



CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF JACOB, 4TH BARON ROTHSCHILD

The legacy of UK cultural luminary Jacob, 4th Baron Rothschild (born 1936) who died in February 2024 is being celebrated by two of his artworks joining the collections of the National Gallery and the V&A, through the Acceptance in Lieu scheme.

The National Gallery – where Jacob, 4th Baron Rothschild served as Chair of Trustees between 1985 and 1998 – will receive *King David* (1651) by renowned Bolognese painter Giovanni Francesco Barbieri (1591–1666), known as Guercino, reuniting it with the two works both created to be its pendant, already part of the Trafalgar Square collection.

The V&A will receive the marble relief *Edward and Eleanor* (1790) by John Deare (1759–1798), one of the most talented Neoclassical sculptors working at the end of the 18th century.

Jacob, 4th Baron Rothschild, in addition to chairing the National Gallery, led the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the family's flagship, Waddesdon Manor. He supported many causes, some close to his home in Buckinghamshire, others as far afield as Albania, Greece, Israel, and the United States. He was committed to helping communities, the environment, education and above all, the arts. His exemplary service to his country was recognised on several occasions, with a GBE, a CVO and as a member of the Order of Merit.

His daughter, Dame Hannah Rothschild – who also served as Chair of the National Gallery – said, *'My father, Jacob, was a devoted patron of the arts and a steadfast champion of the National Gallery. He regarded Guercino's King David—a masterwork of the Italian Baroque – as one of the crowning acquisitions of his lifetime. It was his wish to*

see King David reunited with its two Sibyls at the National Gallery and his family is grateful to the AIL Panel and to the National Gallery for giving it a distinguished home amongst such illustrious company.'

'The exquisite marble relief by John Deare is of such rarity and importance that my father, Jacob, felt it must find its home in a national institution. Our family is delighted that the AIL Panel and the V&A have accepted this bequest, fulfilling his vision with such care and distinction.'

The National Gallery

King David, together with a pendant, *The Cumaean Sibyl with a Putto* (1651, National Gallery), was commissioned by Italian nobleman Giuseppe Locatelli for his family's palace in Cesena, near Bologna. However, when Prince Mattias de' Medici saw the *Cumaean Sibyl* in Guercino's studio, he liked it so much that he appropriated it for his own art collection, and the painting was shipped to Florence instead. Guercino diplomatically did not tell Locatelli he had sold his picture to another client, instead painting *The Samian Sibyl* (1651, also National Gallery), as a replacement pendant to *King David*.

King David is an unusual representation of this figure, not young but not yet old. It is a moving image of a man at a turning point in his life, caught between his youthful career as a fighter and his later life as a ruler, poet and philosopher. The luminous colouring and complex psychology exemplify Guercino's assurance as a painter at the height of his maturity.

As the trio of paintings are brought together, for what is believed to be only the second time since they were painted (the first being the critically acclaimed *Guercino at Waddesdon: King David and the Wise Women* exhibition in 2024) visitors will be able to explore the relationship between David – the Jewish patriarch, psalmist and prophet, whom Christians believed prefigured Christ – and the Ancient Greek turbaned seers, who supposedly foretold Christ's birth. All three paintings exhibit Guercino's brilliant handling of paint to depict silk, flesh and ermine, paper, wood and stone.

After hanging in the Palazzo Locatelli, *King David* came to England in 1768 when the 1st Earl Spencer acquired it, together with the *Samian Sibyl*, for Spencer House, London. Both paintings are still displayed in their exceptionally fine matching frames, designed by James 'Athenian' Stuart (1713–88) in the mid-18th century. The family subsequently hung *King David* at their country seat Althorp, in Northamptonshire. The Rothschild family acquired it in 2010 and returned it to Spencer House, before it was lent to Waddesdon Manor.

