



The Stained Glass Museum

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PRESS RELEASE

Stained Glass Museum purchases rare medieval angel panels at auction



Orders of Angels: The Virtues and the Principalities

Two late 15th century stained glass panels (English), 154mm x 178mm. (ELYGM:2015.7.1, ELYGM:2015.7.2)

The Stained Glass Museum, Ely, has purchased two rare medieval angel stained glass panels at auction with the help of the [Arts Council England/Victoria and Albert Museum Purchase Grant Fund](#) and the [Art Fund](#). The panels were made in England in the 15th century and show two groups of angels, the 'Virtues' and 'Principalities', from the nine orders of angels, a popular subject in medieval art and literature. According to medieval theologians, the 'Principalities' governed mankind's provinces, and the 'Virtues' were associated with miracles. Both stained glass panels depict a group of three standing angels dressed in white robes with two golden wings, golden hair and white haloes. Each group of angelic figures is accompanied by a Latin inscription which may have been taken from medieval liturgical manuscripts relating to the feast of Archangel St Michael, celebrated on 29 September.

Illustrations of the Orders of the Angels can be found in medieval illuminated manuscripts, panel and wall painting, sculpture and stained glass. Yet only five complete (or almost complete) 15th century series of the Orders of the Angels survive in situ in stained glass in England. The panels acquired by the Museum are in excellent condition.

These stained glass panels were removed from Ulverscroft Manor, a house in Leicestershire which was built for Thomas Pares (1790-1866). It is not known where the stained glass panels originally came from, or when they were installed in the house, but they were likely part of a set. The panels were recently rediscovered by the present owners of the building, the Shuttlewood-Clarke Foundation.

The panels were purchased from the Sale at Bonhams Auction House, London, on 18 November 2015. They will be placed on permanent display at The Stained Glass Museum in January 2016.

Press Contact: For further information about this acquisition please contact 01353 660347 or email the Curator, Jasmine Allen curator@stainedglassmuseum.com

Notes to Editors:

- The Arts Council England/Victoria and Albert Museum Purchase Grant Fund is a government fund that helps regional museums, record offices and specialist libraries in England and Wales Acquire objects relating to the arts, literature and history. It was established at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) in 1881 and continues to be part of its nationwide work. The annual grants budget, currently £750,000 is provided by Arts Council England (ACE). For more information, please visit the website www.vam.ac.uk/purchasegrantfund
- The Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art, driven by the belief that everyone should have access to great art. In the past 5 years alone the Art Fund has given £34m to help museums and galleries acquire works of art for their collections. It also helps museums share their collections with wider audiences by supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, including ARTIST ROOMS and the 2013–18 Aspire tour of Tate's Constable's *Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows*, and makes additional grants to support the training and professional development of curators. For more information on the Art Fund and the National Art Pass, please visit www.artfund.org
- The Stained Glass Museum is the only Museum dedicated to the art of stained glass in the UK. It is an independent museum and registered charity located in Ely Cathedral. For more information visit www.stainedglassmuseum.com