

V I C T O R I A B E C K H A M

×

OLD MASTER  
PAINTINGS



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**22 JUNE 2018** – Today, Sotheby's and Victoria Beckham open a first of its kind collaborative exhibition in which highlights from Sotheby's Old Master Paintings sale will be presented in the contemporary setting of Victoria Beckham's Dover Street store in Mayfair.

Featuring 16 portraits selected by Victoria, the exhibition juxtaposes the classical appeal of Old Masters with the modern aesthetic of the Dover Street boutique, showcasing this long-established genre of art in a new light. Presenting exceptional examples by renowned artists, including Sir Peter Paul Rubens and Lucas Cranach the Elder, the exhibition celebrates the innate beauty of Old Master Paintings and the enduring appeal of portraiture in art.

The exhibition is on display in Dover Street until 27th June, ahead of Sotheby's Old Master Evening sale on 4th July 2018.

Speaking about the collaboration, **Victoria Beckham** said, *"It was my first visit to the Frick in New York last year, that really opened my eyes to Old Masters, and is where my fascination began. To have now been given the opportunity to start to learn about them with the incredible team at Sotheby's and have these portraits hanging within my retail space is literally a dream come true. I hope their installation in such a contemporary setting is as inspiring to my customers as it is to me."*

Speaking ahead of the exhibition opening, **Chloe Stead, Sotheby's Old Master Specialist** said, *"Portraiture is a genre of art the appeal of which has endured throughout the centuries, so it's great to be able to shine a spotlight on all the tremendous history and romance that can be wrapped up in a single face. I hope, that in presenting Victoria's selection of portraits by the Old Masters in this wonderfully unexpected, modern and sleek space we will be able to participate in some small way in the dialogue surrounding the magic of painted portraiture, and its enduring appeal, even in our modern age of selfie-overload!"*

With its white walls and polished concrete floor, the Dover Street boutique is Victoria's flagship store. Designed by renowned architect, Farshid Moussavi, the store, which opened in 2015, has hosted a number of collaborative projects with artists including - Turner Prize winner Martin Creed, artist Eddie Peake and sculptor and jeweller Emily Young. Displayed across three floors, the Sotheby's exhibition is the first time Victoria has displayed Old Master paintings in her store, marking a departure from the Contemporary aesthetic for which she is known.

Selected by Victoria from Sotheby's forthcoming July Old Master sales, the works include examples of portraiture by some of the most celebrated artists of the genre, from the Renaissance and the Dutch Golden Age to the British 18th century. From famous duchesses and viscounts, to self-portraits and sitters entirely unknown, the portraits in the exhibition tell the remarkable stories of both the sitters and the artists.

Speaking about the tradition of portraiture, **Chloe Stead** explained: *"There was a moment when its popularity might have given way to the more abstract, conceptual movements in contemporary art during the 20th century, but it was kept alive by the efforts of artist such as Freud, Bacon and Warhol. Over recent years portraiture has found new champions in artists like Hockney, Jenny Saville and Marlene Dumas (to name but a few), and interest in the genre appears stronger than ever."*

One of the oldest and most engaging genres in art history, portraiture not only depicts physical characteristics but offers an insight into the status and the personal tastes of the sitter. It captures how sitters perceives themselves, and in turn, how they wish to be perceived, making it the most personal of all art forms.

Who better to understand this notion of self-presentation than Victoria Beckham, one of the most photographed women in the world?

## VICTORIA'S HIGHLIGHTS



### NETHERLANDISH OR SOUTH GERMAN SCHOOL

#### *Portrait of Mary of Burgundy (1458-1482)*

**Estimate £1,000,000–1,500,000**

A renowned beauty, Mary of Burgundy was quite simply the most famous woman of her time. Commissioned by Mary's husband, the Archduke (later Emperor) Maximilian of Austria, following her tragic and premature death in a hunting accident, this portrait is likely to have served two purposes; to record the likeness of his beloved wife whom he described as the most beautiful woman he'd ever seen; but also to distribute far and wide to remind his subjects of his right to rule the lands he inherited upon the death of his young wife.



### SIR PETER PAUL RUBENS

#### *Portrait of a bearded Venetian nobleman*

**Estimate £3,000,000–4,000,000**

The most influential Flemish baroque artist of his time, Rubens painted this vivid and enigmatic portrait after extensive travels in Italy. Fascinated by the works of Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese, he almost certainly based this depiction of an Italian nobleman on a Venetian prototype, quite probably by Tintoretto. Nevertheless the resulting portrait is the product of Rubens' own immensely creative imagination. Rubens himself must have been much taken with the portrait, as it is likely to have remained in his own private collection until his death in 1640.



### FERDINAND BOL

#### *Self-Portrait*

**Estimate £300,000–500,000**

Among the most talented artists to work in Amsterdam with Rembrandt, Bol painted this self-portrait leaning on a stone balustrade in about 1647. Inspired by Rembrandt's painted and etched self-portraits, this work pays homage to his master's celebrated image of 1640, which in turn draws its inspiration from Titian. Bol was arguably at his most original in the genre of portraiture and an imaginative interpreter of his own self-image. Here Bol places himself in the pictorial tradition of the elegant gentleman–artist of elevated status. This painting is one of the last of Bol's self-portraits in private hands.



**LUCAS CRANACH THE ELDER**

*Portrait of a Man with a Spotted Fur Collar*

**Estimate £1,500,000–2,000,000**

This rare and early portrait is thought to have been painted whilst Cranach was abroad in the Netherlands, around 1508. The Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony sent Cranach from his home town of Wittenberg to the Netherlands (“the land of painters”), in order to show off the brilliance of his own court painter. Certainly this characterful and commanding portrait, with its rich blue background and spotted fur collar, makes a bold impact that must have wowed Cranach’s hosts in the low-countries



**CIRCLE OF LEONARDO DA VINCI**

*Portrait of a Lady in Profile*

**Estimate £200,000–300,000**

Influenced by Leonardo da Vinci, this is delightful example of Milanese Renaissance court portraiture. Although we do not know the identity of the artist nor the sitter, it is clear she is a noble woman of some style: the fluttering ribbons, the shape of the bodice, the large ruby brooch worn on the side of her head are all important indications of her status.

**[DOWNLOAD IMAGES HERE](#)**

**KEY DATES**

**Victoria Beckham x Old Master Paintings**

Exhibition: 22 – 27 June

Store Open

Monday – Saturday 11am until 7pm

Sunday 12pm until 5pm

Victoria Beckham

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**Sotheby's Old Master Sales**

Exhibition: 30 June – 4 July

Evening Sale: 4 July, 7pm

Day Sale: 5 July, 10.30am

Sotheby's

34-35 New Bond Street

London

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