

# 18th-Century Tipu Sultan Throne Finial worth £1.5 million at risk of leaving UK

- The export bar is to allow time for a UK gallery or institution to acquire the piece
- The finial is one of eight gold tiger heads that adorned the throne of Tipu Sultan, known as the “Tiger of Mysore”

Valued at £1.5 million, a gold jewelled tiger head, which once adorned the gold-covered throne of Tipu Sultan in the 18th century, is at risk of leaving the country unless a UK buyer can be found.

Tipu Sultan, the ‘Tiger of Mysore’, was regarded as the greatest threat to the British East India Company until his defeat and death in 1799. As ruler of Mysore, Tipu identified himself and his personal possessions with tiger imagery and this finial offers scholars the opportunity to illustrate the vibrant culture of Tipu’s court and closely examine British imperial history. Three surviving contemporary images of the throne are all in the UK.

The finial, made of gold and set with rubies, diamonds and emeralds, is a rare example of fully documented 18th century South Indian goldsmiths’ work and its existence was unknown until 2009. Its marble pedestal is unique among the five surviving finials known, and the meaning of its gold inscription is still a mystery.

Following his defeat, many objects from Tipu’s treasury arrived in Britain, where they influenced poetry (John Keats), fiction (Charles Dickens; Wilkie Collins), artists (J.M.W.Turner) and were received with huge public interest.

Arts Minister Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay said:

This fascinating finial illustrates the story of Tipu Sultan’s reign and leads us to examine our imperial history.

I hope a UK-based buyer comes forward so that we can all continue to learn more about this important period in our shared history with India.

The Minister’s decision follows the advice of the [Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest](#) (RCEWA). The Committee agreed that it is an important symbolic object in Anglo-Indian history in the last years of the 18th Century, with Tipu’s defeat having great historical importance to Britain’s imperial past and leading to a contemporary fascination with Tipu’s story and objects.

Committee Member Christopher Rowell said:

Tipu Sultan's golden and bejewelled throne (c.1787-93) was broken up by the British army's Prize Agents after Tipu's defeat and death in defence of his capital, Seringapatam, in 1799. This tiger's head is one of the original eight which were placed on the balustrade of the octagonal throne. Each gold tiger's head from the railing is slightly differently set with gemstones, which makes this example both part of a set and unique in its design. Its quality attests to the expertise of Tipu's goldsmiths and jewellers, in whose productions he took a close personal interest. The head of the large gold rock crystal tiger which supported the throne, and a bejewelled huma bird which perched on the pinnacle of its canopy, were presented to George III and Queen Charlotte (Royal Collection Trust). The tiger and its stripes were Tipu's personal symbols. 'Better to live one day as a tiger than 1,000 years as a sheep' he famously declared. His flirtation with Napoleonic France led to his downfall at British hands. This tiger's head, one of four throne finials to survive, including a head in the Clive Museum at Powis Castle (NT), should remain in the country together with the other fragments of the throne, and I hope that every effort will be made to achieve this.

The Committee made its recommendation on the grounds that the finial's departure from the UK would be a misfortune because it is so closely connected with our history and national life and is of outstanding significance for the study of royal propaganda and 18th-century Anglo-Indian history.

The decision on the export licence application for the finial will be deferred until 11 February 2022. This may be extended until 11 June 2022 if a serious intention to raise funds to purchase it is made at the recommended price of £1.5 million.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the finial should contact the Committee's Secretariat on 0845 300 6200.
2. Details of the finial are as follows: Title: Tiger's head finial from the throne of Tipu Sultan of Mysore (1750-1799). Place and date: Mysore, 1787-93 (construction of the throne; Kirmani 1864). The plinth possibly made in Madras or Calcutta, c. 1799-1800. Material: gold over a lac core, set with rubies, diamonds and emeralds. The head mounted on a black marble pedestal with gilt metal inscription and mounts, with four gilt metal feet and four gilded balls. Size: 6.9cm (height of head); 17.5cm (total height with pedestal). Condition: good.
3. Provenance: Tipu Sultan of Mysore (1787-1799); Thomas Wallace, Baron Wallace of Knarsdale (c.1800 or later) – listed in an 1843 inventory of the contents of Featherstone Castle (Northumberland), the family seat, and thence by descent; Bonhams, London, 2 April 2009 (lot 212); private collection. Literature: Bonhams, London: 2 April 2009, lot 212; Jaffer,

A. (ed.), *Beyond Extravagance* (NY: 2013), pp.189-90, cat.61; Haidar, N.N. (ed.), *Treasures from India* (NY, 2014), pp.46-7; *Export of Objects of Cultural Interest 2010/11* (2011): Case 1, p. 23.

