



PRESS RELEASE

Strictly embargoed until: Midnight on Wednesday 27 August 2008

NATIONAL GALLERIES OF SCOTLAND AND NATIONAL GALLERY LONDON JOIN FORCES TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF OLD MASTER COLLECTION FOR THE UK

Joint Statement on behalf of National Galleries of Scotland, the National Gallery London and the Duke of Sutherland:

The National Galleries of Scotland (NGS) and the National Gallery in London (NGL) are working together with the Duke of Sutherland to secure the long-term future of the Bridgewater loan of Old Master paintings.

The Bridgewater Collection, currently on view at the NGS, is the most important private collection of Old Master paintings on loan to an institution in the UK and counts among the most important art collections anywhere in the world. The loan includes masterpieces by artists such as Raphael (3), Titian (4), Rembrandt (1) and Poussin (8). The pictures have been on continuous public view in the National Gallery of Scotland since the collection was placed there in 1945 by the then 5th Earl of Ellesmere, later 6th Duke of Sutherland. It forms the core of the National Gallery of Scotland's world-famous displays of European art.

Over the years, the Bridgewater Collection has grown in value to the point where the Duke of Sutherland has decided that it would be prudent to review the holding in relation to the family's overall assets, and he has therefore decided to offer a small number of selected pictures for sale to the nation, reflecting his strong preference that the entire collection should remain on public view in the UK. The Duke has offered the opportunity for the Galleries to acquire two masterpieces on extremely generous terms; *Diana & Actaeon* and *Diana & Callisto*, both by Titian.

Titian's *Diana & Actaeon* is on offer at a net price of £50m. The NGS and NGL will be seeking funds to acquire this work which would then be available for display on a rotating basis in London and Edinburgh. Assuming the funds can be raised to enable this purchase to proceed, the two Galleries will also be granted an option to acquire the second picture, *Diana & Callisto* in four year's time for a similar amount. If the effort to acquire these works is successful then the remainder of the Bridgewater Collection will remain on long-term loan at the NGS.

The two Titians are arguably the finest works in the Bridgewater Collection. They were both painted as part of a cycle of works for Philip II of Spain and they represent a highpoint in Italian Renaissance art.

This is the first-ever collaboration of its kind between the London and Edinburgh National Galleries.

The Bridgewater Loan originally numbered 32. The National Gallery of Scotland acquired four paintings from the Loan in 1984 and Titian's *Venus Anadyomene* in 2003.

John Leighton, Director General, National Galleries of Scotland:

“The Bridgewater Loan, so generously made by the Duke of Sutherland, is the most important Old Master paintings loan to any public museum in the world and is of supreme importance to Scotland and the rest of the UK. The present initiative is intended to secure the long-term future of the Loan for the public benefit. We are delighted to be working in close collaboration with the Duke and our colleagues in London in order to achieve this.”

Nicholas Penny, Director, National Gallery London:

“For a century, the agitation to preserve great works of art in British Collections from export has been animated by anxiety that Titian's great paintings *Diana and Actaeon* and *Diana and Callisto* might be sold. Now the paintings have been offered on remarkably advantageous terms; their acquisition by both institutions would be an historic event.”

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