



INTERNATIONAL



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Antiques and The Arts Weekly
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Sworders' Out Of The Ordinary Sale July 30—

Princess Diana Letters, Live Aid Photos, Crippen Crime Ephemera Headline

STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET — More than a dozen letters and cards from Diana, Princess of Wales, to her family's former housekeeper come to auction in Essex this summer. *Sworders' July 30 Out of the Ordinary* sale includes a trove of correspondence between the princess and the lady she knew simply as "Collie."

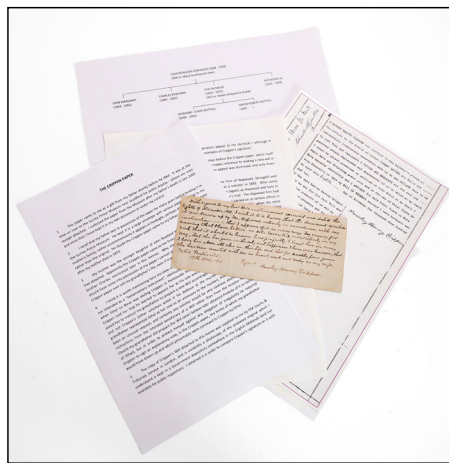
Violet Collison had been the head housekeeper to John Spencer, Viscount Althorp, and his wife, Frances Ruth Roche, at Park House on the Sandringham Estate. While in service, she welcomed the births of four Spencer children — Sarah, Jane, Diana (later Diana Princess of Wales) and Charles — and later, after the Spencer's marriage broke down, followed Frances to London in 1967. Working for Frances and Peter Shand Kydd until her retirement in 1973. Collie remained close to Frances and the Spencer children until she died in 2013, at the age of 89.

As can be seen from the variety and nature of this collection of cards and letters, Collie remained in Diana's thoughts throughout her life, before and during her marriage to Charles, Prince of Wales, the birth of their two children, Princes William and Harry, and beyond.

Invited to the Royal Wedding on July 29, 1981, she also received a ticket for Diana's funeral on September 6, 1997.

Most of the letters to Collie are thank-you notes for Christmas and birthday presents given to Diana and Princes Harry and William as children, each offering a line or two regarding his life at the time.

A double-sided letter, written on Buckingham Palace notepaper to Collie thanking her for a birthday present, is dated July 8, 1981, only three weeks before the Royal Wedding. In it, Lady Diana Spencer observed, "everyone frantically busy here doing last minute decorations...the bride-to-be has remained



quite calm!" In its original envelope addressed in Diana's hand, it is expected to bring £800-1,200.

Writing as the Princess of Wales from Kensington Palace on September 25, 1984, Diana thanked her former housekeeper for a gift to Prince Harry. She notes that "William adores his little brother and spends the entire time pouring an endless supply of hugs and kisses over Harry." Offered together with a

Christmas card from the same year, it also has a guide price of £800-1,200.

Iconic images captured by acclaimed photographer David Bailey at Live Aid in 1985 also go under the hammer. The 13 images, signed by the artists they depict, were those chosen at the time for a benefit auction. Printed in editions of just three each, they were sold at auction later that year as part of a charity event at Sotheby's.

Bailey was backstage when "the global jukebox" sprang into life at Wembley Stadium on July 13, 1985. The benefit concert, the brainchild of Bob Geldof, was organized at breakneck speed to raise funds for the relief of famine in Ethiopia. The event was held simultaneously at Wembley Stadium in London and John F. Kennedy Stadium in Philadelphia, while a television broadcast was watched across 150 nations by an estimated 40 percent of the global population.

Backstage, the cream of British rock and pop music from Paul McCartney to Bono, hung out together.

Highlights in the sale depict The Who (signed on reverse by Roger Daltrey, Pete Townshend, John Entwistle and Kenny Jones), George Michael and Elton John (signed by both), Bob Geldof and Paula Yates (signed by both). George Michael on his own (signed) and the four members of Queen (again signed on reverse by Freddie Mercury, Brian May, Roger Taylor and John Deacon).

