June meeting has been rescheduled to 5 July at 16:30 hours.