

[Press release: Guardi's Rialto Bridge with the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi at risk of leaving the UK](#)

The Rialto Bridge with the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi, by Francesco Guardi.

Arts Minister John Glen has placed a temporary export bar on the Rialto Bridge with the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi by Francesco Guardi to provide an opportunity to keep it in the country.

The extraordinary painting is at risk of being exported from the UK unless a buyer can be found to match the asking price of £26,796,000 (including VAT of £591,000).

With its masterful colouring and dynamic composition in which a series of gondolas bisect the Grand Canal, The Rialto Bridge with the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi showcases Guardi's atmospheric style and the elegant depiction of light that would come to dominate his later works.

Arguably Guardi's masterpiece, the painting is considered to be one of the ultimate expressions of Venetian vedute, or view painting. Alongside Canaletto and his nephew Bellotto, Guardi was one of the great Venetian view painters of the 18th century.

He was much admired in the 19th century for his impressionistic depictions of Venice and the Lagoon, which inspired many generations of artists visiting the city, most significantly Turner.

The painting is believed to have been commissioned in 1768 by the relatively unknown grand tourist, Chaloner Archedeckne, making it of great importance to the study of the British relationship with Venice and Grand Tour commissions.

Arts Minister John Glen said:

This magnificent painting is a true masterpiece that encapsulates the vibrant atmosphere and light of 18th century Venice.

I very much hope that it can be kept in the UK, where it can be appreciated and admired by future generations for many years to come.

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 \(RCEWA\)](#), administered by The Arts Council.

RCEWA member Aidan Weston-Lewis said:

At more than six feet across, this beautifully composed, bustling view of one of the classic stretches of the Grand Canal is one of the most spectacular and attractive Venetian view paintings in this country. Commissioned by a British visitor to Venice in the late 1760s, it has remained in the UK ever since and has frequently been on public display. Its departure from these shores would be a regrettable loss.

The RCEWA made its recommendation on the grounds of the painting's outstanding aesthetic importance and outstanding significance for the study of the development of Guardi, Venetian view painting and the study of Grand Tour patronage and taste.

The decision on the export licence application for the painting will be deferred until 4 July 2018. This may be extended until 4 January 2019 if a serious intention to raise funds to purchase it is made at the recommended price of £26,796,000 (including VAT of £591,000).

Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the painting should contact the RCEWA on 0845 300 6200.

An image of the painting can be downloaded via our [flickr site](#).

ENDS

For media information contact: Yasmin Kaye Senior Communications Officer
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Tel: 0207 211 6489 Email:
yasmin.kaye@culture.gov.uk

Notes to editors

1. Details of the painting are as follows: The Rialto Bridge with the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi, late-1760s Oil on canvas, 119.7 x 204.3 cm Signed 'GUARDI' (lower left) In very good condition. Probably commissioned in Venice in 1768 by Chaloner Arcedeckne, in whose family it remained for the next 123 years, when it was acquired by Sir Edward Cecil Guinness, later 1st Earl of Iveagh. Then by descent and inheritance.
2. 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.
3. The Arts Council champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. It supports a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. www.artscouncil.org.uk.