

PRESS RELEASE

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1,500 Oil Paintings from Edinburgh go on Your Paintings **Public Invited to Tag Paintings to Help Build a National Online Catalogue**

The Public Catalogue Foundation (PCF), in partnership with the BBC, today announced that the first 1,500 of Edinburgh's 7,700 oil paintings have been added to the **Your Paintings** website for the nation to enjoy. **Your Paintings** is a project to create a complete online catalogue of every oil painting in the national collection, at www.bbc.co.uk/yourpaintings

Edinburgh's publicly-owned collections are involved in this ground-breaking national project to reveal paintings from across the country that are both on display and in store. Paintings by Bellamy, Fergusson, Howson, Jan Steen, Nasmyth, Peploe and Raeburn are among the 1,500 paintings in Edinburgh that can now be seen on **Your Paintings**. These paintings are drawn from three important collections across the city. Paintings from a further 35 collections across Edinburgh will join the site over the coming year.

Included on Your Paintings is the large topographical and civic collection belonging to the City of Edinburgh Council. This sits alongside the University of Edinburgh Fine Art Collection that holds a large number of works of art, including numerous Scottish portraits and contemporary Scottish art. The smaller collection of Historic Scotland's paintings at Edinburgh Castle reflects the site's significance in Scottish history.

To help the BBC and PCF identify and catalogue what can be seen in each painting, the public is being invited to **'tag'** the nation's paintings. Tagging is fun, easy and you don't need to be an art expert to do it. The results will allow future users of the Your Paintings website to find paintings of subjects that interest them. **Your Paintings Tagger** is at <http://tagger.thepcf.org.uk>

Quotes

David Patterson, Curator, Fine Art, City of Edinburgh Museums and Galleries, said: “Ever since seeing one of the PCF's wonderful catalogues a number of years ago, it has been a personal ambition to have the City of Edinburgh's art collection made more widely accessible in this way. It is great to see this come to fruition.”

Jill Forrest, Museums Support Officer, University of Edinburgh Fine Art Collection, said: “I have personally been delighted to have had the opportunity to participate in this exercise with the PCF. This project has proved invaluable in recording and digitising the oils within the University of Edinburgh Fine Art Collection with the additional benefit of enhancement of our catalogue records. It is exciting to think that all this information will finally be available to researchers worldwide.”

Hugh Morrison, Collections Registrar, Historic Scotland, said: “Working with the PCF has been a very rewarding and worthwhile project for Historic Scotland. It has provided an opportunity to systematically improve the quality of our collections documentation and photography, and most importantly, extend public access to paintings on display and in storage. Making Historic Scotland's paintings accessible in this way will help encourage further appreciation and understanding of these important works.”

Nicholas Serota, Director, Tate, said: “The Your Paintings website is an important undertaking that will reveal the depth and breadth of the nation's collections of paintings, many of them published online for the first time. Through ambitious collaboration between organisations across the UK this bold project complements our ambition to connect audiences with art in an immediate way online, something we will take for granted in the future.”

Andrew Ellis, Director, the Public Catalogue Foundation, said: “No country has ever embarked on such a monumental project to showcase its entire painting collection online. Working with collections and individuals all over the UK, this project will reveal to the world the UK's extraordinary holding of oil paintings.”

Roly Keating, Director of Archive Content, BBC, said: “Our partnership with the PCF encapsulates so many of the BBC's ambitions, both as a public service broadcaster and key supporter of the UK arts sector. Your Paintings will be a hugely valuable learning resource for our audience and demonstrates the power of working with partners to open up the nation's cultural resources.”

Press Images

Press images of the paintings below are available from Katie Carder at katie.carder@thepcf.org.uk

or on 020 7395 0338



Steen, Jan 1626–1679
The Doctor's Visit c.1660
 Oil on canvas on panel 70 x 56cm
The University of Edinburgh Fine Art Collection

Jan Steen's *The Doctor's Visit* is one of the finest examples of genre painting in the city. This painting appears to show an ill, feverish patient turning in bed to look at her doctor, who is in turn looking directly at the maid and past the wine proffered by her. We soon realise that the patient isn't sick in the conventional sense but sick with love for the doctor. Her own lover can be seen distantly at the window looking in on the scene.

Collection contact: Jill Forrest
 (jill.forrest@ed.ac.uk)



Bellany, John b.1942
The Obsession
 © the artist/Bridgeman Art Library
 Oil on panel 212 x 242cm
City of Edinburgh Council

John Bellany was born in Port Seton, a fishing village in East Lothian. This early work depicts a group of fishermen at a gutting table. Their weather-beaten features reflect the harshness of their daily toil and battle against nature's forces. The composition makes strong allusions to the biblical Last Supper with the fishermen standing in for the disciples. One of the characters appears to be praying, and another clutching his bible, arms formed into a crucifix. The obsession in the title is Bellany's own, his striving to discover the answer to life's questions.

Collection contact: David Patterson
 (0131 529 3993)



Lorimer, John Henry 1856–1936
The Flight of the Swallows 1906
 Oil on canvas 115 x 90cm
City of Edinburgh Council

The elegant interior in the painting is based on Kellie Castle in Fife, the Lorimer family home. It is a tower house that was largely re-modelled in the 1870s by the artist's brother, the architect Sir Robert Lorimer. The painting has a strong narrative element and a trace of pathos, with the swallows preparing to migrate to warmer climes hinting at the end of childhood. The picture also conveys the sense of stability and prosperity of the Edwardian era before the First World War.

