

NHMF helps Tate to save Joshua Reynolds' *The Archers*

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The National Heritage Memorial Fund today announced that it will offer Tate £1.6million towards its campaign to save Joshua Reynolds' celebrated work *Colonel Acland and Lord Sydney: The Archers* c.1770 for the nation.

Image



Joshua Reynolds' *Colonel Acland and Lord Sydney: The Archers*

Added to the generous pledges from Tate Members (£500,000) and The National Art Collections Fund (Art Fund) (£400,000), this means that Tate is now very close to reaching the £3.2million required to match the agreed market price.

The picture was export stopped earlier this year by the Government following its sale to a German institution. At the time, it was given a starred rating by the Export Reviewing Committee, indicating that every possible effort should be

made to keep it in the country. Tate now has until 26 July to raise the rest of funds.

The Archers is a double full-length portrait of Colonel John Dyke Acland (1746 - 1778; on the right) and Dudley Alexander Sydney Cosby (1732-1774). Acland was an MP, while Cosby was a diplomat and reportedly committed suicide by 'a dose of Danish poison' in 1774. The two men are depicted as 'men of action', in the act of releasing arrows from their bows, in a flamboyant composition which links the picture with the great mythological hunting scenes of Titian and Claude Lorraine. Bravura touches are everywhere, from the 'Flemish' still-life of dead game at their feet, to the thick impasto of the freely-painted wooded landscape. The old master allusions contain rich references to the themes of youth and friendship. *The Archers* is one of the major works of the exhibition Joshua Reynolds: *The Creation of Celebrity* (26 May - 18 September 2005) at Tate Britain.

Tate Director Nicholas Serota said: 'This generous grant from the NHMF means that we are close to acquiring this important work for the nation, so we are enormously grateful to their trustees, as well as to the Art Fund and Tate Members for their continuing generosity. *The Archers* is a fine example of an outstanding British work which is the target of Tate's Collection campaign, Building the Tate Collection. We are now in discussion with other potential donors whose support is required to complete the necessary funding.'

Stephen Johnson, Head of the National Heritage Memorial Fund, said: 'This painting would make a striking addition to the Tate Collection and like the other 1,200 iconic pieces of our heritage that we have helped to save, it would be a huge loss if it leaves these shores for good. The NHMF was set-up to honour those who gave their lives in war for this country, so as we celebrate our Silver Jubilee and as the nation commemorates the end of WWII, this seems is a particularly appropriate time to save such an important painting.'

David Verey, Chairman, National Art Collections Fund. said: 'Having pledged a major grant of £400,000 to speed Tate on its way, we're delighted that the NHMF has ensured that the fundraising target is now within Tate's reach. *The Archers* is just the kind of painting that Tate needs to boost its outstanding British collection, showing one of our most accomplished painters at his dashing best.'

Further information

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