

THE PUBLIC CATALOGUE FOUNDATION

The National Inventory of Oil Paintings in Public Ownership
AN INTRODUCTION

The United Kingdom holds in its public galleries and civic buildings arguably the greatest publicly owned collection of oil paintings in the world. Some 80% of these paintings are rarely if ever seen, being held for reasons good and bad, in stacks and storage. More curiously, very few galleries have published a comprehensive illustrated catalogue of their collections. In short, what is publicly owned is not publicly accessible. The Public Catalogue Foundation (PCF), a registered charity, has been set up specifically to record the nation's complete collection of oil paintings in public ownership and to make this accessible to the public through a series of affordable catalogues and free internet access. The catalogues and website will allow the public to see a colour illustration and brief description of every painting in its national collection. This information has significant educational benefits and constitutes the building blocks for later art-historical research. Revenue from catalogue sales will be dedicated to the conservation and restoration of publicly owned oil paintings and the exhibition of works that have rarely, if ever, been on display.

All costs incurred in the production of the catalogue will be borne by the PCF and be funded principally by local private sponsors and donors together with local authorities. The PCF's National Inventory Research Project is funded through the Pilgrim Trust grant scheme, the Neil MacGregor scholarship scheme and the Getty Grant Program, and is organised in partnership with the History of Art Departments of Glasgow University and Birkbeck College, University of London. All that the PCF asks is that custodians work with it to find time to allow our photographers access; provide assistance moving pictures where required and supply simple cataloguing information.

If you have any paintings predominantly in oil, tempera or acrylic in your long term care, please let Sarah Norcross-Robinson know how many as soon as possible:

01603 493637

sarah.norcross-robinson@norfolk.gov.uk

For further information please ring Andrew Ellis, Chief Executive on 020 7932 8408 or Sarah Norcross-Robinson, Norfolk catalogue co-ordinator on 01603 493637.

www.thepcf.org.uk