Collection contact: David Patterson
 (0131 529 3993)



Hornel, Edward Atkinson 1864–1933
Seashore Roses c.1907
 Oil on canvas 122 x 154cm
City of Edinburgh Council

Hornel's visit to Japan with George Henry in 1893–1894 made a lasting impression on his work. However, around 1898, there is a shift in his painting style. Hornel began to produce paintings that depicted groups of young girls in various landscape settings. He increasingly used photography as a means to an end. He would 'stage' the painting by posing the young girls on the studio floor, and then transfer the arrangement to canvas on which he had previously painted the landscape. This method inevitably meant that his later works lacked the spark of originality of his earlier paintings. *Seashore Roses* retains a clarity and lightness of touch not often evident in later works.



Flemish School
A View of Leith with a Galleon c.1710
 Oil on canvas 50 x 91cm
Historic Scotland, Edinburgh

Dated 1710, this is one of the earliest paintings of the Shore of Leith. It shows a naval escort ship entering a busy port. One of the many uses of the harbour was to offload timber being imported from the Baltic to a compound known as the 'Timber Bush'. To the left of the harbour front is a windmill tower that later became a signal tower for ships. The turreted building on the far right, known as the 'Kings Wark', was built by James I as a royal residence, store house and armoury.

Collection contact: Hugh Morrison
 (0131 668 8946)



Oever, Hendrick ten 1639–1716
Canal Landscape with Figures Bathing
 Oil on canvas 67 x 87cm
The University of Edinburgh Fine Art Collection

This painting is well travelled having been borrowed several times within the last 20 years. Most notably it recently went to Apeldoorn in the Netherlands for an exhibition attended by Queen Beatrix. It is one of the few paintings in existence showing the town of Zwolle (close to Apeldoorn) as it was in 1675. Researchers have debated and commented on how unusual it is to see female nudes in this situation.

Collection contact: Jill Forrest
 (jill.forrest@ed.ac.uk)

Notes to Editors

About Your Paintings

Your Paintings is a partnership project between the BBC and the Public Catalogue Foundation (PCF) to put the United Kingdom's entire collection of oil paintings online at www.bbc.co.uk/yourpaintings. This website is emerging as a unique learning resource, showing not only photographs and information about each painting but also selected BBC TV archive footage and links to further information. The website was launched at the National Gallery in the summer of 2011. Currently, the site shows around 104,000 paintings from 1,400 collections.

In total, the national oil painting collection amounts to some 200,000 works, held in 3,000 galleries, museums, universities, hospitals and other public institutions from across the UK, making it one of the largest and most diverse collections of paintings in the world. The plan is for all these paintings to be online by the end of 2012.

With the help of crowd-sourcing technology pioneered by the Astrophysics Department at the University of Oxford to classify galaxies, and art historical input from the University of Glasgow, the public are being invited to go online and help classify or 'tag' the paintings catalogued by the PCF so that in due course the paintings can be searchable by subject matter. Paintings can be tagged by visiting <http://tagger.thepcf.org.uk/>

About the Public Catalogue Foundation

The PCF is a registered charity. It was launched in 2003 to create a photographic record of all the oil paintings in public ownership in the United Kingdom. In addition to publishing its work online, the PCF is also publishing a series of printed catalogues.

The painstaking research to locate the paintings up and down the country and collate the data has been carried out by 50 researchers. Over 30 fine art photographers have been employed to take photographs of these paintings over the life of the project. London-based staff focus on fundraising, processing and editing the data that comes in from the field, and clearing copyright.

The PCF is funded principally by grants and donations. Under 20 per cent of its funding comes from the public sector. Whilst many hundreds of individuals and institutions have supported its work, the PCF's principal funders are Arts Council England, Christie's, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, the Garfield Weston Foundation, the J Paul Getty Jnr Charitable Trust, The Monument Trust, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and the Wolfson Foundation.

The PCF was founded by Dr Fred Hohler. Its Trustees are Charles Gregson (Chairman of the PCF), Robert Hiscox (Chairman of Hiscox plc), Menna McGregor (Clerk of the Mercers' company), Alex Morrison (Founder and Managing Managing Director of Cogapp), Richard Roundell (Vice-Chairman of Christie's UK), Marc Sands (Director of Audiences and Media at Tate), Dr Charles Saumarez Smith (Chief Executive of the Royal Academy), Graham Southern (Founding Director of Blain Southern) and the artist Alison Watt. The Director is Andrew Ellis.

For more information go to www.thepcf.org.uk

About BBC Online

BBC Online is BBC's portfolio of websites, available at bbc.co.uk. It comprises ten Products – News, Sport, Weather, CBBC, CBeebies, Knowledge & Learning, Homepage, Search, TV & iPlayer and Radio & Music. In April 2011, it had 31.7 million unique browsers and was the fourth most popular website in the UK. It is the only UK-owned website in the UK top ten. Your Paintings is part of Knowledge & Learning.

The BBC creates partnerships with the arts sector that go beyond broadcast, from sharing expertise to widening public engagement in UK arts.

Media Enquiries

For the Public Catalogue Foundation and for press images contact Katie Carder on 020 7395 0338.