



# INTERNATIONAL



Compiled By  
Antiques and The Arts Weekly  
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## Sworders Goes Out Of The Ordinary April 13-14

STANSTED, ESSEX COUNTY, UNITED KINGDOM — Numbering close to 600 lots, the “Out of The Ordinary” auction at Sworders, Stansted, on April 13-14 is the largest to date. In keeping with the name of the popular format, the sale brings together the weird and the wonderful from an original Dalek from the *Doctor Who* series to a sword presented by Catherine the Great to a Cossack who helped put down a popular rebellion, and the “Smallest Show On Earth,” the United Kingdom’s only surviving flea circus.

Flea circuses were a hugely popular form of fairground entertainment in both England and Germany between the 1830s and the 1960s. In its heyday, the Professor Len Tomlin Flea Circus attracted the crowds in Belle Vue, Manchester and later formed part of the Ribchester Museum of Childhood. It is believed to be the last example in the UK. Bidding for the two miniature swing trapezes, a chariot, two bicycles, a windmill, a garden roller, a carriage and a dueling pedestals is expected at \$2,12,800 but it may leap higher.

The Daleks are now almost 60 years old — they first appeared on our screens in 1963 — but they remain the most famous of all of the *Dr Who* villains. Standing 5¼ feet high, Sworders’ example



One of two albumen prints of Pre-Raphaelite beauty Julia Prinsep Stephen (\$700-\$1,100).

(\$21/25,000) is made to “new series” specifications — principally of wood with fiberglass, metal and plastic elements — and has recently been fitted with a motor so it can be driven around. It appeared in three episodes of the BBC series — alongside Matt Smith in the *Asylum Of The Daleks* in 2012 and Peter Capaldi in *The Magician’s Apprentice* and *The Witch’s Familiar* (2015).

No “Out of the Ordinary” sale would be complete without a conversation-starting piece of

taxidermy — a role amply filled by a alicorn (a full-size rearing horse with mounted wings and horn) that is guided at \$11/17,000 — or a few lots focused on dark magic.

Original Victorian photographs of well-known Pre-Raphaelite muse Julia Prinsep Stephen are expected to bring \$700-\$1,100. She was a model for many artists including her maternal aunt and godmother, Julia Margaret Cameron. In 1878, she accepted the proposal of the writer and critic Les-



An original Dalek that appeared in three episodes of *Doctor Who* (\$21/25,000).



Taxidermy alicorn, Twentieth Century (\$11/17,000).

lie Stephen with whom she would have four more children — all of them influential members of what would be known as the Bloomsbury Group.

Among the most historically important items in the sale is a Russian Eighteenth Century presentation sabre fashioned as a Persian shamshir. The curved steel blade has an inlaid gold image of Catherine the Great and a cyrillic inscription indicating that the sword was awarded during the Pugachev Rebellion (1773-75),

the principal revolt in a series of popular rebellions that took place in the Russian empire after Catherine II seized power in 1762. The sword, which belonged to Lord Alistair McAlpine and then passed into the collection of the Australian businessman Warren Anderson, carries an estimate of \$28/35,000.

Each session on April 13 and 14 begins at 10 am.

Sworders is on Cambridge Road. For more information, [www.sworder.co.uk](http://www.sworder.co.uk).

## After Outcry, Israeli Museum Calls Off Sale Of Islamic Art

BY ILAN BEN ZION

FOR THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

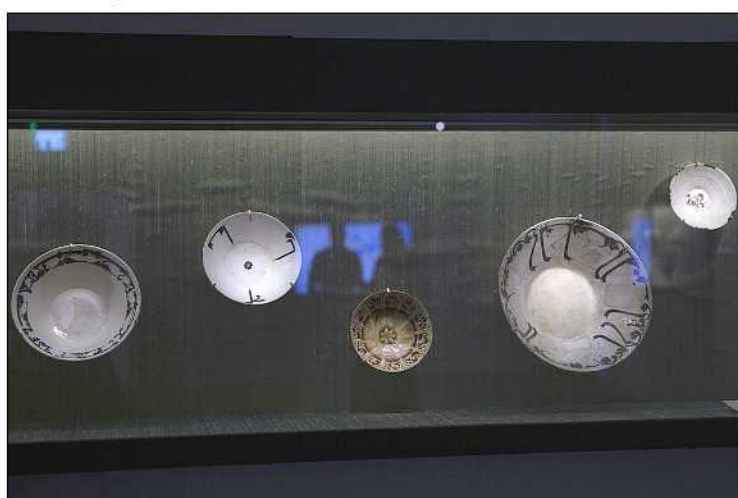
JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel’s premier museum for Islamic art has scrapped the planned auction of scores of rare and precious items after public outcry over the attempted sale, which had been expected to fetch millions of dollars from wealthy private collectors.

