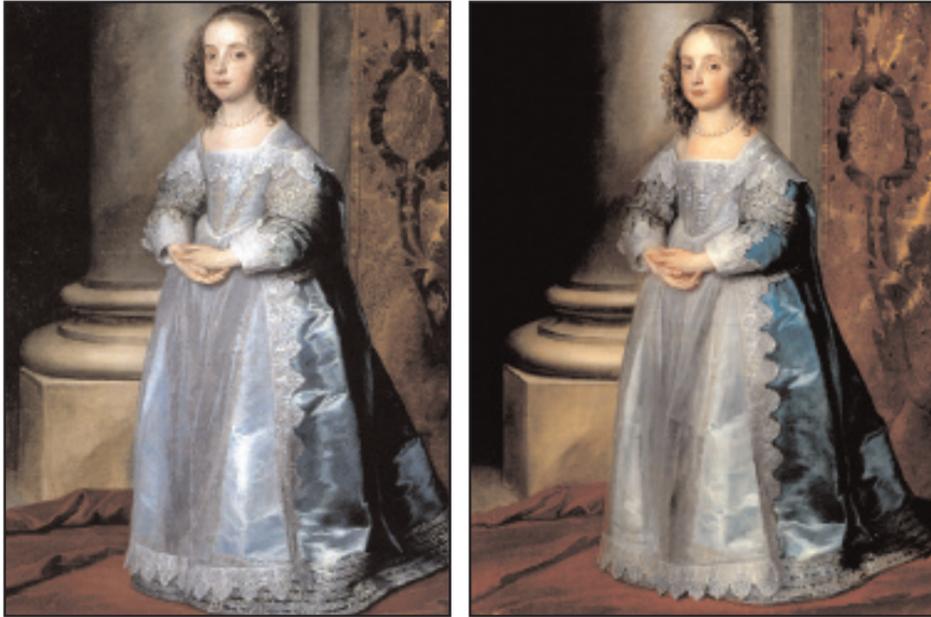


United Kingdom

Van Dyck: spot the difference

Rare chance to see two portraits of Princess Mary



The Boston version (left) and Historic Royal Palaces's portrait

LONDON. Two versions of a Van Dyck portrait of Princess Mary are to be brought together, in an attempt to resolve which is the prime version. One picture, owned by Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, is on loan to the "Van Dyck & Britain" exhibition at Tate Britain. The other has just been acquired by Historic Royal Palaces, for display at Hampton Court.

Mary, born in 1631, was the eldest daughter of Charles I and was probably six when she was painted. The Historic Royal Palaces portrait of her hung at Hampton Court when Charles I was under house arrest there during the Civil War.

The two portraits have probably not been seen together since they left Van Dyck's studio in around 1637. Traditionally, the Boston version has been regarded as the prime version, but bringing them face-to-face will offer a unique opportunity for specialists to study them in private. Although the arrangements have not yet been finalised, it is likely to be done just after the Tate Britain show closes on 17 May.

The Hampton Court version was acquired by Historic Royal

Palaces in February, under an Acceptance in Lieu arrangement. The portrait had belonged to Sir Oliver Millar, a former Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures and director of the Royal Collection, who died in 2007. Millar was also a distinguished Van Dyck specialist. The Acceptance in Lieu arrangement covered tax of £1,050,000.

What was not reported when the picture was acquired was the circumstances of its emergence. It was a "sleeper", selling at Sotheby's on 15 November 1967 as "after" Van Dyck, and was bought by Millar for £160.

In what today might be regarded as a questionable move, Millar published the portrait in the lead article of the June 1968 issue of *The Burlington Magazine*, without mentioning that he actually owned it. Millar wrote that "a version has recently come to light of the portrait of Mary, Princess Royal", which "passed into a private collection". In 2004 Millar co-authored the Van Dyck catalogue raisonné, and his picture was numbered IV.163, with the owner given as "private collec-

tion, England".

Millar's 1968 *Burlington* article suggests that the portrait might possibly have a Nazi-era provenance problem (which would not have been regarded as a major issue in the 1960s). He records that two scholars, Gustav Glück and Ludwig Burchard, "saw the portrait, apparently in Berlin and Vienna, in the early 1930s". Shortly afterwards it was acquired by Dr Walter Stucki of the Zurich Kredit-Bank. However, the picture seems to have reached Zurich in 1932, which would put it in the clear (since spoliation is only an issue from 1933 onwards).

