

Minutes of the Contemporary Group

(A video conference via MS Teams)

Saturday 11th April 2020

Present: Alan Cameron, Aidrian Hough, Brian Steptoe, Duncan Unsworth, Ken Holland, Patricia Ruddle, Paul Ashley, Sean Goodhart, Tom Owens, Romney Tansley (these minutes).

Apologies:

David Grimshaw, Avijit Datta

Minutes of the last meeting (circulated):

Agreed that these would not be discussed.

F/u to the AGM:

Agreed that as AOB had been omitted from the AGM due to time constraints, items under this should be dealt with now.

PR asked about the new rules created for the Facebook group RPSContemporary. RT explained that the lack of any rules for the group had been causing problems for the admins, as it was difficult to supply a reason when it came to removing inappropriate posts. The new rules which have applied since January were consulted on and discussed within the group. They were modelled on those in use by other RPS related Facebook groups.

He then described how to locate them. It was agreed that RT should be assisted in administering the group. AC and PA agreed to become additional admins.

Roles Confirmation

TO is regional organiser for East Anglia (there is no East) and PR, for North.

Treasurer's Report

None.

Regional Organisers Reports

East Anglia: TO said participation in PhotoEast 2020 has been postponed owing to the venue being closed as part of lockdown. Work based on the theme of 'Work' will be shown as and when restrictions are lifted and we get processed in a queue as and when the venue is rebooked by the local council.

North West: AC spoke of the current low numbers in the group and issues around the venue.

South West: AH has replaced Rod Fry.

North: PR said the next meeting would be a video conference and urged that all regional meetings should extend an invitation to reps from their RPS regional groups.

Group Wide Activities

Concept: KH spoke of the need to increase the current limit on the size of the pdf file published on the RPS web site, in order to improve the digital quality, a limit not imposed by issu. RT spoke of the aim to make Concept more than just a newsletter, by inviting the submission of articles.

Contemporary Photography: PA proposed that just as publication is on a fixed quarterly basis, so Concept should adopt a fixed interval in order to stagger the publication dates. However as Concept is currently every two months, this does not look feasible.

Postal Portfolios: DU reported that there are now two boxes and 14 members and that it is planned to have a weekend in September.

Webmaster: SG said that the new website back-end tool is really difficult to work with and completely unlike traditional website development. It is actually a content management system. To create a simple blog post takes 4 steps and is very difficult to remember when not doing it every day!

I have copied the "Contemporary Showcase" images to the new system and have finally learned how to create a gallery. It is very time consuming and will take some time but in a few months I hope to be able to link the galleries to our homepage.

Big thanks to Brian for preparing materials for recent blog posts. I'm normally travelling for work 75% of my time and have less time for being creative than I'd like.

The journal and concept archives are now available on the new website. They're just simple tables. I had talked about doing something "prettier" at the March 2019 committee meeting but have not got to this yet.

The events page is important and, even if we already know a locally organised event is fully subscribed, we should create events on the website. This is the way events get to appear in the main RPS Journal. With no events being published it gives the impression that our group is not active. Please send me event details.

Instagram is a good tool for publicity of the group. The <https://www.instagram.com/rpscontemporary/> page I created now has 1166 followers. Help with choosing interesting images to share is needed (otherwise the site just reflects my taste). If you see anything interesting please let me know if that photographer has an Instagram page. We can also cross reference blogs and events here (and on Facebook).

Chair: AC said there has been a recent meeting of the SIG reps and that work is currently underway to make the main website more easily navigable. PA spoke of difficulties finding members' galleries and SG said he would feed this back.

Working Under Lockdown

While this continues it was agreed that committee meetings should either be early or late but not in the middle of the day. Next meeting to be at 9:00 on a Saturday.

Working with the Regions

PR said cooperation with Mary Crowther in the York region is good.

AC proposed that there should be greater cooperation between CG and the Documentary group and this was agreed. He undertook to contact them about this.

AOB

PA raised the need to increase membership. RT confirmed that as of Dec 2019 there were around 360 members. PR said we should seek a breakdown of membership by region.

Date for next AGM

This needs to be held around Sept time to meet requirement that it takes place before the AGM of the Society. Saturday 19 Sept agreed, with Birmingham agreed as the venue so that it coincides with the Photo Show. Agreed AC and RT to work on securing a venue (Birmingham library if possible) and speaker.

The meeting concluded.