

Pre-Raphaelite painting by Rebecca Solomon at risk of leaving the UK

- Solomon was a pioneering Jewish painter who campaigned for women artists
- Export bar is to allow time for a UK gallery or institution to acquire the painting

A Pre-Raphaelite painting worth £314,880 is at risk of leaving the UK unless a buyer can be found to save the work for the nation.

Rebecca Solomon was known for showing an awareness of inequality in her work and this painting titled *A Young Teacher* depicts sitter Fanny Eaton, whose mother was a former enslaved woman in Jamaica, posing as an Indian nursemaid. The piece provides a nuanced and sensitive perspective on gender and ethnicity in the 19th century.

Rebecca Solomon hails from a prominent Jewish family and went on to become a pioneering pre-Raphaelite artist. She was also active in social reform movements, including as part of a group of thirty-eight artists who petitioned the Royal Academy of Arts to open its schools to women.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Stuart Andrew said:

Rebecca Solomon's work shone a light on inequality and prejudice at a time when these subjects were far from mainstream. Her painting *A Young Teacher* has more to tell us about gender and ethnicity in the 19th century and I hope a UK buyer comes forward so we can continue to learn more about attitudes at the time.

The Minister's decision follows the advice of the [Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest](#). The committee agreed that the painting was extremely important in the context of diversity and representation of Black and Asian figures in 19th century Britain, as well as noting the lack of professional, female Jewish artists of this period in British public collections.

Committee member Professor Mark Hallett said:

Despite its seemingly undramatic character, Solomon's painting is a bold and ambitious meditation on issues of gender, race, intimacy and education. The *Young Teacher* cries out for further investigation and interpretation: new research on its creator, subject-matter, production and display has the potential to enrich our understanding not only of the picture itself, but of Victorian art and culture more generally. For all these reasons, the Committee very much hopes it finds a home in the UK.

The RCEWA made its recommendation on the grounds that its departure from the UK would be a misfortune because it was of outstanding significance for the study of women artists and Jewish art in 19th century Britain, as well as to the history of art and Empire.

The decision on the export licence application for the painting will be deferred for a period ending on 1st February 2023 inclusive. At the end of the first deferral period owners will have a consideration period of 15 business days to consider any offer(s) to purchase the painting at the recommended price of £314,880. The second deferral period will commence following the signing of an Option Agreement and will last for three months.

ENDS

Notes to editors

1. Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the painting should contact the RCEWA on 0161 934 4317.
2. Provenance: Cyril and Agnes Baynes, Isle of Wight, gifted in 1964 to their gardener and housekeeper, then by descent.
3. The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest is an independent body, serviced by the Arts Council, which advises the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on whether a cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria.
4. [Arts Council England](#) is the national development agency for creativity and culture. ACE have set out their strategic vision in Let's Create that by 2030 want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. ACE invest public money from the Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision.
5. Following the [Covid-19](#) crisis, the Arts Council developed a £160 million Emergency Response Package, with nearly 90% coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. ACE are also one of the bodies responsible for administering the Government's unprecedented Culture Recovery Fund.