

Press release: 'Exceptionally rare' 19th century marble sculpture' at risk of export

- Culture Minister steps in to prevent Antonio Canova's 'Bust of Peace', valued at £5.3 million, from export
- Bust deemed to be a significant cultural object symbolising end of Napoleonic era and return of peace to Europe after years of conflict

An original work by one of the greatest 19th century sculptors is at risk of being exported from the UK unless a buyer can be found to match the asking price of £5.3 million.

The white marble 'Bust of Peace', made by Antonio Canova (1757-1822) has been blocked from export by Michael Ellis, Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, to provide an opportunity to keep it in the country.

The neo-classical bust, one of a handful of original works by the Italian neoclassical artist that remain outside museum collections, was sold to a private buyer at Sotheby's in July 2018. Until then, it had been more than 200 years since it had last been seen in public.

The decision to defer the export licence follows a recommendation by the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest, administered by The Arts Council. They made their recommendation on the grounds that the sculpture is closely connected with the UK's history and national life.

It can be seen to symbolise the return of peace to Europe after years of struggle and unrest during the Napoleonic era, which culminated in the Battle of Waterloo, where Napoleon was defeated.

Michael Ellis, Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, said:

Canova is widely recognised as one of the greatest sculptors of his – or any – era.

The 'Bust of Peace' combines a crucial moment in our history with beauty and elegance, pointing to a more peaceful future ahead. Therefore it is essential that we do our best to save this superb item for the benefit of the nation.

The bust is one of Canova's celebrated 'Ideal Heads:' female heads carved in marble, just under life size, representing a different conception of beauty and presented as gifts to friends and patrons who had helped him.

It was carved between 1814-15 and may have been given to John Campbell, Lord

Cawdor, in part to thank him for his help in repatriating art looted from Italy by the French armies during the Napoleonic Wars. It was the first such bust to reach Britain, and the first to be presented to a British patron after Napoleon's defeat. It was displayed at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 1817.

Following Lord Cawdor's death in 1821, the bust remained under the ownership of five generations of descendants in his family mansion of Stackpole Court in Pembrokeshire. However by the time the contents of the home were sold at auction in 1962, the bust's significance had been lost. When it was sold, the head was simply described as "a white marble bust of a lady wearing a diadem," without attribution.

The location and storage conditions were unclear for the following 50 years, until its re-emergence at an auction in 2012.

Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest member Aidan Weston-Lewis said:

This outstanding bust was probably given by Canova as a token of friendship and gratitude to his most loyal British patron and champion, Lord Cawdor. Over nearly three decades, Cawdor commissioned several of Canova's most celebrated works, including the reclining and standing versions of Cupid and Psyche, both now in the Louvre.

Due to political circumstances and periods of personal insolvency, he took possession of only a few, although among them was the Amorino now at Anglesey Abbey (National Trust), the first sculpture by Canova to come to Britain. As a testament to the special relationship between a brilliant and innovative British patron and statesman and the greatest artist of his day, every effort should be made to retain the Bust of Peace in the UK".

Canova's works are revered for his subtle artistry, sensitively working the surface of the marble, thereby giving his works a texture unparalleled by any of his contemporaries.

[Press release: British Embassy Ljubljana statement on Ascent Resources](#)

The British Embassy in Ljubljana is working with the British Slovene Chamber

of Commerce to support Ascent Resources as a British investor in Slovenia. Decisions on permits are rightly a matter for the Slovene Government. The Embassy will continue to make the point that foreign investors need to be given predictable timescales for decisions on these issues by Slovene authorities. Ambassador to Slovenia Sophie Honey raised this recently with Slovene Ministers, and will continue to press this case with local authorities.

We regret that the Embassy cannot engage individually with shareholders, who should contact Ascent directly if desired. However we remain in close contact with Ascent and the British Slovene Chamber of Commerce on this matter.

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Published 2 November 2018

[Press release: Regulator announces statutory inquiry into housing charity](#)

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, is today announcing a statutory inquiry into Alternative Housing ([1152412](#)).

The charity was established for the relief of those in need due to their age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage in Bristol. The charity provided accommodation, support and care to some groups.

The charity came to the Commission's attention after it was convicted of several breaches of the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006. A subsequent appeal against these convictions was dismissed.

The Commission opened a statutory on 4 July 2017 and has been examining:

- The extent to which there was misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity
- The extent to which there was a significant breach of trust or non-compliance with charity law
- The extent to which there was a significant risk to charity property and /or beneficiaries

The inquiry has found that the charity has ceased to operate and has removed it from the Register of Charities.

The Commission is unable to comment further on the inquiry's work which is continuing.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. Reports of previous inquiries by the Commission are available on [GOV.UK](#).

Ends.

Notes to editors

1. The Charity Commission is the regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work see the about us page on [GOV.UK](#).
2. Search for charities on our [check charity tool](#).
3. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.

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