The Renaissance Society of America, Inc.
Annual Member Meeting
Saturday, 2 April 2022
1:15 – 2:00 p.m. GMT
The Convention Centre Dublin, Ireland

Agenda

I. Announcements, review of Minutes, moment of silence: Mara R. Wade, President
II. Awards: Mara R. Wade
III. Report on amendments to Bylaws: Carla Zecher, Executive Director
IV. Financial report: James Shulman, Treasurer
V. Q&A about RSA programs and activities: Mara R. Wade

Attendance: 34

Minutes
President Mara Wade called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance to the first in-person meeting since the meeting held in Toronto in March 2019. She asked for a moment of silence to recognize all those RSA members lost in the past two years.

Professor Wade invited the members to offer amendments to the Minutes of the previous meeting. It was moved and seconded to approve the Minutes, which were accepted unanimously with no nays and no abstentions.

Turning to the presentation of awards, Professor Wade recognized Richard Freeman, Digital and Electronic Media Chair, who presented the two RSA Digital Innovation Awards after listing their criteria.

- **Early Modern Women and the Poetry of Complaint, 1540-1660**, directed by Rosalind L. Smith, Department of English, The Australian National University
- **Secrets of Craft and Nature in Renaissance France**, directed by Pamela H. Smith, Department of History, Columbia University

William Connell was invited to present the Nelson Prize for the best Renaissance Quarterly article published in 2021. Professor Connell read the commendation from the selectors before announcing the winner, Hannah Joy Friedman, for her article “Jusepe de Ribera’s Five Senses and the Practice of Prudence,” which can be found in volume 74.4 (2021): 1111–1161. Honorable mention for the Nelson Prize is awarded to Adrian Masters, “Influential Women, New World Riches, and Masculine Anxieties in the Development of the Spanish Council of the Indies, 1524-98,” which appeared in the Spring 2021 issue.

Patricia Fortini Brown was recognized for the Paul Oskar Kristeller Lifetime Achievement Award, which honors a lifetime of uncompromising devotion to the highest standard of scholarship accompanied by exceptional achievement in Renaissance studies.
The Phyllis Goodhart Gordan Prize for the best book in Renaissance Studies was awarded to Christopher J. Nygren for *Titian’s Icons: Tradition, Charisma, and Devotion in Renaissance Italy* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2020).

Executive Director Carla Zecher was recognized to describe recent changes to the RSA’s Bylaws that the Board of Directors had ratified at their business meeting earlier in the week:

- The creation of a Publications Committee, whose chair would sit on the Board of Directors
- The description of the RSA Council (which includes Disciplinary Representatives and Associate Organizations) was removed from the Bylaws since its members are not a governing body. They remain a crucial advisory board.
- Similarly, the description of academic disciplines relevant to the RSA was removed because it is not related to governance.
- The State of New York, under which the RSA is incorporated, lifted the requirement to hold in-person member meetings. The Bylaws were revised to accommodate either in-person or virtual member meetings in future years.

Dr. Zecher noted that these changes will be posted on the website.

Dr. James Shulman, Treasurer, addressed the next item on the agenda, the Financial Report. In the five slides he shared to illustrate the current state, Dr. Shulman focused on how the Society has fared during two years of pandemic. FY21 income of $994,611 drew on many sources, including Membership (38%), Conference Registration (36%), Publications (16%), Fellowships Support (8%), and Donations (2%). He stressed that it is important to sustain or increase this level of donations. This income was used to fund $998,405 in expenses: Staff (42%), Annual Meeting Direct Costs (19%), Publications, (16%), Administration (14%), and Fellowships (9%).

Dr. Shulman shared a table that compared the RSA Members and Dues for 2019 and 2021 by income categories. An increase of 900 members during the first year of covid were seen across all levels of membership. He explained that the Board reduced the membership fees for the three most precarious tiers to increase equity in virtual conference access while bringing in only $5,000 less in that revenue category. Dr. Shulman noted that the goal of increasing the level of services will require more staff time at a higher percentage of the revenue, and additional programming will require a higher level of donations or other types of contributed income.

Thanking Dr. Shulman, President Mara Wade welcomed the incoming President, Professor Nicholas Terpstra, who thanked Professor Mara Wade for leading the RSA during the pandemic. Professor Wade also thanked Immediate Past President Clare Carroll for her long service to the RSA and advice on the role of RSA President. Professor Wade also welcomed incoming vice president, Professor Herman Bennett, who will serve as President after Professor Terpstra’s two-year term.

Professor Terpstra described the RSA as 5,000 moving parts who are rising to the many challenges that face our profession. He announced that during his tenure, research grants would be refocused to foster the work of the most precarious members, and new modes of programming would be developed and offered.
Professor Terpstra thanked Dr. Zecher for her unstinting dedication to the challenges facing the Society, and praised her team, especially Tracy Robey and Even Carmouche, for their service on behalf of the RSA. He also thanked Professor Jessica Wolfe, who concluded her term as Renaissance Quarterly articles editor. He explained that he was joined by Mihoko Suzuki and Lisa Voigt during the transition to a new articles editor structure with three editors, and he noted that Professors Brian Maxson and Barbara Fuchs will soon join Professor Suzuki.

Concluding his remarks, Professor Terpstra thanked the RSA Board for its excellent work in enacting a new vision for the RSA at the behest of the members, who are doing so much in terms of their forward thinking and service on ad hoc committees and other advisory roles. He praised Professor Wade for her inclusionary work across all members. He looked forward to the spring 2023 meeting in San Juan, PR, asking the members to think about how we can extend RSA conversations and communication with the Americas in particular.