

News Release

CONFIDENTIAL EMBARGOED DRAFT: Monday 24 February 2014

DUCHESS OF CAMBRIDGE VIEWS VAN DYCK SELF-PORTRAIT AS APPEAL REACHES £3.5 MILLION AND DEADLINE EXTENDS TO JULY



HRH The Duchess of Cambridge, Patron of the National Portrait Gallery with Director Sandy Nairne beside the Self-portrait of Sir Anthony Van Dyck, 1640-1 © Photograph: Jorge Herrera

The National Portrait Gallery has released a photograph of its patron HRH The Duchess of Cambridge being shown the Van Dyck *Self-portrait* it is campaigning with the Art Fund to save for the nation. The Duchess was given a private view of the portrait, on display at the Gallery, with director Sandy Nairne, during The Portrait Gala on the 11 February.

As the Government export bar has been extended to allow a further five months of fundraising to prevent the portrait from going overseas to a private collection, the Gallery and the Art Fund have announced a current total of more than £3.5 million including over 6,000 individual contributions received from supporters both nationally and internationally.

The total amount includes a six-figure pledge from the Garfield Weston Foundation and multiple five-figure gifts from an anonymous individual supporter, who has significantly boosted funds at each crucial stage of the campaign. This follows the recent pledge of £1 million from The Monument Trust, the largest single gift yet given to the campaign.

The campaign began with an initial £1.2 million raised from the Gallery and the Art Fund including a grant of £500,000 towards the acquisition from the Art Fund (with an additional £150,000 offered towards a nationwide tour of the painting) and £700,000 from the Gallery's Portrait Fund and acquisition budget.

The National Portrait Gallery was given an initial three months to acquire Van Dyck's exceptional *Self-portrait* (1640-1) priced at £12.5 million, following a temporary Government export bar (issued on Thursday 14 November 2013) to prevent it from being taken overseas. That export bar expired on 14 February 2014 and has now been extended to 13 July 2014.

The painting has been in British private collections for nearly 400 years but has been sold to a private collector who now wishes to take it abroad. This is the only chance a museum or a gallery in the United Kingdom has of acquiring the masterpiece.

The Gallery and the Art Fund have also launched two new social media initiatives in support of the Save Van Dyck fundraising campaign, a Thunderclap aiming to attract a minimum of 250 sign-ups by Friday 28 February and a cut-out of Van Dyck's frame that supporters can add to their social media profiles as a Twibbon. Go to www.savevandyck.org for more information.

Sandy Nairne, Director of the National Portrait Gallery, London, said: 'The growing support for the Van Dyck campaign is hugely encouraging. Everyone at the National Portrait Gallery is determined that this great painting should be on public view for the next 300 years.'

Stephen Deuchar, director of the Art Fund, said: 'The five month extension demonstrates and reflects the incredible support shown towards this most crucial of campaigns. We've seen huge interest and generosity on all fronts. But the job is not yet done, and I'm pleased to announce that we've just launched several new social media initiatives – further ways for everyone to show support for the campaign.'

Sir Anthony Van Dyck's last self-portrait is a work of huge international importance and the only portrait of the artist made during his time in Britain ever likely to be made available for acquisition by a British public collection. Given its key place in British art and history, the Gallery, with the support of the Art Fund, plans to display the portrait both at its London home and, from early 2015, at partner museums and galleries around the country.

This enigmatic portrait dates from the end of Van Dyck's life and presents an intimate image of an artist at work. He shows himself apparently in the act of painting, his hand raised in the process of applying paint to a canvas just out of sight. For today's viewer, it conveys a sense of direct engagement with the artist as an individual, despite the passage of almost 400 years.

As well as enriching its present holding of three works by the artist, this Van Dyck painting, would make a significant addition to the National Portrait Gallery's striking collection of self-portraits. These include works by Reynolds, Zoffany, Hogarth and Stubbs and, amongst twentieth-century and contemporary artists, Gwen John, Barbara Hepworth, Frank Auerbach, L S Lowry, Julian Opie, Gillian Wearing, Lucian Freud and David Hockney.

Born in Antwerp in 1599, Van Dyck was an artistic prodigy who worked as an assistant to Peter Paul Rubens. He came to Britain in 1632 at the invitation of King Charles I, making London his home until his death in 1641. Charles I was Van Dyck's most famous patron, rewarding him with a knighthood and the title of Principal Painter. Van Dyck established himself at the heart of the English court, producing magnificent portraits of the royal family and many courtiers. However, beneath the shimmering surface of the court was a sense of growing unease. The late 1630s were a time of political upheaval and by the end of 1642 civil war had broken out in Scotland and England. Within a year of producing this portrait Van Dyck was dead, buried in Old St Paul's Cathedral with the epitaph: 'Anthony Van Dyck – who, while he lived, gave to many immortal life'.

Donations to the National Portrait Gallery's *Save Van Dyck's Self-portrait* appeal can be made online at www.savevandyck.org

Cheques, made payable to the National Portrait Gallery, can be sent to Save Van Dyck, Development Department, National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London, WC2H 0HE

#savevandyck

Donate by text: Text VanDyck to 70800 to give £5

DISPLAY

Van Dyck's *Self-portrait* (1640-1) is displayed adjacent to the Seventeenth-Century Galleries on the Second Floor of the National Portrait Gallery, London. Admission free.

TOUR

Should Van Dyck's *Self-portrait* be acquired by the Gallery there will be a three-year nationwide tour to Turner Contemporary, Margate, Manchester Art Gallery, Dulwich Picture Gallery, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and The Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art, helping museums to buy and show great art for everyone. Over the past 5 years we've given over £26m to help museums and galleries acquire works of art for their collections and placed hundreds of gifts and bequests, from ancient sculpture and treasure hoards to Old Master paintings and contemporary commissions, with 25% of grants going towards works by living artists. We also help museums share their collections with wider audiences through supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, including the national tour of the Artist Rooms collection and the 2013-2014 tours of Grayson Perry's tapestries *The Vanity of Small Differences* and Jeremy Deller's *English Magic*, the British Council commission for the 2013 Venice Biennale. Our support for museums extends to the Art Guide app – the comprehensive guide to seeing art across the UK, promoting a network of over 650 museums and galleries throughout the country, and the £100,000 Art Fund Prize for Museum of the Year – an annual celebration of the best of UK museums, won in 2013 by William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow. We are independently funded, the majority of our income coming from over 100,000 members who, through the National Art Pass, enjoy free entry to over 220 museums, galleries and historic houses across the UK, as well as 50% off entry to major exhibitions. Find out more about the Art Fund and the National Art Pass at www.artfund.org