In concluding his article, Millar suggests that either the newly discovered portrait or the Boston painting could be the prime picture: "Without placing them side by side there could be no means of deciding which of the two versions is the first." The Millar picture has a more distinguished provenance (having been owned by Charles I) and a likely signature, whereas the Boston painting appears to be finer in quality. **Martin Bailey**

New chief curator for Whitechapel

Achim Borchardt-Hume on history, community and leaving the Tate

LONDON. German-born Achim Borchardt-Hume will begin his role as chief curator at the newly expanded Whitechapel Gallery (*The Art Newspaper*, March 2009, pp31-32) at the end of April. He will oversee all curatorial activities, including the newly created Collections Gallery and Commissions Gallery, as well as offsite projects. Dr Borchardt-Hume spent four-and-a-half years at Tate Modern as curator of modern and contemporary art, where he was responsible for "Rothko: the Late Series" [September 2008], "Albers and Moholy-Nagy: From the Bauhaus to the New World" [March 2006], and "Doris Salcedo: Shibboleth" [October 2007] for the Turbine Hall. Previously he worked as a curator at London's Barbican and exhibitions organiser at the Serpentine Gallery.

The Art Newspaper: Why did you decide to move from Tate?

Achim Borchardt-Hume: I think it's a very curious question when I get asked that, because it's decisively a move towards the Whitechapel. The main attractions are its distinguished history, the long tradition it has of making contemporary and modern art accessible to the wider public, and the particular place it occupies in the artistic community.

TAN: What differences do you see working at the Whitechapel compared to Tate?

AB-H: Every place has its idiosyncrasies, its particular structure and place within the panorama of art institutions in London, and the way they are perceived both locally and internationally. I think what hugely appealed to me about the refurbished Whitechapel Gallery is the scale of the exhibition galleries, the fact that by having a particular philosophy about education and public programmes, it can critically reflect on some of the functions of a museum or that type of institution while retaining the agility of an exhibition space. The newly created Archive Gallery, for instance, allows the Whitechapel to reflect upon its own history, embedding specific exhibitions and developments in art to which it contributed into a wider historic trajectory. It would be worthwhile to bring renewed attention to the seminal role the Whitechapel played in bringing modern international art to London through the first solo exhibitions by the likes of Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. Similarly, the new annual commissions make for a time-frame that enters into an interesting dynamic with the faster turnover of temporary exhibitions. The opening commission by Goshka Macuga, which focuses on Picasso's *Guernica* and its display at the Whitechapel in 1939, is another good example of how to tie these different strands together.

TAN: There are many similar institutions to the Whitechapel now—how do you see it marking itself out as different?

AB-H: Not to sound like a politician, but I'd like to slightly take the emphasis away from this idea that institutions are necessarily competing with each other. The thing about the Whitechapel is that it can do mid-scale exhibitions that are more difficult to realise in a large-scale institution. It has the potential to make accessible very interesting new developments in art, but also maybe shine a slightly different light on what we take as the history of art of the past 40 or 50 years and give a different rooting to that. It is important that whatever we do, we find ways to talk about it, to mediate our activities in such a way that they become accessible and relevant to a wider community. Displacement, for



instance, is a quintessential modern experience and one that is essential to the practice of many artists throughout the 20th century. It is also the lived experience of much of the local Whitechapel community, as indeed of many Londoners. It is about highlighting these connections between art and life, if that does not sound too grand.

TAN: Will director Iwona Blazwick be less involved with programming now that you're here?

AB-H: I think it will be very much a conversation. And we're thinking around how to further develop the shape that conversation can take between the two of us, but also within the wider Whitechapel team.

TAN: The programme over the next few months is very female dominated, with shows by Isa Genzken, Goshka Macuga, Elizabeth Peyton and Sophie Calle—Iwona Blazwick said that it's really by accident, but I wondered whether you had

TAN: Whitechapel is closely linked to the local community. Do you see any problems arising from that in the future, the balance between its international and local profile?

AB-H: If there's anything I've learned from the other institutions I have worked in over the past decade or so, it's that there is never a single audience, and that when you think about the visitor, you need to be quite careful that you don't make too many assumptions about who that should be. Fundamentally there should be a sense of respect for any person that may come to you, otherwise it becomes rather patronising and simplifying.

TAN: Do you imagine curating shows that speak to specific audiences, or do you think that each show should speak to everybody?

AB-H: I think it's very difficult to say that one can do anything that speaks to everybody. But I also don't believe that one can address specific audiences in a certain way. Being German I don't have a particular penchant for German art—I'm quite aware that I may actually react rather sensitively when I feel there is a facile equation being made as to why I ought to be interested. There may be, like the exhibition curated by Sunil Gupta of photography from South Asia [at the Whitechapel from 15 January to 11 April 2010], a certain pertinence to it happening at the Whitechapel and its local popula-

"What appealed to me was that we can critically reflect on the functions of a museum while retaining the agility of an exhibition space"

any thoughts on that?

AB-H: I think Iwona would be the first to counter with: if they were all men, how many would have picked up on that? I think they're all very interesting artists, so I have absolutely no second thoughts on it. I don't think it's driven by conscious quota thinking. But it is done with an awareness that it's important that we look in the right directions.

TAN: Have you thought about long-term programming yet?

AB-H: There is a history at the Whitechapel of doing quite distinct historic exhibitions, such as "Faces in the Crowd" [December 2004]. So perhaps quite focused exhibitions on a particular historic moment, and a moment in an artist's career that might seem quite pertinent to what is happening now. I want to make sure there is a certain political relevance to the programme.

