

The Vancouver Life Drawing Society AGM

Saturday April 5, 2014

President's Report

Well another year has come and gone and a lot has happened. The Board has spent most of the last fiscal year struggling with what to do about declining attendance. We wrestled with different ideas and proposals and still do not seem to have it figured out. Predicting session attendance is a little like trying to predict Salmon returns. Sometimes you have it and sometimes you don't. At the same time the year was marked by some great moments and undertakings by members.

I wish to thank all the hard working volunteers, past and present who have contributed to the running of our Society however there are a few worth mentioning. To start our VP Randal Cullen initiated the creation of a Memorial page to our Web Site and Memorial plaques on some of our drawing horses in memory of those members who have passed on. Last year we saw the passing of two long time members Don Slade and Stephen Alexander Corcoran.

Randal along with our past Secretary Melissa Delamar put together and published for its second year the Basic Inquiry Calendar which helps showcase the multitude of talents at Basic.

Nicholas Jackwi who came to us at the beginning of the year as an interested member did a session analysis for us which indicated of the 12 sessions we were running only 5 were paying for themselves. The Board eventually cut 2 sessions. He also found the regular sessions were more popular than the long pose sessions. The Board has not addressed that one yet. Nicholas is now our Treasurer having taken over from Jo-ann Turford.

Caroline Dahlmanns helped with some promotional work early this year creating a fabulous poster and flash cards that were circulated throughout the community and may have been instrumental in increasing attendance and attracting a few new members.

Recognizing that one of Basic Inquiries failings was not offering any instructional sessions it was set out that Board should try to encourage some classes. Anastasia Andrianova proposed a class syllabus for Sunday evenings that she runs as a 50:50 cost share/revenue earning arrangement with the Society.

Justin Ogilvie has returned with his prolific teaching style and rents studio space from the Society for his Monday and Tuesday evening classes. Justin and Randal have also been working on a proposal for improving the studio lighting over the modelling stage.

On another front to improve studio lighting James Ceaser, who took over Friday morning sessions from Mei Wang, has been working with Alain Boullard to install an isolation curtain around the model stage. The purpose is to reduce the amount of back splash from the gallery lights.

In November Jane Hennessey, Caroline Dahlmanns along with the help of Alain Boullard organized a rollicking member's Emote show which was the culmination of many hours of hard work and effort. It is this kind of engagement that brings much needed life to the Society and its function.

In an effort to increase revenues and gallery function the Gallery-Artist Contract was reviewed. It was decided the weekly rental fee was to be increased; effective May 1, 2014. A stipulation was put in that Saturday afternoons from 2 to 5 pm would be reserved for gallery hours with the expectations members showing their work would use this time to have the gallery open. The Board is sensitive to member's concerns for these changes and invites discussion at this year's AGM.

All in all it was another busy year which saw the Board deal with the usual ups and downs of maintaining a Society, solely run by volunteers, managing to stay solvent and continuing to provide to the arts community at large a viable place to study the human figure. I look forward to what 2014 will bring.

Douglas Smardon

President