King David is the sixth of the Gallery's NG200 acquisitions this year, following Alma-Tadema's *After the Audience*, Poussin's *Eucharist*, Eva Gonzalès's *The Full-Length Mirror*, the early 16th-century Netherlandish or French altarpiece *The Virgin and Child with Saints Louis and Margaret* and new commission *Mud Sun* by Sir Richard Long.

It will be on display in Room 32 – alongside other 17th-century Italian works by artists including Caravaggio (1571–1610) and Artemisia Gentileschi (1593–1654) – as part of *C C Land: The Wonder of Art*, the once in a generation major redisplay of the National Gallery Collection featuring more than a thousand works of art in display for everyone to enjoy for free.

Sir Gabriele Finaldi, Director of the National Gallery, says: *'As we continue to celebrate our 200th anniversary it is very fitting we remember Jacob, 4th Baron Rothschild and his legacy on the Gallery. He was brilliant, knowledgeable and refined, with an ability to make things happen and to bring people and institutions with him. The National Gallery transformations in the late 1980's and early 1990's – including the construction of the Sainsbury Wing – were, in large measure, due to his energy and vision. Bringing King David together with the two sibyls creates an incredibly rich context of contrast and comparison, allowing visitors an insight into the arc of Guercino's extraordinary career, and we are very grateful to the HM Government Acceptance in Lieu scheme for making this happen.'*

Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, Il Guercino (1591–1666) *King David*: Accepted in Lieu of Inheritance Tax from the Estate of Jacob, 4th Baron Rothschild and allocated to the National Gallery. The acceptance of the painting settled £5,600,000 in tax.

V&A

Celebrated as one of the most innovative and gifted British Neoclassical sculptors, John Deare (1759–1798) spent most of his career in Rome, where the relief of *Edward and Eleanor* was carved in 1790. Due to his early death at age 38, his production was limited to around fifty documented works, though very few of these are known today. The majority were reliefs of classical and allegorical subjects or related to English history, commissioned by British ‘Grand Tourists’ to decorate their country houses.

Until now, only two other marble sculptures by Deare were held in British public collections: *Cupid and Psyche* (1791) at the Bradford District Museums & Galleries and *Julius Caesar Invading Britain* (1796) acquired by the V&A in 2011 (on display in the Hintze Gallery, G22). Plaster versions of the *Edward and Eleanor* composition are held at Wimpole Hall and at the Walker Art Gallery.

The relief depicting Eleanor of Castile sucking poison from the wound of Prince Edward (later Edward I) will be installed in the British Galleries (G119) at V&A South Kensington later this year – the first time it has been on public display. In this exceptional relief, which demonstrates Deare’s virtuoso technique in carving marble with great subtlety, the sculptor has adapted an episode of medieval British history into a depiction of Greek history, in a refined Neoclassical style. The work is of particular interest to the V&A, as it predates the *Caesar Invading Britain* relief and shows various sources of inspiration in the composition, including the paintings of Angelika Kauffman. The V&A also holds several albums of drawings by John Deare, including a study of a woman (E.260-1968) believed to be preparatory for the figure of Eleanor.

Much remains to be discovered about Deare’s production. The V&A is hosting an international conference on 16 and 17 May 2025 on the theme of sculptural exchanges between Italy and Britain in the 18th and 19th centuries, where the relief will be the focus of a spotlight presentation, marking the start of a new line of research into the artist’s work.

Tristram Hunt, Director of the V&A, says: *‘These remarkable acquisitions, made possible by the Acceptance in Lieu scheme, will forever represent Lord Rothschild’s legacy as a great connoisseur, champion of the arts and relentless supporter of British cultural institutions.’*

Both works were acquired by the respective institutions as part of the Acceptance in Lieu scheme, in negotiations brokered by Christie’s Heritage and Taxation Department.

