

Strong had gallery lose 'horrible' bit of history

Nicholas Hellen
SOCIAL AFFAIRS EDITOR

SIR ROY STRONG, the celebrated art historian and curator, ordered staff to remove significant elements of a famous painting of Thomas More's family at the National Portrait Gallery.

Official archives show he agreed to the removal of five Catholic heraldic shields and two motto scrolls during the restoration of the painting, saying: "Yes, take them off. I've had a good look ... they're horrid."

This weekend Strong, 81, confirmed he wrote the instruction in May 1972 while director of the gallery and conceded he would have acted differently today. "If you had been doing it now, you would probably have left the coats of arms on," he said.

The gallery is to come under criticism in a new book by the Tudor historian John Guy about More, executed by Henry VIII in 1535 and canonised in 1935. Guy has found evidence indicating that Strong's advisers were mistaken in believing that the shields and scrolls had been added many years after the painting had been completed.

The painting of More's family has been one of the main attractions at the gallery's Tudor and Stuart collection. However, it is actually a 1593 reproduction by Rowland Lockey of an original by the more acclaimed Hans Holbein, which was destroyed by fire in the 18th century.

Guy argues that in removing the overt Catholic imagery from the 1593 painting, Strong

"compromised" its real historical significance. In Thomas More: A Very Brief History, published by SPCK on March 16, he writes that the Lockey painting should have been preserved because it marks a pivotal point in history when large numbers of England's Catholics decided to switch their loyalty from the Pope to Elizabeth I.

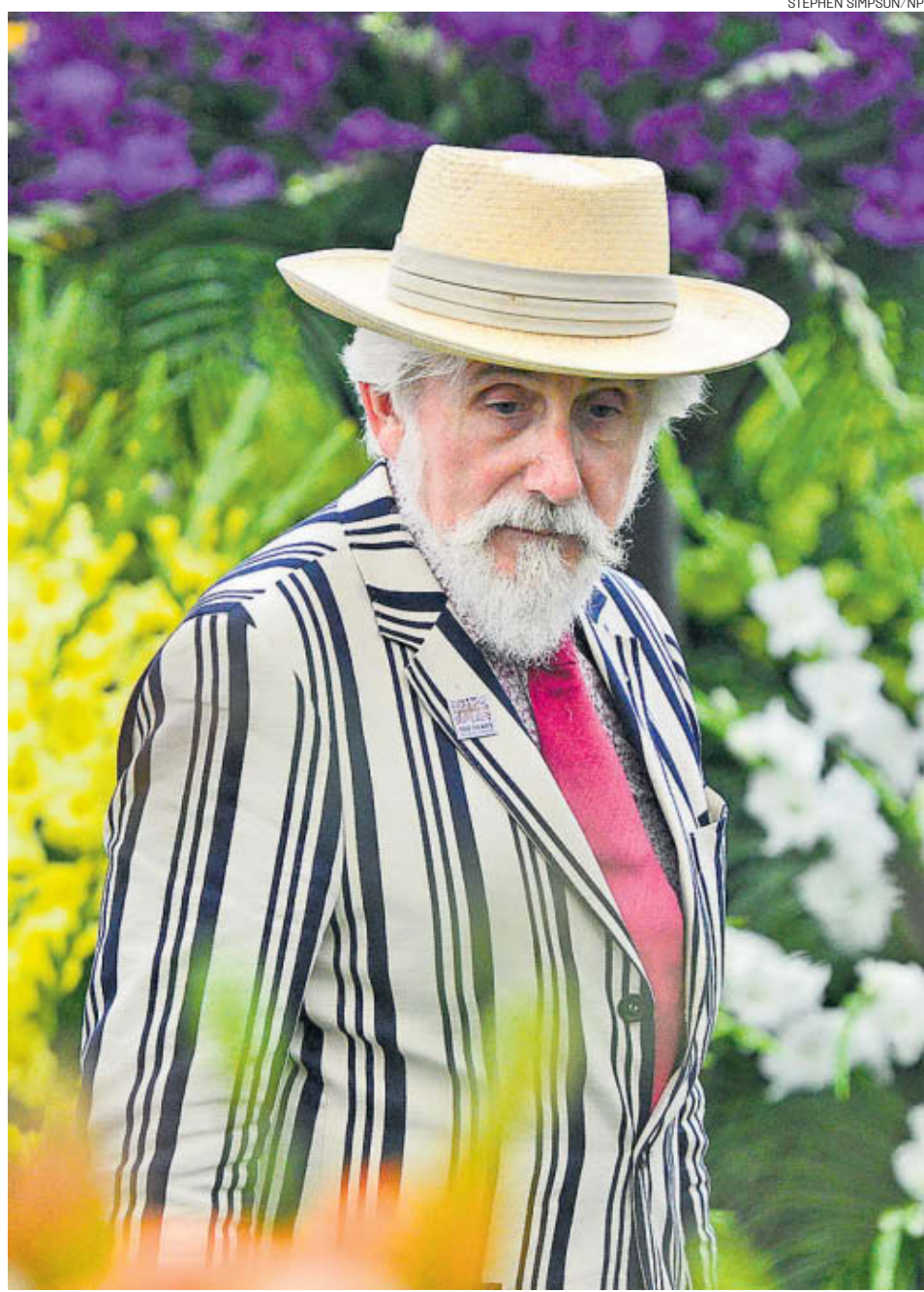
The Holbein original was commissioned under her father's rule in 1527 before the Reformation. By 1593 England was a very different country, under Protestant rule. "It was the year many Catholics faced up to the fact that Philip II's Armada of 1588 had failed and there was never likely to be a successful invasion of England," Guy writes.

