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 | news release |

**Le Brun’s *“Portrait of Everhard Jabach and family”* granted temporary reprieve**

The Culture Minister, Ed Vaizey, has placed a temporary export bar on a rare 17th century French painting by Charles Le Brun, *Portrait of Everhard Jabach and family*, providing a last chance to keep it in the UK. Unless a matching offer of £7,300,000 can be raised, the painting will be exported.

This monumental, recently rediscovered, work is a masterpiece of group portraiture and has been described as *“*a French *Las Meninas”.* The paintingdepicts the banker and collector Everhard Jabach and his family, and reflected in a mirror is a self-portrait of Le Brun himself, a reference to the close relationship between patron and painter. Considered by many to be one of the greatest collectors of paintings and drawings ever, much of Jabach’s collection has ended up, via the French royal family, in the Louvre.

The painting has been structured with extraordinary skill, enriched by a meaningful iconography and animated by a subtle variety of poses and expressions. Le Brun gives additional meaning to the work with the inclusion of various objects including a celestial globe, a closed Bible, a book of Serlio’s showing geometrical drawings and a bust of Minerva, representing links between education and members of the Jabach family.

Culture Minister Ed Vaizey took the decision to defer granting an export licence for the painting following a recommendation by the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest (RCEWA), administered by Arts Council England. The RCEWA made their recommendation on the grounds that it is of outstanding aesthetic importance, and that it was of outstanding significance for the study of group portraiture in Europe in the 17th century.

There are very few paintings by Le Brun in British public collections, and none of these is a portrait. What was generally considered to be the prime version of the Jabach group portrait was formally in Berlin and is presumed to have been destroyed in the Second World War. However, recent technical analysis indicates that this version was painted first. This painting offers the British public a unique opportunity to appreciate how brilliantly Le Brun assimilated the lessons of Northern painting into the type of rigorous composition associated with French painting in the middle of the 17th century.

Culture Minister Ed Vaizey said:

“This striking work is a brilliant and rare example of the work of an artist at the peak of his portraiture career. It would be a terrible shame if it was to leave our shores permanently and I hope a UK buyer – be it an institution or an individual - can be found in the time permitted.”

The decision on the export licence application for the painting will be deferred for a period ending on 6 May 2014inclusive. This period may be extended until 6 October 2014inclusive if a serious intention to raise funds to purchase the painting is made at the recommended price of £7,300,000.

Offers from public bodies for less than the recommended price through the private treaty sale arrangements, where appropriate, may also be considered by Mr Vaizey. Such purchases frequently offer substantial financial benefit to a public institution wishing to acquire the item.

An image of the work can be downloaded from <http://www.flickr.com/photos/thedcms/12360508455/>

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**Notes to Editors**

1. Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the painting should contact RCEWA on 0845 300 6200.
2. Details of the painting are as follows:

Charles Le Brun (1619-1690)

*Portrait of Everhard Jabach, his wife Anne-Marie née de Groote and their children, Anna Maria, Hélène, Everhard the Younger and Heinrich, with a portrait of the artist in the background*

1659-60 (?)

Oil on canvas 233.5 x 325 cm

1. The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest is an independent body, serviced by Arts Council England, which advises the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on whether a cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria.
2. Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people’s lives. Between 2010 and 2015, it will invest £1.9 billion of public money from government and an estimated £1.1 billion from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country. www.artscouncil.org.uk

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