Michael Clarke CBE, Chair, Acceptance in Lieu Panel, commented: *‘The allocation of these wonderful works to two of the nation’s most visited cultural institutions underlines the continuing importance of the Acceptance in Lieu scheme in sustaining and enriching our cultural life. The Guercino will feature prominently in the new redisplay at the National Gallery, and the sculpture by Deare will headline the V&A’s exciting forthcoming international conference on Italian-British artistic exchange. Both these outstanding works of art will impact and thrill visitors for generations to come.’*

Arts Minister Sir Chris Bryant said: *‘These two acquisitions will be a great addition to the National Gallery and the V&A’s phenomenal collections. They’ll fit perfectly alongside other works and couldn’t have a better home. I’m delighted that the Rothschild family and the Acceptance in Lieu scheme have jointly made this possible.’*

Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair, Arts Council England added: *‘The Acceptance in Lieu scheme brings a rich variety of items into public collections, giving communities across the country the opportunity to enjoy and better understand our shared cultural heritage. It is gratifying to know that this and future generations will be able to enjoy these acquisitions at the V&A and the National Gallery for years to come.’*

John Deare (1759–1798) *Edward and Eleanor*: Accepted in Lieu of Inheritance Tax from the Estate of Jacob, 4th Baron Rothschild and allocated to the Victoria and Albert Museum. The acceptance of this sculpture settled £1,120,000 in tax.

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Acceptance in Lieu (AIL) scheme is administered by Arts Council England. AIL allows those who have a bill of Inheritance Tax to pay the tax by transferring important or pre-eminent cultural, scientific or historic allocations to the nation. AIL is not a philanthropy scheme, and items are not ‘donated’ to a museum, library or archive, pre-eminent works are offered in lieu of tax. Material accepted under the scheme is allocated to a public collection and is available for all. The Acceptance in Lieu Panel, chaired by Michael Clarke CBE, advises on whether property offered in lieu is of suitable importance (pre-eminent) and offered at a value which is fair to both nation and taxpayer.

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. Our vision, set out in our strategy Let’s Create is that by 2030, we 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. Between 2023 and 2026 we will have invested over £467 million of public money from Government, alongside an estimated £250 million each year from the National Lottery, to help ensure that people in every part of the country have access to culture and creativity in the places where they live. Until Autum 2025, the National Lottery is celebrating its 30th anniversary of supporting good causes in the United Kingdom: since the first draw was held in 1994 it has raised £49 billion and awarded more than 690,000 individual grants.

The National Gallery is one of the greatest art galleries in the world. Founded by Parliament in 1824, the Gallery houses the nation’s collection of paintings in the Western European tradition from the late 13th to the early 20th century. The collection includes works by Artemisia Gentileschi, Bellini, Cezanne, Degas, Leonardo, Monet, Raphael, Rembrandt, Renoir, Rubens, Titian, Turner, Van Dyck, Van Gogh and Velázquez. The Gallery’s key objectives are to care for and enhance the collection and provide the best possible access to visitors. Admission free.

On 10 May 2024 the National Gallery reached its 200th birthday, and the start of its Bicentenary celebration, a year-long festival of art, creativity and imagination, marking two centuries of bringing people and paintings together.

More information at nationalgallery.org.uk

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The V&A is a family of museums dedicated to the power of creativity – its power to entertain and move, to enrich our lives, open our minds and change the world. We celebrate and share that power through a programme of exhibitions, events, educational and digital experiences, a collection of 2.8 million objects, and through our support for new works and commitment to conservation, research and sustainable design. Together, our work tells a 5,000-year-old story of creativity, helping to advance cultural knowledge everywhere, and inspiring the makers, creators and innovators of today and tomorrow. We are always working to broaden our audiences so that everyone can be part of the V&A – because the V&A and the power of creativity belong to us all.

The V&A sculpture collection includes over approximately 26,000 objects, from masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance by Michelangelo, Bernini and Rodin to Northern European polychrome wood sculpture, British Neoclassical sculpture and the iconic V&A Cast Courts. For more information, visit:

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IMAGES

John Deare, *Eleanor and Edward*, 1790. Courtesy of the estate of Jacob, 4th Baron Rothschild
Guercino, *King David*, 1651 © The National Gallery, London

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