In a settlement struck Wednesday, March 10, the Sotheby’s auction house agreed to return 268 items from London back to the L.A. Mayer Museum for Islamic Art in Jerusalem.

The agreement ends a saga that drew broad condemnation and threatened to gut one of Israel’s prized public art collections. Art experts criticized the attempted sale to private collectors, saying it had been hidden from the public and violated the museum’s founding mission to edify the Israeli public about the Islamic world through art.

As part of the arrangement, the Al Thani Collection, an art foundation funded by the ruling family of the energy-rich Gulf Arab state of Qatar, “will generously provide an annual sponsorship to the L.A. Mayer Museum for Islamic Art” for ten years, while one of the Islamic Art Museum’s pieces will be given on long-term loan to the Al Thani Collection’s gallery at the Hotel de la Marine in Paris.

The Israeli daily *Haaretz* said that Sotheby’s would receive a 2 million-pound (\$2.8 million) cancellation fee. Nei-



Ancient ceramics on view in the Museum for Islamic Art in Jerusalem, on Wednesday, March 10, 2021. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

ther Sotheby’s nor the museum would provide details on the fee or the annual funding for the museum, though the auction house said “given the circumstances, Sotheby’s reduced its withdrawal fees.”

The item to be loaned is an intricately decorated, Eleventh Century silver jug, part of a hoard of silver objects discovered in the early Twentieth Century near Nivahand, in northeastern Iran. The item was purchased early last century by art collector Ralph Harari, who later sold it to the museum’s founder, Vera Salomons.

An Arabic inscription beneath a frieze of running animals on the jug reads: “Perfect blessing, lasting wealth, abundant happiness and overall security to its owner.” It

was not one of the items originally up for auction at Sotheby’s in October sale.

Israel and Qatar do not have formal diplomatic relations, but contacts exist to facilitate Qatar’s transfer of hundreds of millions of dollars in aid to the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip. Sotheby’s said it had facilitated the cooperation between the Islamic Art Museum and the Al Thani Collection.

The Islamic Art Museum welcomed the agreement, saying it “will ensure the continued operation of the museum over time.”

“This is a truly momentous final outcome and we are thrilled to be partnering with The Al Thani Collection Foundation in this way to further our shared aims of increasing

cultural exchange, while allowing the museum to continue to enhance art and culture for the benefit of the Israeli public and art lovers,” it said.

The Al Thani Collection said it was “very pleased to play a part in the survival of a unique institution that makes a meaningful difference to the communities around it.”

The items from the museum’s collection, including several centerpiece objects and prized antique watches, were slated for auction at Sotheby’s in October. The Hermann de Stern Foundation, a Liechtenstein-based trust that funds the bulk of the museum’s budget, said the sale was aimed at covering the cost of maintaining the institution. It insisted that it had the legal right to sell the items.

The Hermann de Stern Foundation declined comment Wednesday.

The Hashava Foundation, an Israeli art theft prevention organization, petitioned the Supreme Court in November to halt the auction. It said the sale was “in gross violation” of Israel’s laws governing museums and antiquities, and that it would cause “irreversible damage and major loss to the general public.”

Meir Heller, Hashava’s founder, said the organization was proud that the petition “achieved its aim and brought about the return of this rare and precious collection to Israel and its exhibition for the public.”

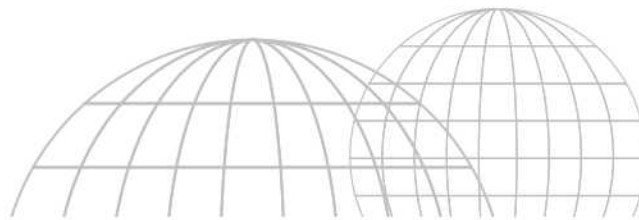
The museum was established in the 1960s by Salomons, the scion of a British-Jewish aristocratic family who died in 1969, and named for Leo Arie Mayer, a prominent scholar of the Middle East. It is home to thousands of Islamic artifacts dating from the Seventh to the Nineteenth Centuries. It also has a collection of antique watches handed down by the Salomons family, including dozens by the famed Parisian horologist Abraham-Louis Breguet. His timepieces adorned European royalty in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, including Marie Antoinette.

