

THE
NATIONAL
GALLERY

THE NATIONAL GALLERY MASTERPIECE TOUR

2021-2023



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The National Gallery Masterpiece Tour 2021-23 offers non-London museums, galleries and art centres the opportunity to partner with the National Gallery for three years and display three major works from our collection. Each year one masterpiece is shown at three venues across the UK, with past paintings including Manet's *The Execution of Maximilian*, Holbein's *A Lady with a Squirrel and a Starling*, Rembrandt's *Self Portrait at the Age of 63* and Degas' *Hélène Rouart in her Father's Study*. Recent venues have included The New Art Gallery, Walsall, Shetland Museum & Archives, Victoria Art Gallery, Bath and Auckland Castle. The National Gallery's collection belongs to the public and we are committed to sharing our collection, enabling access and engaging with diverse audiences across the UK.

We are now seeking three venues to become our Masterpiece partners for three years, beginning in 2021 with the tour of Jean-Siméon Chardin *The House of Cards*, about 1740-1.

THE PARTNERSHIP

The three successful venues will become partners of the National Gallery for three years, working collaboratively with us to develop the Masterpiece tour and display a different National Gallery painting each year. Working in partnership over three years will enable us all to learn together, connect with existing and new audiences, gather insight and evaluation, share good practice and develop a new network.

Each year, in addition to receiving the Masterpiece painting the National Gallery will also provide curatorial and digital content about the work, supporting digital images (for non-commercial use) and branding assets (logos). A member of the National Gallery curatorial department will also be available to give a talk at each venue.

There will also be opportunities for colleagues from across the partnership to meet, share ideas and discuss plans with one another and National Gallery colleagues as well as visits to the National Gallery to see the paintings. Each year, National Gallery colleagues will be available to venues to discuss and develop ideas, providing support and knowledge exchange. There will also be an ongoing evaluation programme with resources and support provided by the National Gallery.

The painting for 2021 will be Chardin's *The House of Cards*. However, for the Masterpiece Tour 2022 and 2023 we are excited to work with our partners to develop a new model, when for the first time, the choice of the painting will be made together by the partners and the National Gallery.

COSTS & PRACTICALITIES

Costs of preparing the paintings for display, transporting them to and installing them at each venue are fully covered, as are costs of attending project meetings. In addition each venue will receive a contribution of £5,000 per year to support their plans and ambitions for the Masterpiece Tour. This may for example contribute to the costs of related marketing, programme development or display.

Partners will be responsible for the on-site local costs of staging the display (e.g. preparation of the display space, producing and display of text, preparation and display of any other works etc.). Partners will also be responsible for insuring the painting, or covering the minimum liability under the Government Indemnity Scheme arrangements, and all other local costs. If you do not currently qualify for GIS but wish to work towards this during the partnership please contact us to discuss as it may be possible to provide support for insurance costs.

There must not be an additional charge for visitors to see the Masterpiece tour at your venue. However, if entry to your venue is charged this cost may remain the same.

Venue facilities must comply with the National Gallery standard conditions of loan and please note that you may be required to alarm the painting. As part of your application, we will also require facility, security and environmental information (See Your Application section below).

Should you have any concerns regarding the facility, security and environmental specifications please get in touch ahead of your application to discuss this with Gracie Divall, Exhibitions Manager (National Touring) Gracie.Divall@ng-london.org.uk.

Gracie will be happy to discuss requirements with you and provide advice.

NG4078

Jean-Siméon Chardin, *The House of Cards* (*Portrait of Jean-Alexandre Le Noir*), about 1740-1

Oil on canvas

60.3 x 71.8 cm (unframed)

85.5 x 98.4 x 9.8 cm (framed)



A young boy stands at a small wooden table fully absorbed in building a house out of playing cards. He is Jean-Alexandre Le Noir, whose father, Jean-Jacques Le Noir, was a furniture dealer and cabinet-maker, who commissioned several paintings from Chardin.

The theme of a child building a house of cards was a familiar one in which the delicately balanced cards represent the fragile nature of human endeavour. Pictures of this subject were often accompanied by moralising verses, as was Chardin's painting when it was engraved. But there may also be a family connection. As a maker of fine furniture, Monsieur Le Noir may have hoped his son would follow him into the business. The boy's card building is perhaps not just a game but may also be an exercise in sound methods of construction.

The picture is one of four identified versions of *The House of Cards* painted by Chardin.

Themes relating to this painting that could be explored include:

- Risk/Control
- Still Life
- Domestic life then and now
- Portraits
- Brevity of life
- Stillness/Calm
- Focus/Patience
- Time
- Leisure
- Boredom
- Construction
- Solitude
- Childhood/Growing up/Aspiration/Expectation
- Play/Games/Learning/Experiment
- Fate/Destiny



Poussin, *The Triumph of Pan* on display at Victoria Art Gallery, Bath. Masterpiece Tour 2019.

YOUR APPLICATION

Application is open to all non-London museums, galleries and art centres who meet the required standards of loan, security and environmental control and can commit to one display per year 2021-23 featuring the Masterpiece. We are particularly keen to receive applications from venues who have not worked with us previously and who are located in areas of cultural and/or economic disadvantage.

The deadline for applications is 9am, Wednesday 4 March 2020. All applications should be sent digitally.

To apply, please answer all of the following questions:

- Tell us about your organisation and audiences (150 words)
- What is the relevance of *The House of Cards* to your organisation? (150 words)
(Please note, a connection between the work and your collection and / or location is not required – this lack of direct relevance could be why you would like to display the work).
- What are your initial ideas for display and interpretation? (200 words)
- What impact would the painting have on your audience? What kind of learning, outreach, promotional or other programmes might you plan? (200 words)
- What are your initial ideas for using the £5,000 contribution in 2021?
(please note, these ideas do not have to be final and may change during the course of the project)
- What would be the benefits to your organisation of working in a partnership with the National Gallery and the other venues? (150 words)
- What would be the benefits to the National Gallery of working with you? What could we learn? (150 words)

You may include up to three additional documents in support of your proposal.

Please also provide:

- An indication of potential display dates for 2021. Display periods should be between 8 – 12 weeks duration.
- [Completed UKRG Standard Facilities Report](#)
- [Completed UKRG Security Supplement](#)
- Relative humidity and temperature readings of the exhibition space for a two-month period. The readings must be continuous over a period when the climate control was functioning.

SELECTION

The National Gallery will select partner venues based upon the outlined criteria, venue proposals, completed facilities reports, and the need to achieve geographical spread within the tour. Successful venues will be notified by the end of March 2020.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Please submit all applications by 9am, Wednesday 4 March to Gracie Divall, Exhibitions Manager (National Touring) Gracie.Divall@ng-london.org.uk. If you have any questions prior to submitting your application, please do not hesitate to contact Gracie.

We look forward to receiving your application.



Students' work in response to Poussin *Triumph of Pan* at York Art Gallery. Masterpiece Tour 2019.