4. 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.
5. 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](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

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## **£10 million DASA funding for Scottish innovation**

Innovators in Scotland have reached a key milestone, receiving over £10 million in DASA funding for defence and security related projects.

Since 2016, DASA has been working with innovators all across the UK to help address challenges in defence and security. We achieve this by welcoming ideas from innovators small and large, providing support to those who have not previously worked with Government.

We are pleased to have strengthened and broadened our links to innovators based in Scotland – attracting the best ideas for defence and security, and helping them pull those ideas through into capability.

### **DASA funds £10 Million in Scottish innovation**

Scotland has thriving digital, data and space technology industries, showcasing a long tradition of tech innovation. 66 highly ambitious Scottish innovators have had their ideas funded through DASA's Themed Competitions and Open Calls, with the underlying theme being technologies that will help solve the big challenges facing UK security, both present and in the future.

Key technology areas that received funding in Scotland include: Space Technology, Photonics, LIDAR, Ai & Robotics and Materials Science.

## **Reaching out to Scottish innovators**

DASA works locally, to support and advise innovators of all shapes and sizes, providing a critical link to pull through innovation to help the Ministry of Defence, Home Office, Department for Transport and other Government departments keep the UK safe by staying ahead of the threats we face.

We have a team of regionally based [Innovation Partners](#), who are available to give advice to suppliers about their ideas and how they can best engage with DASA.

**Debra Carr, DASA Scotland Innovation Partner, said:**

“I’m thrilled that DASA has reached £10 million in funding for projects based in Scotland. It is a testament to the incredible work that has come through our competitions and a great showcase of Scottish contributions to vital areas of defence and security such as space, robotics, artificial intelligence and photonics. We greatly look forward to working with more Scottish innovators in the future.”

## **DASA’s largest Scottish funding award**

The largest funding award to a Scotland-based innovator was received by Spire Global, which received £800k for its Radio Frequency (RF) Signals Detection and Geolocation Project, as part of the [Space to Innovate Themed Competition](#).

**On working with DASA, Theresa Condor, EVP & GM Spire Space Services at Spire Global Inc., said:**

“It is an honour for us to be selected by DASA for this mission in support of the UK Government and its defence activities and to be recognised as part of Scotland’s innovative space technology scene. Using Spire expertise in signal detection and geolocation, the project will take advantage of our capabilities as a space services provider and utilise the expertise and heritage of our low earth orbit nanosatellite constellation, consisting of more than 100 satellites and 17 ground stations globally.”

## **Get involved with DASA**

DASA looks forward to working with more innovative Scottish companies. If you have an innovative idea for a defence or security challenge, we want to hear from you. Reach out to your local Innovation Partner today.

[Contact a DASA Innovation Partner](#)

[What is DASA?](#)

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# **[PM call with Egyptian President Sisi: 12 November 2021](#)**

Press release

The Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to the President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, to discuss progress in the ongoing negotiations at COP26.



The Prime Minister spoke to Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi this morning, to discuss progress on negotiations at COP26.

He noted Egypt's role as a positive force for climate action in the region, and President Sisi welcomed the constructive negotiations in Glasgow under the UK Presidency.

The leaders agreed that a final push was needed in the talks to drive progress across adaptation, mitigation and finance and deliver on the goals of the Paris Agreement.

They committed to continue working closely together to achieve an ambitious outcome at COP26 that keeps 1.5C in reach, and maintain momentum towards COP27 in Egypt.

Published 12 November 2021

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## **Michelle Russell appointed as Chief Executive at the Security Industry Authority**

Press release

Heather Baily QPM, chair of the Security Industry Authority (SIA,) today announced the appointment of Michelle Russell as the Regulator's chief executive.



## Security Industry Authority

Michelle Russell has been serving as Acting Chief Executive of the SIA since October 2020. She joined the SIA as Director of Partnership and Interventions in January 2020, leading the criminal enforcement and regulatory inspection functions. She has over 25 years' experience of working in regulation and regulatory environments in both the public and private sectors.