Among the items that were to be auctioned were a Fifteenth Century Ottoman helm inlaid in silver calligraphy, a Twelfth Century bowl depicting a Persian prince and a collection of antique watches, including three designed by Breguet.

The removal of the artwork drew public outcry by Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, Israeli Culture Minister Hili Tropper, museum curators and academics, and forced the postponement and eventual halt to the auction.

“I am delighted that all our strenuous efforts to preserve intact the entirety of the collection of the L.A. Mayer Museum have come to such a successful conclusion,” Tropper said, saying the Al Thani Collection Foundation’s “generosity is a great tribute to the spirit of cross-cultural cooperation.”





## Isle Of White's Last Surviving Windmill, Subject Of JMW Turner Watercolor, Restored

SWINDON, UNITED KINGDOM — The last surviving windmill on the Isle of Wight has been restored by the National Trust to its appearance when it was captured in watercolor by JMW Turner.

New sweeps and stocks — the timber frame and beams that make up each sail on a windmill — have replaced a set that were removed more two years ago because the wood was beginning to decay.

An important landmark on the island, Bembridge Windmill and the landscape in which it sits has changed little since Turner painted it in 1795; his watercolor is in the collection of the Tate Museum. Built in the early 1700s, the windmill served its community for more than 200 years. Poignantly, milling stopped and never resumed when the men left the island to fight in the First World War.

In more recent years, the mill has been a wartime shelter, a Home Guard HQ, and has faced dereliction. It was rescued and given to the National Trust in 1961. This year marks its 60th anniversary in the care of the conservation charity.

The project to restore the mill's

sails required a crane to lift the new sweeps almost 50 feet into the air. High up in a cherry picker, the millwrights carried out the painstaking work of aligning and bolting together the sweeps and their heavy 36-foot-long stocks. Each pair weighs around 1,300 pounds, and the complex, highly skilled job took several days.

The work was carried out by the same millwright who last fitted sweeps to the windmill 40 years ago. Geoff Wallis, from Dorothea Restorations, returned with his son, John, who has followed him into the business.

"There are a few millwrights still about, but it takes a lifetime to learn the skills," said Wallis. "I've been in the business for 45 years and my mission is to pass my skills on to future generations; I'm still learning though. Each mill is different — different ages, different construction, materials, technologies — it's wonderful to see how they were put together and to study the skills of former millwrights."

"Bembridge Windmill is a terrific example of this. Being a small country mill it was probably never prosperous enough to



**"Bembridge Mill, Isle of Wight, with a View West towards Brading Haven 1795 by Joseph Mallord William Turner," catalog entry, April 2012, in David Blayney Brown (ed.), J.M.W. Turner: Sketchbooks, Drawings and Watercolours, Tate Research Publication, December 2012; Andrew Wilton photo.**

be updated with modern machinery so much of its original construction is still intact. It's basically an authentic Eighteenth Century mill. You can see all the little changes that have taken place over time though, and these things tell the

mill's story. For a millwright like me it's absolutely fascinating, and a great privilege."

The total cost of the work is \$53,000. The costs were met by local fundraising and a grant of just over \$14,000 from the Government's Culture Recovery

Fund, part of the \$2.19 billion to help heritage organizations through the coronavirus pandemic.

One of seven original windmills on the Isle of Wight, Bembridge Windmill is now the only survivor. Today, this much-loved local landmark sits in a quiet corner of a field, perched high enough for its sweeps to be seen across the surrounding countryside.

The National Trust hopes to reopen the mill, as soon as government guidelines allow, to pre-booked visits three days a week.

Operations manager on the island, Kathryn Wilson said, "People on the island will be thrilled to see the mill reunited with its sails; it's looked so forlorn without them. We know it has a special place in many hearts — it's what brought me to the Isle of Wight over a decade ago and it is the most important building in the National Trust's care here."

"We're really looking forward to welcoming visitors back to the mill, to discover its stories, and to enjoy the thrill of clambering to the top and taking in those glorious views across the fields and out to the sea."

## Elusive Artist Banksy Confirms He's Behind Prison Artwork

LONDON (AP) — Banksy appears to have thrown his support behind a campaign to turn a former prison in the English town of Reading into an arts venue, a town spokesman said on Thursday, March 4, after the street artist confirmed that artwork that appeared on a red brick wall of the prison was of his making.

