

Confidential

SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES

BRUNEI GALLERY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the meeting held on
Wednesday 22nd February 2006**

Members The Director (Professor C Bundy) Chair *=not present
Dr J Carpenter
Professor S Chan*
Professor C Clunas*
Dr A Contadini
Professor L Croll
Ms K Hazell
Ms J Rankine
Professor T Tomlinson

In attendance: Mr J Hollingworth
Ms J Onyejiako

Apologies: Prof. Craig Clunas, Prof. Stephen Chan

1. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on the 2nd November 2005 were **APPROVED** with slight change of wording in point 7. Treasures of SOAS, paragraph 1, line 5.

2. Matters Arising

2.1 It was **NOTED** that the organizers of Ibrahim El Salahi informed John Hollingworth that the forthcoming exhibition has been postponed until 2008/9. It was **NOTED** that WSLOT: Women see lot of things has instead accepted the summer slot and an expansion on the Rwandan theme will be implemented.

3. Recent and Current Exhibitions

Mr Hollingworth reported on the success of recent and current exhibitions:

3.1 *Design Made in Africa*

(27 October – 25 November 2005) Main Galleries

There was reasonable attendance, over 3,000 visitors and good press coverage largely being the Francophone press. The British Satellite News also filmed. Design Made in Africa and Africa's Forgotten Crisis both ran for a shorter period in order to accommodate the Japanese project.

3.2 ***Africa's Forgotten Crisis***
(27 October -25 November 2005) First Floor
There was considerable media interest, culminating with the Ugandan photographer James Akena being interviewed by the BBC World Service.

3.3 ***Japanese Creative Traditions***
(03 December – 05 December 2005) Ground Floor
There was a good turn out for the 3 days with approximately 800 people attending the Buddhist performance.

3.4 ***Egyptian Landscapes***
(18 January – 17 March 2006) Ground Floor/Lower Level
There was excellent press coverage and a well attended private view with over 350 guests, including the Egyptian Ambassador and guest speaker Joanna Lumley with Lisa Croll opening for SOAS. There have been a number of articles in the local and national press, Ham and High, Time Out, The Independent plus the Egyptian Press and TV. Interviews held by BBC satellite news, BBC World Service, BSN, and a variety of arts and craft magazines,(Nadfas). In five weeks there have been approximately 6,000 visitors.

There has been a large number of school group visits, family drop in day, lectures and a company event in association with the Alumni evening.

3.5 ***Rural Africa: Communities on the move***
(19 January – 18 March 2006) First Floor
There was no opening however, interest from the BBC World service with much coverage on internet magazine sites.

4. **Schedule 2006 - 2008**
The schedule was **NOTED**.

5. **Forthcoming Exhibitions**
Members **NOTED** the following report

5.1 *The World in Colours (25 April – 24 June 2006) Ground Floor*
Opens to the public on the 25th April with a low key Private viewing on May 2nd when the organizers can attend. Indemnity and insurance are approved.

5.2 *1000 Branches: Iranian Armenian Identity through Contemporary Arts (April – June 2006) Lower Ground Floor*
Proceeding well, organizer to return from Iran and confirm details.

5.2 *WSLOT: Women See Lot of Things (July – September 2006) Ground Floor/Lower Level*

Replacement for Ibrahim El Salahi as INIVA has issued a change of schedule due to the lending institutions being unable to meet the deadline.