The large-scale photographs are to be offered some 39 years since the event itself. They carry estimates of between £1/1,500 (for Geldof and Yates) to £4/5,000 for George Michael.

Sale curator Mark Wilkinson comments: "For people of my generation, Live Aid was unforgettable, the most impressive live concert they had ever experienced. These striking black and white images, taken by David Bailey, give great



insight to life behind the scenes. It is also poignant that a number of these artists are no longer with us today".

In this sale where "anything goes," a rare document signed by the infamous Coldwater, Michigan medical Hawley Harvey Crippen (1862-1910) has an estimate of £2/3,000.

More than a century after the headless body of Cora Henrietta Crippen was found buried in a cellar, the case of Dr Crippen — the first criminal to be captured with the aid of wireless telegraphy — continues to exert a macabre fascination. This letter comes by descent from John Rowland Hopwood, who acted as Ethel Clara Le Neve's solicitor.

Handwritten from Pentonville prison on November 17, 1910, less than a week before his execution for the murder of his wife, Dr Crippen explains his decision to name his mistress Ethel Clara Le Neve as his sole executrix in his will. "It should be known how perfectly I trust her in every way, that she has given me the only real happiness I have ever known, that I love her above all else in this life and that for nearly four years she has been united with me in heart, soul and body as my wife."

Sworders' Stansted Mountfitchet salesroom is at GE South & Sons, Ltd, Cambridge Road. For information, www.sworder.co.uk.

Lenbachhaus Restitutes Silver Sculpture From Former Collection Of Dr Max Meirowsky

MUNICH — On June 26, The Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau Munich (Lenbachhaus Munich) restituted the Georg Wrba statue "Diana on a Doe," returning it to the Geneva-based Bona Terra Foundation, which administers the inheritance of industrialist Dr Max Meirowsky (1866-1949).

Proactive research on the part of Lenbachhaus found that the work had been confiscated in 1938 in an act of Nazi persecution. The Bavarian capital city of Munich has a clear stance in this regard: "The injustices perpetrated by the Nazi regime must not be allowed to occur again. Accordingly, public offices expressly work to retribute cultural assets to their former owners or to the owners' legal heirs." The restitution of the statue is based on the principles of the Washington Declaration of 1998 regarding works of art confiscated under National Socialism. The decision by the Munich Department of Arts and



Georg Wrba's "Diana on a Doe."

Culture to retribute the work was made on May 2, 2024.

The silver statue "Diana on a Doe" is counted among the early works of the Munich artist Georg Wrba (1872-1939). A bronze cast-

ing of the figure is said to have been presented for the first time in 1899 as part of the Munich Secession exhibition. There are several versions of the statue in bronze and silver, produced by various different casting houses. Nevertheless, documents clearly show that the object in question is the silver statue from the collection of Dr Max Meirowsky.

Meirowsky, a Cologne entrepreneur, patron of the arts and passionate art collector, owned a company providing insulation materials to meet growing demand from the automobile and electrical industries. He used his fortune to build an art collection that included works by Renoir, Gauguin and van Gogh. He commissioned the Munich artist Georg Wrba in the course of the expansion of his Cologne-Lindenthal villa, built in 1910. Meirowsky had resigned from his position as director of the Cologne-based company "Meirowsky & Co AG" in the mid-

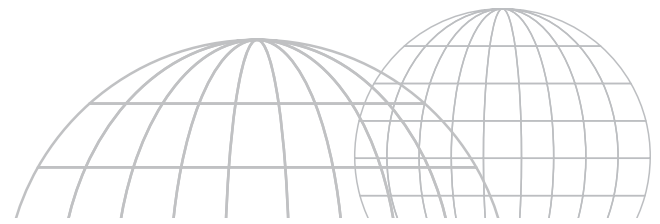
1920s and moved to Berlin. His company in Berlin closed down in 1927, the company premises was confiscated and sold off in 1938.