The elusive artist confirmed the picture was his when he posted a video of him creating it on his Instagram account. The monochrome picture shows a man escaping using a rope made of paper from a typewriter. It appeared Monday outside Reading Prison, famous as the location where writer Oscar Wilde served two years for "gross indecency" in the 1890s.

The prison closed in 2013, and campaigners want it turned into an arts venue. Britain's Ministry of Justice, which owns the building, is due to decide mid-March on its future.

In his Instagram video, Banksy is shown stealthily stenciling and spraying paint to create the artwork, titled "Create Escape." The footage is juxtaposed with an episode of a traditional art instruction video called *The Joy of Painting with Bob Ross*.

The campaign to turn the former prison into an arts venue has won the backing of actors, including Judi Dench, Stephen Fry and Kenneth Branagh.

A spokesman for Reading Borough Council said it was "thrilled that Banksy appears to have thrown his support behind the council's desire to transform the vacant Reading Gaol into a beacon of arts, heritage and culture with this piece of artwork he has aptly called 'Create Escape.'"

"The Council is pushing the Ministry of Justice, who own the site, to make suitable arrangements to protect the image," the authority said.



**Banksy has painted an image of a prisoner escaping down the walls of Reading Prison using a ream of paper weighted by a typewriter, invoking the institutions most famous inmate — writer Oscar Wilde ©Matthew Childs photo.**

## German, Netherlandish Exhibitions To Feature Canada's Group Of Seven Artists

OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA — Works by the artists of the Group of Seven — Lawren Harris, J.E.H. MacDonald, A.Y. Jackson, Arthur Lismer, F.H. Varley, Franklin Carmichael and Franz Johnston — as well as Emily Carr and Tom Thomson, among others — are now on view at the Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt, Germany, as part of the exhibition, "Magnetic North: Imagining Canada in Painting 1910-1940." The exhibition, which brings together 87 paintings and five films from several Canadian collections and institutions, will subsequently be hosted by the Kunsthall in Rotterdam, the Netherlands in fall 2021.

"Magnetic North: Imagining Canada in Painting 1910-1940" is co-organized by the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), and the National Gallery of Canada.

National Gallery of Canada and chief executive officer, Dr Sasha Suda, PhD said that "the presentation of the exhibition 'Magnetic North' at the Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt and at Kunsthall in Rotterdam will provide incredible exposure for the finest masterpieces from some of Canada's key museums and cultural institutions. This is a historic moment, as these prodigious works will be brought together for the very first time in Europe. Visitors will discover the remarkable talent of these artists, who created an unprecedented pictorial style for the representation of Canadian landscapes in the first decades of the Twentieth Century. These significant artists have marked the history of art in Canada and their works are ambassadors par excellence for our country."

The year 2020 marked the



**Photo courtesy Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt.**

100th anniversary of the group's first exhibition in Canada. Visitors will be able to admire an impressive selection of paintings made between 1910 and 1940, a period of nation building and rapid industrial expansion. These paintings and sketches embody the dream of an independent dominion, a dream very much at odds, then and now, with Canada's colonial history.

Addressing Indigenous identity and representation, and "reframing Canadian history through a contemporary lens," Monnet takes the viewer on a journey from the Far North to the urban south, "capturing the perpetual negotiation between the traditional and the modern by a people moving ever forward." The three-minute film is made out of NFB archival footage.

"The opportunity to share the captivating works of The Group of Seven and their contemporaries with new audiences is exciting," said Stephan Jost, the Michael and Sonja Koerner director and chief executive officer of the AGO.

"In paintings of sublime mountains and unspoiled nature, these artists created a romantic fiction of uninhabited wilderness. This exhibition boldly infuses these works with contemporary relevance, offering visitors the opportunity to see these modern paintings through the eyes of contemporary Indigenous artists."

The works are drawn primarily from the collections of the National Gallery of Canada and the Art Gallery of Ontario, with 23 and 38 paintings, respectively. The other works in the exhibition are from the Art Museum at the University of Toronto, Library and Archives Canada, the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, the Ottawa Art Gallery, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Museum London, the National Film Board of Canada, the Judith and Norman Alix Art Gallery, the Robert McLaughlin Gallery, the Vancouver Art Gallery and Victoria University.

For information, [www.schirn.de/en/](http://www.schirn.de/en/), [www.kunsthall.nl/en/](http://www.kunsthall.nl/en/) or [www.gallery.ca](http://www.gallery.ca).