- 5.3 *Images from the End Game – Alexander Iyas (October – December 2006) Ground Floor*
Proceeding well, John Hollingworth met with John Tchalenko who explained the 3D materials and interactive film projection for use at the back of the gallery.
- 5.3 Petrie Collection of Archaeology from Palestine (Oct. – Dec 2006)
Lower Gallery
Meetings continue towards finalising details between Rebecca Sparks (Curator) and designer who has brought in outreach officers to work on the project to develop an education programme. Peter Ucko is keen to work on a one day conference. The Palestine Society is involved with supporting the project and funding is going ahead.
- 5.4 *The New Mongolians (January – March 2007)*
Ground Floor (excluding rear)/Lower Level
This is proceeding well, with constant contact with the curator Prue Robinson. It was **NOTED** that the Mongolian Ambassador would be interested to be involved and should be informed.
- 5.5 *Tapping into the Known – The Life and work of Christopher Okigbo*
Whole Gallery (April – June 2007)
Proceeding well, presently working on a programme of events.
- 5.6 *(Views from) The End of Arabia: Contemporary Art from Saudi Arabia and Yemen*
Ground Floor/Lower Level (July – September 2007)
Stephen Stapleton the organizer is looking to involve a structured programme of education, currently in Yemen finalising artists to be included.
- 5.7 *From Soho Road to the Punjab (July – September 2007)*
First Floor
Proceeding well, developing accompanying events with the music department.
- 5.8 *Keepers of the Fire (October – December 2007)*
The organizers have formally asked for a postponement, revised dates for Oct – Dec 2008 to tie in with events at the British Museum and British Library. Therefore this slot is presently vacant.
- 5.9 *Secrets of the River – Artefacts from the Brunei Museum*
(January – March 2008)
John Hollingworth offered the organizers their original request of 2007 slot; this was declined in favour of staying with 2008. It was **NOTED** that Stacey Pierson of PDF should be informed in order to rearranged her colloquy to tie in with this exhibition

6. New Proposals

6.1 *Visual Music: Art & Science of the pen in the work of Ahmed Moustafa (January – March 2009)*

Anna Contadini contacted the joint proposer Dr Stephen Sperl to clarify the content of the exhibition, as it is an excellent format for a book but needs further focus for exhibit. Further concerns were expressed as at the moment the exhibition is conceived as one artist show. Anna Contadini suggested that the exhibition be enhanced by historical material, as it would show a development from the 10th Century theory of up to the present time. It was **NOTED** there is enough historical material to include in a possible exhibition, including holdings at the British Library.

It was **NOTED** that Dr Sperl is keen to talk further and enlarge on the project with both historical material and a series of explanatory drawings.

It was **AGREED** that a visual proposal of Ahmed Moustafa's work was needed with the possibilities of including a limited number of other contemporary works of the Calligraphic School for comparison.

It was **AGREED** that Anna Contadini will continue discussions with Stephen Sperl to draft a more substantial work for proposal.

6.2 Survival Against the odds (July – September 2006)

To report that the organizers have renamed the exhibition “Heroes of our Time” Rwanda Courage and Survival and it will be expanded for exhibit on the ground floor gallery, to coincide with WSL0T.

7. Preliminary Proposals Declined

The preliminary proposals declined by the Management Group were **NOTED**.

8. Any Other Business

It was **NOTED** that Anna Contadini presented a preliminary proposal of the Treasures of SOAS and tabled colour illustrations of some of the most important pieces in SOAS divided according to geographical area. Anna Contadini suggested that the treasures could consist of a central piece such as the Anvar-I Suhayli, with a display of materials from other regions around it, showing the extent of SOAS material. The proposal and choice of material were enthusiastically considered around the table.

The Committee approved the opening date to move back to Oct 2007 in conjunction with the beginning of the new academic session, using the summer of 2007 to actually set up, giving a longer run in time for installation and also fund raising.

It was **NOTED** that Lisa Croll suggested the possibilities of fundraising towards a high profile pilot exhibition occupying the whole gallery that would

consist of all the regions studied by the school and incorporate the ideas of outreach, education and development, and then later to decide upon the artifacts for the permanent collection. Some concern was expressed as to whether this would detract from the permanent display and dilute the effect of the smaller permanent collection and would mean fund raising for two separate but similar projects. Also doubt was expressed whether this would realistically happen in the time frame proposed due to current staffing and resources available.

It was **AGREED** that a number of artifacts would need considerable conservation, John Carpenter expressed that the very rare Japanese scroll would have to be sent to a conservation studio in Japan to which he has offered to liaise.

The Director suggested that Anna Contadini and Craig Clunas be present at the next Development Committee to re-present the proposal within a costing framework. It was **AGREED** to focus a proposal towards an exhibition in October 2007 looking at the options of either a larger temporary exhibition or a smaller semi-permanent display as originally proposed, with John Hollingworth to provide some costing and working figures for these.

Joy Onyejiako
01/03/06

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: MAY 17th 2006 at 10.00am