TAN: The Collections Gallery has already been programmed for the next year with works from the British Council. Have you been involved in choosing the guest curators?

AB-H: They are all decided already. We are now discussing what collection should follow next year and whether this should be a public or private collection, which is perhaps more likely, or some different type of collection.

TAN: Are there any specific private collections that you'd be interested in?

AB-H: We are talking to both private collectors and those in charge of public collections that are not generally accessible. What I hope we could explore further is what drives people or institutions to collect, what drives an organisation such as the British Council to collect, to further our understanding of collecting as an activity. There are extraordinary examples of artist's collections such as Sol LeWitt's, which would be another area I would be keen to mine further.

But I don't see that so much as being addressed to that specific audience. I hope that we are continuously aware of a local audience, and I would hope particularly that if we manage to reach younger people, that they will become loyal audiences.

TAN: Whitechapel has always been known as an institution that is sympathetic to artists. How do you feel about the problems that can arise when an artist and the gallery's wishes or expectations clash?

AB-H: It's really critical for an institution such as this to be driven by artists. Every institution has to serve a number of stakeholders, but it's critical that art and artists are always at the beginning of this food chain. But of course it's unavoidable that if you strongly believe in something and you want to make something, there will be times of conflict. It's really a process of continuous negotiation actually.

TAN: Regarding the horizontal/vertical debate around certain paintings in your Tate Rothko exhibition (*The Art Newspaper*, November 2008, p24), obviously you couldn't consult the artist, but the interesting thing is that in the end the curator will always make the final decision. How did you feel about that debate?

AB-H: I was obviously quite aware of which way [up] I hung those paintings. But the critical thing I took away from that exhibition, and from that debate, was that it was very important that something people had become very comfortable with—like a comfy old cardigan—captured the extraordinary existential endeavour that underpinned Rothko's practice, and the radical nature of that work. It was very interesting to do that through an exhibition that had a simple, straightforward argument, and to see how people reacted to that.

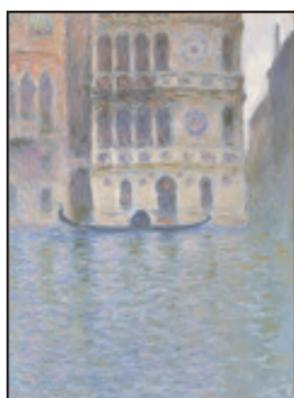
Interview by Rosie Spencer

Wales's impressionist fundraising tour

LONDON. National Museum Wales is touring its impressionist collection to the US, to help raise funds for gallery refurbishment. "Turner to Cézanne" opened in March at the Columbia Museum of Art in South Carolina, and later moves on to Oklahoma City, Syracuse, Washington, DC, and Albuquerque. The 50 pictures were collected in the early 20th century by Gwendoline and Margaret Davies, who donated them to the Cardiff museum and gallery in 1952 and 1963. The US tour will bring in around \$500,000 from the five venues.

At the Cardiff gallery, the redisplay of paintings from the Renaissance to 1900 was completed last December, on the upper floor of the east wing.

The central wing, for art from 1900 to 1945, will also be

Monet, *The Palazzo Dario*, 1908

refurbished, and this should be completed in autumn 2010. The final task will be to restore the historic west wing, for post-1945 art, to reopen in summer

2011. Total costs will be £4.5m, partly funded by the Welsh Assembly Government (£1m). The ground floor will continue to display the museum's collections of archaeology, geology and natural history.

In the longer term, there are much more ambitious plans. A feasibility study undertaken by ABL Cultural Consulting for the Welsh Assembly Government has recently recommended the construction of a north wing for the Cardiff museum and gallery building, at a cost of £86m. This would be used for science displays, freeing the ground floor of the main building for art, which would then be called the Welsh National Gallery of Art. Space for art would be doubled, allowing much more of the collection to be shown.

The other element of the long-term plan is the creation of a National Centre for Contemporary Art, probably in Newport or Swansea. This would cost an estimated £39m. However, the Lottery-funded Centre for Visual Arts in Cardiff had to be closed in 2000 because of low visitor numbers, after only 18 months in operation, so another major project for contemporary art will be scrutinised very carefully. Discussions on the ABL feasibility study are continuing. **M.B.**

Eastbourne's Towner Art Gallery reopens

LONDON. The Towner Art Gallery in Eastbourne reopens on 4 April in a new building designed by Rick Mather. Founded in 1923, and named after its benefactor John Towner, it was in an 18th-century manor house. The new building lies just off the seafront. Costing £9m, the main funders were the South East England Development Agency, Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and Eastbourne Borough Council (which owns the collection and runs the gallery). The Towner's main strength is British art from the 19th century to the present, and its holdings of Eric Ravilious are particularly important. The gallery recently received a £1m Art Fund grant to buy international contemporary art. The inaugural show in the Towner's temporary exhibition gallery is by Chilean sculptor Iván Navarro, who will represent his country at this year's Venice Biennale. **M.B.**