



# National Gallery Act 1856

## 1856 CHAPTER 29

An Act to extend the Powers of the Trustees and Director of the National Gallery, and to authorize the Sale of Works of Art belonging to the Public. [23d June 1856]

WHEREAS Pictures and other Works of Art acquired for the National Gallery by Purchases out of Monies granted by Parliament, and by Bequests and Donations, have been placed under the Care and Ordering of Trustees and a Director (appointed by the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury for that Purpose): And whereas it is expedient that Power should be given to dispose of such of the Pictures and other Works of Art under the Care and Ordering of the said Trustees and Director as they may adjudge to be unfit or not required for a National Collection, and that Pictures and other Works of Art given to or for the Benefit of the Nation should, where no other Provision is made by the Donors, vest in and be under the Care and Ordering of the said Trustees and Director:

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, as follows :

### **I Pictures, &c. unfit to be preserved in the National Gallery may be sold.**

The Trustees and Director of the National Gallery, or any Three or more of them, of whom the Director shall be one, present at any Meeting specially assembled for that Purpose, by Fourteen Days previous Notice, may from Time to Time, with the Consent in Writing of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, order that any of the Pictures and Works of Art for the Time being under the Care of the said Trustees and Director, which have not been bequeathed or given to or for the Benefit of the Nation, and which the Trustees and Director, or any Three or more of them, as aforesaid, may adjudge to be unfit for or not required as Part of the National Collection, be sold by Public Auction, and a detailed Account of the Monies arising therefrom shall be laid before Parliament in the annual Report of the Trustees and Director ; provided, that if it shall be deemed fit by the Authorities aforesaid, with such Consent as aforesaid, to sell any Pictures which were not given or bequeathed to or for the Benefit of the Nation, but which have become Part of the National Collection, and as such been exhibited

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*Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).*

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in the National Gallery, Copies of the Order to make such Sale, and of such Consent thereto, shall be laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament Six Weeks previously to such Sale.

## **II Proceeds of Sale.**

The Receipt of the Person authorized by the said Trustees and Director to sell such Pictures and Works of Art shall be a sufficient Discharge for the Money arising from such Sale, and such Money shall be paid over by the Person receiving the same into the Exchequer, and shall become Part of the Consolidated Fund of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*.

## **III Pictures given to the Nation to vest in the Trustees and Director. As to the Disposal of such Pictures as are bequeathed and not added to National Collection.**

All Pictures and Works of Art which have already been or may hereafter be from Time to Time given or bequeathed to the Public or to the Nation, or given or bequeathed by Words showing an Intention that the Gift or Bequest should enure to or for the Benefit of the Public or the Nation, shall (unless the Donor or Testator shall have made other Provision for the Care thereof) vest in and be under the Care and Ordering of the said Trustees and Director of the National Gallery ; provided, that in each Case of Bequest the said Trustees and Director may select such of the Pictures and Works of Art so bequeathed as they may deem fit to become Part of the National Collection, and the Remainder of the Pictures and Works of Art comprised in such Bequest, unless otherwise disposed of by any Testamentary Provision, shall become Part of the Residuary Estate of the Testator.