

Press release: £11 million drawing at risk of export

- 500 year old drawing is one of only 28 by the artist known to survive
- Only drawing by Lucas van Leyden not held in a museum collection

Arts Minister Michael Ellis has placed an export bar on a 500 year old drawing worth £11.4 million in a bid to keep it in the country.

The work, A Young Man Standing, by Dutch artist Lucas van Leyden, is one of only 28 drawings by the artist known to survive and his only drawing not held in a museum collection.

Lucas van Leyden (about 1494 – 1533) was primarily famous for his skills as a printmaker. He was the first artist from the Netherlands to gain international fame comparable to that of German Albrecht Dürer and Rembrandt and Rubens a century later.

This drawing is thought to be a study for a projected engraving. It depicts a young man in contemporary clothing and was probably drawn from life. The sitter is most likely a nobleman – or a studio model posing as one – given the sword he is shown wearing.

It is believed to date from around 1520. Early in its history the drawing was stuck onto another sheet, perhaps by a collector to better preserve it, suggesting that even then works by van Leyden were considered precious.

Arts Minister Michael Ellis said:

This incredibly rare work by Lucas van Leyden is a true treasure. The drawing showcases his skill as an artist and acts as a record of the 16th century world.

I hope that we are able to keep this work in the UK so that the public can enjoy it.

The RCEWA made its recommendation on the grounds of the drawing's outstanding aesthetic importance and its significance for the study of the works of Lucas van Leyden.

Reviewing Committee member Aidan Weston-Lewis said:

Apparently drawn directly from a dressed-up model in the studio, this exquisitely crafted drawing offers a charming and rare glimpse into the world of this brilliant but elusive artist.

Van Leyden's inclusion of credible, contemporary characters like this in his narrative compositions lends them an appealing

conviction, and anticipates the work of Pieter Bruegel the Elder later in the century.

One of a small group of the artist's drawings to have come down to us, this sheet is unlike any of the others in this country and every effort should be made to retain it.

The decision on the export licence application for the drawing will be deferred until 17 July 2019. This may be extended until 17 December 2019 if a serious intention to raise funds to purchase it is made at the recommended price of £11,483,750 plus VAT of £296,750.

Images of the drawing can be downloaded from [Flickr](#).

ENDS

Notes to editors

Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the drawing should contact the RCEWA on 0845 300 6200.

Details of the drawing are as follows:

- Lucas van Leyden (about 1494 – 1533) A Young Man Standing
- Black chalk, watermark pot with two handles, cut and laid down 11 x 51/8 inches (27.9 x 13.2cm)

The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest is an independent body, serviced by The Arts Council, which advises the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on whether a cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria.

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