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**Re: Robert Craggs Nugent - Tate exhibition 2027**

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**From** C NUGENT <c.nugent@kokomama.com>

**Date** Fri 9/26/2025 4:54 AM

**To** Ben Sharp <b.sharp@holburne.org>

**Cc** Eleanor Powlesland <e.powlesland@holburne.org>; Hannah Mills <h.mills@holburne.org>

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Dear Ben

Please excuse the delay in replying to your email, but I have been travelling and not had the possibility to check on some of the information you were hoping for. Anyway, welcome to your new responsibilities at the Holburne.

The portrait was indeed exhibited at the Holburne before the long term loan that began in 2000. It was one of the major paintings in an exhibition at the Holburne called "Gainsborough in Bath" held in 1988, 1st July - 14 August 1988. The image was used on the cover of the catalogue. I hope you have a copy of that catalogue somewhere at the Holburne!

The loan itself I believe was effective from 21 June 2000 when the painting was moved to the Holburne. It has since been hung elsewhere on two occasions. First at the Tate exhibition of 2002, in London and Boston. Later on (2008?) it was hanging at Waddesdon Manor, Bucks while the Holburne underwent renovations. I have always thought that the Holburne was an ideal setting for the painting to hang and have been very happy with how this has gone. I have renewed the loan as necessary, most recently in 2022.

**Provenance.** I assume these questions are addressed to me, rather than the museum. Its fairly straightforward and can be summed up by "has remained in the sitters family". I was given the painting by my father, Sir Robin Nugent etc. etc. There is one small detail in this regard, which is of interest to art historians, although not perhaps of interest to the Tate's form. The possession of the painting was not always linear in terms of inheritance. At first the painting was inherited by the Earl's daughter, Mary - who married the Duke of Buckingham. A generation or two later in 1848, it was put up for auction by

the Buckinghams as part of the great Stowe Sale. At the sale it was bought back by the Buckingham family in order to give it to the Earl's eldest grandson, and my direct ancestor - Field Marshall Sir George Nugent. Just in time as he died in 1849. This is recorded in detail in the published Stowe Catalogue.

**Date you acquired the Work of Art:** 18 March 2000

**From whom you acquired the Work of Art:** Sir Robin Nugent

**Provenance information showing.....** *I assume the Holburne and the Tate Galleries have details of exhibitions and especially publications already.... I can cite the following:*

Society of Artists Exhibition. 1761. This was Gainsborough's first publicly exhibited portrait.

Grosvenor Gallery. Exhibition of the Works of Thomas Gainsborough. 1885.

Tate Gallery / Arts Council. Thomas Gainsborough 1727 - 1788. An exhibition of paintings. 1953.

The Upper Grosvenor Galleries. Fine Artists and Great Persons. 1962.

Holburne Museum. Exhibition 'Gainsborough in Bath'. 1988.

Holburne Museum of Art. Exhibition 'Pickpocketing the Rich'. 2002.

Tate Gallery London and Boston. Gainsborough. 2002 - 2003.

**Are you aware of any third party claim to ownership?** *You have ticked this as a yes. I think that is incorrect. I am the owner. References to HMRC below don't change that?*

**Do you require immunity from seizure?** *That sounds serious, but as the work is in the UK I hope I am not at risk of having the painting seized? Can you explain what risk of seizure is, the link in the form doesn't work?*

**For UK tax purposes only, has the Work of Art been accepted in lieu of tax by HM Revenue & Customs?** *Yes. It then asks "How much". I think that is impossible to answer. HMRC don't attach a figure to this. As I understand it, for them it is a matter of calculation on the day the painting is sold - applying the rate of estate duty in use when the conditional exemption was agreed onto the value of the painting today (as determined by auction) - in this case the initial exemption was in 1929, and I don't have figures from then. Can the Tate give guidance on this? Could you check the Holburnes archives to see how the question was answered for the previous Tate Exhibition (if indeed there was a similar question).*

**Value of the work of art for insurance purposes:** *The figure of £1,500,000 has been entered which relates to the loan agreement with the Holburne. Two things here... i) I seem to remember that a higher insurance value was used for the last Tate exhibition (20 years ago), can you check? and ii) in any case I am no longer sure that this is an appropriate insurance value even for our loan agreement, and I will write to the Holburne in the next few days to explain.*

**Permissions for image reproduction:** I would follow the Holburne's recommendations for this, with the proviso that I use with the Holburne. That I think it reasonable in return to ask for a copy of materials produced by the borrower / requestor? Even if its the Tate and/or the Tate shop.

Can I assume that either the Holburne will supply image files, or that the Tate will go ahead and produce their own?

I can see there are still gaps in the information here, but its better to send this and we can discuss further details you might need.

best wishes  
Christopher

On Tue, 19 Aug 2025, at 15:54, Ben Sharp wrote:

Dear Sir Christopher Nugent,

I hope this email finds you well.

There have been a few changes in the curatorial team over the past eighteen months here at The Holburne, so I just wanted to introduce myself, I'm Ben Sharp, one of the Assistant Curators at the Holburne. I have also copied in my other colleagues, Hannah, our other Assistant Curator, and Eleanor, our Curator (who I believe you have already corresponded with) into this email.

I am currently handling the paperwork for the *Robert Craggs Nugent, later Earl Nugent (1790 - 1788)* by Thomas Gainsborough loan request from the Tate for their Thomas Gainsborough exhibition in 2027, to coincide with his 300th anniversary. As I was inputting the information, the earliest correspondence that we have on record is 2001, but I understand that the work has been with the Holburne pre-dating this year. I was wondering if you had the exact details of when the work first came on loan to us? My apologies that we do not have this on record.

Furthermore, in the Tate's loan agreement, they've requested the provenance (we do not have this information in our Loan Agreement) as well as permissions for reproduction of the work (in our Loan Agreement with you, it states it's a case-by-case with external partners). I have attached the Draft Loan Agreement; the sections I refer to are on pages 2 and 3. If you could kindly review these sections and inform me on the above, it would be hugely appreciated.

If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to ask. I'm also more than happy to arrange a phone call as well, if this were easier.

All the best,  
Ben

**Ben Sharp** (he/they)  
**Assistant Curator**  
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[www.holburne.org](http://www.holburne.org)

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**Don't miss:**

Nicolas Party: Copper & Dust, 12 May to 31 August

Impressions in Watercolour: Turner and his Contemporaries, 23 May to 14 September

**Attachments:**

- 25.04.17 DRAFT TLF Gainborough - Robert Craggs Nugent.pdf