His collection suffered a similar fate: after Meirowsky had offered individual works for sale to German museums beginning in 1936, he began selling entire blocks of artworks in 1937. In November 1938, the Berlin auction house Hans W. Lange sold 140 objects from Meirowsky's collection. Today, a total of more than 300 works from his collection are still considered missing. Meirowsky urgently needed the returns from the sales in order to pay what were referred to as the Reich Flight Tax and the Jewish Capital Tax. Lenbachhaus purchased two objects at the Berlin auction: the silver statue by Georg Wrba and a painting by Philipp Röth, which could already be restituted in 2012.

Immediately after the auction, Meirowsky emigrated to Switzerland via the Netherlands. He

died stateless in Geneva in 1949. His will dated June 3, 1948, mandated the founding of the Bona Terra Foundation, dedicated to work on behalf of the trades and agriculture in Israel. In 1954, the foundation was brought to life with the support of Paul Guggenheim, executor of Meirowsky's will.

Anton Biebl, director of the Munich Department of Arts and Culture, said, "The current upsurge in right-wing populism feeds on abandonment of the culture of remembrance and on disregard for the historical obligations upon us. Returning cultural assets confiscated under the aegis of National Socialist persecution is a central aspect of responsibility in commemorating those persecuted and murdered under National Socialism. I am therefore particularly pleased that the city of Munich can today return the silver statue 'Diana on a Doe' by Georg Wrba to the heirs of Dr Max Meirowsky."



More Than 140 Works Focusing On The Wives Of Henry VIII On View At The National Portrait Gallery

LONDON — On view at London's National Portrait Gallery through September 8, "Six Lives: The Stories of Henry VIII's Queens" is the first major exhibition to place its focus on the women who married the infamous Tudor king.

Reuniting items that would have last been seen together when in possession of the queens themselves, "Six Lives" includes items that have never been on public display, and a Sixteenth Century portrait once thought lost.

Exploring agency, influence and cultural impact both in life and afterlife, the exhibition steps back through time — from contemporary portraits by Hiroshi Sugimoto and costume from *SIX the Musical*; to Sixteenth Century portraits by Hans Holbein the Younger shown alongside magnificent tapestry, textiles, books and jewels.

Sixteenth Century paintings by Hans Holbein the Younger and contemporary photography by Hiroshi Sugimoto meet in the National Portrait Gallery's first exhibition of historic portraiture since reopening, presenting a study of the lives and afterlives of the six women who married Henry VIII. "Six Lives: The Stories of Henry VIII's Queens" examines the representation of Katherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, Anne of Cleves, Katherine Howard and

Katherine Parr, both in their own time and in the centuries since they lived.

Presenting the queens in chronological order, "Six Lives" is the first major exhibition of its kind to place the narrative focus on these extraordinary women, rather than their infamous husband. From historic paintings, miniatures, drawings and the queens' personal possessions — including their own letters and books — to contemporary photography, costume and film, the exhibition draws upon a wealth of factual and fictional material to place the spotlight on six women who helped to shape a fascinating period of English history.

With many portraits and objects reunited for the first time in centuries, visitors to "Six Lives" can expect to learn more about the family networks that brought each queen to court, their relationships with the king, their patronage and interests, as well as the ways in which they used portraiture to communicate their politics, religious beliefs, values, identity and status.

Important loans from private collections include a recently conserved historic painted panel of Katherine Parr, attributed to "Master John," and a portrait of Anne of Cleves by Edgar Degas. The three-quarter-length portrait of Katherine Parr was long believed to have been lost —



Hiroshi Sugimoto's 1999 portraits of the six wives. Collection of Odawara Art Foundation ©Hiroshi Sugimoto.

destroyed by a fire in 1949 — and is being publicly displayed for the first time since its conservation and sale at auction last year, while the portrait by Degas offers an unusual encounter with the Sixteenth Century queen through the eyes of the renowned French Impressionist painter.

The stories of the queens have been constructed and revised many times, both in their lifetimes and throughout history — from their mottos and heraldic

emblems to their presentation on stage, in film and in books. Their stories have been a frequent source of fascination, repeatedly inspiring writers and artists of all kinds to attempt to uncover the "truth" of their lives: their characters, their appearances and their relationships. Quoting from portraits made throughout the Sixteenth Century, few performances of the character of Anne Boleyn are undertaken without her distinctive pearl necklace with a "B"

pendant. Similarly, Holbein's meticulous rendering of Anne of Cleves' clothes provides ample information from which to present an instantly recognizable figure on stage or screen.