Commenting on the appointment, Heather Bailly said:

I am delighted to announce that Michelle Russell is appointed substantively to the role of Chief Executive. We conducted a rigorous recruitment campaign to identify the best possible candidate for the Chief Executive role during the summer of this year, supported by an independent executive recruitment company. The final interview panel were unanimous in their view that Michelle was the best person for this important role. This appointment has Ministerial support from both the Home Office and from Ministers in the devolved administrations of Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Michelle brings a wealth of experience in the public sector together with positive, inclusive leadership skills and strong personal values to the Chief Executive role. She will now continue to build on the excellent work that the SIA is delivering nationally, with a continued focus on public safety.

Further information:

- The Security Industry Authority is the organisation responsible for regulating the private security industry in the United Kingdom, reporting to the Home Secretary under the terms of the [Private Security Industry Act 2001](#). Our main duties are: the compulsory licensing of individuals undertaking designated activities; and managing the voluntary Approved Contractor Scheme.
- For further information about the Security Industry Authority visit [www.gov.uk/sia](http://www.gov.uk/sia). The SIA is also on [Facebook](#) (Security Industry

Authority) and [Twitter](#) (SIAuk).

Published 12 November 2021

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## [Sellafield 'blockbusters' complete removal of iconic chimney top](#)

Nuclear clean-up teams have removed the huge diffuser at the top of the Windscale Pile Chimney on the Sellafield site.

The diffuser gave the 125-metre chimney its distinctive top-heavy appearance.

It has loomed over the west Cumbrian landscape for nearly 70 years.

But after 3 years of careful dismantling, it has now been cleared.

The achievement has also removed the seismic risk associated with the chimney.

A birds-eye view of the chimney, with its diffuser removed.

Geoff Carver, Sellafield Ltd project manager, said:

I'm delighted to have reached this point. Removing the seismic risk is a huge achievement.

This is a clear demonstration of progress towards our purpose of delivering a clean and safe environment for future generations. Many people have contributed to this success.

Sellafield Ltd employees have worked closely with their colleagues from our partners ADAPT, Doosan, Mammoet, KDC, Kaefer, the Design Services Alliance, and Nuvia.

The work was hugely challenging and much of it took place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The diffuser had to be cut up in-situ, more than 100 metres above ground.

Sections were then transported separately down to the ground. It required 200 moves to clear the entire block.

Work is now taking place to remove a metal frame platform and reduce the access shaft. Once that work is complete, a key delivery milestone will be met.

Following this, work will start on demolishing the chimney barrel.

The removal of the diffuser and the progress made on the demolition work marks an important achievement for the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's (NDA) mission to clean-up the UK's earliest nuclear sites on behalf of the UK government.

David Peattie, Chief Executive of the NDA, said:

This is an excellent example of the pioneering work taking place on our sites to deal with the legacy of the earliest days of the nuclear industry. In reaching this significant milestone of removing the Windscale Pile Chimney diffuser, we take another step forward in our clean-up mission.

Glenn McCracken, Sellafield Ltd's head of remediation, said:

This is a great achievement. Well done to the whole team who have worked tirelessly to deliver this iconic, visible and, crucial piece of remediation work.

## **The facts**

- Demolition work started in December 2018
- The first block was removed from the diffuser in January 2019
- A total of 226 blocks have been removed from the top of the chimney stack
- Each block weighed between 2 and 9 tonnes
- The total weight of all 226 blocks is 1232 tonnes
- This has reduced the height of the stack by 15.42 metres

The demolition was delivered by a team of 54, including 39 from ADAPT and their subcontractors and 15 people from Sellafield Ltd.

## **Waste management of the blocks**

The sections of the diffuser structure have been cut by machine using diamond wire saws. These cut blocks were removed from the top of the stack and lowered into the controlled area canopies ground using the tower crane.

The blocks were then remediated and transferred to the bagging station on the Sellafield site where a Goliath crane was used to manoeuvre the blocks ready for transport to interim storage prior to disposal.

This was either to the Calder Landfill Extension Segregated Area on the

Sellafield site, or Low Level Waste Repository, dependent on contamination levels and conditions for acceptance at each location.

The team also introduced a fit for purpose facility to diamond wire cut the face of some of the removed contaminated blocks to ensure we manage the blocks in accordance with the waste disposal hierarchy.

### **Further reading**

[Sixty two years on](#)

[Demolition starts on Windscale Chimney](#)

[Giant crane to help bring historic chimney down](#)