"Henry VIII was the star around which the country and Tudor court orbited. In his nearly 38-year reign, the six women who married him were protagonists in an almost implausible melodrama. Often reduced to the rhyme 'Divorced, Beheaded, Died / Divorced, Beheaded, Survived,' this exhibition seeks to restore the queens' individuality and agency in both historic and contemporary storytelling, bringing them out of Henry's shadow and their homogenous grouping. By encountering the court culture in which they performed their roles as queens, the images of their families and peers, the works that they commissioned, the objects they owned and even the letters and notes that they wrote, we cannot fail to glimpse them as individuals. In this exhibition, the faint surviving traces of each queen are displayed alongside the portraits that have helped to turn them into icons," shared Dr Charlotte Bolland, senior curator of research and Sixteenth Century collections, National Portrait Gallery.

The National Portrait Gallery is on St Martin's Place. For information, www.npg.org.

Metropolitan Museum Restitutes 14 Sculptures To Kingdom Of Cambodia

NEW YORK CITY & PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA — The Metropolitan Museum of Art has announced that it is physically returning to the care of Cambodia 14 sculptures that the Museum deaccessioned last year. The repatriation follows the launch of the Met's Cultural Property Initiative, which includes undertaking a focused review of works in the collection as well as the hiring of Lucian Simmons in a newly created head of provenance position and additional provenance researchers. The 14 works, along with two sculptures already returned to the Kingdom of Thailand, were deaccessioned in December 2023 in connection with the Southern District of New York's investigation of dealer Douglas Latchford. The museum is continuing to review its collection of Khmer art and remains in constructive dialogue with Cambodia.

"The Met is committed to the responsible collecting of art and the shared stewardship of the world's cultural heritage," said Max Hollein, the Met's Marina Kellen French director and chief executive officer. "We have

made significant investments in accelerating the proactive and collaborative research of our collection, and we are dedicated to acting promptly when new information arises — as demonstrated by this group of sculptures. This is a milestone moment in our ongoing work, and we are honored to collaborate with Cambodia on this return. The Met greatly values our open dialogue with Cambodia, and we will continue to actively engage with colleagues there to arrive at constructive resolutions that further ongoing efforts and advance the world's understanding and appreciation of Khmer art and culture."

The works of art being transferred were made between the Ninth and Fourteenth Centuries in the Angkorian period and reflect the Hindu and Buddhist religious systems prevailing at that time. A number of the sculptures — including the bronze masterpiece The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara Seated in Royal Ease (late Tenth-early Eleventh Century), and the monumental stone Head of Buddha (Seventh Century) —



A late Tenth-early Eleventh Century bronze sculpture of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara is prepared for repatriation to the Kingdom of Cambodia. Photo courtesy the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

remained on view in the museum's galleries for Southeast Asian art, presented as the repatriated heritage of Cambodia, while arrangements were being made for their return.

At the time that the Thai and Cambodian works were deac-

cessioned, Phnombootra Chandrajoti, director-general of Thailand's fine arts department commented, "We are very pleased that the Met has reached out to us and proactively proposed the return of these two objects to Thailand. This

act serves as a model for ethical collecting practices and strengthens the bonds of cultural respect and collaboration between Thailand and the Met. We view this return as a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to repatriate cultural treasures, and we hope it inspires further partnerships as we work together to foster the exchange of knowledge and to ensure the return of cultural artifacts where appropriate to their countries of origin. In Thailand, the committee for repatriation, chaired by the Cultural Minister, is actively engaged in research initiatives to identify and track down additional objects that may have been illegally removed from the country in the past, further paving the way for a future where cultural heritage is preserved and valued in its rightful place."

Additionally, the Cambodian Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts said, "We appreciate this first step in the right direction. We look forward to further returns and acknowledgments of the truth regarding our lost national treasures."