More's descendants in the 1590s decided that they could best convey the message that they could be loyal to both the crown and their Catholic faith by placing themselves in a picture alongside their martyred grandfather, he says.

Once Lockey had painted this reworked version, and another for a different branch of the family, More's relatives sold the Holbein original.

Guy, a fellow of Clare College, Cambridge, said: "The family were trying to make sense of the world through this painting. That makes it an historical document. If you turn it into something which people would prefer to see, you are altering the facts of history."

Strong defended his decision to remove the Catholic imagery, saying that the technical advice he had received in 1972 was "categorical" and he had not simply "got a Brillo pad



The 1593 Lockey painting alongside the restored version. Changes were ordered by Roy Strong, top

and wiped them off". He said he had kept two coats of arms but had the others removed because they were not painted "to the same quality".

The National Portrait Gallery said it was not gallery practice to "permanently remove original

paint from the surface of pictures". It added that "conservation practice and ethics" had changed in the past 40 years and new techniques meant it is easier to identify recent additions from the original work. It appears all may not be lost,

however. When the painting was recently on loan to another gallery, a room guide spotted what looked like overpainted coats of arms. "That surely creates room for hope," Guy said. *Time and place, Home, page 2* @nicholashellen

STEPHEN SIMPSON/NPG

Jump in job-sharing as women juggle careers and children

Becky Barrow
MONEY EDITOR

IT WAS when Alix Ainsley's son was about to start secondary school at the age of 11 that she realised her full-time job had to stop, and be replaced by a different way of working.

The 41-year-old from Bristol is now in the vanguard of a growing movement — of women sharing jobs in order to juggle work and motherhood, and increasingly forging such strong partnerships that they are moving jobs together.

Ainsley started job-sharing with another mother, Charlotte Cherry, 36, at the financial giant GE Capital. The pair have since moved together to Lloyds Banking Group, where they split the role of HR director, working three days a week each, overlapping on Wednesdays.

"I wanted to be more available at the end of the day," explained Ainsley. "When my two children were very small, it was so much easier to work full-time, or in a more demanding arena. When they're older they do want you there, and they notice your absence."

The growing popularity of job-shares is highlighted in the latest Power Part Time list, an annual ranking of the top 50 jobs done by people who are "tearing up the rulebook on the 9 to 5, Monday to Friday" work regime.

This year's list, compiled by the flexible working agency Timewise and published tomorrow in Management Today magazine, features nine jobs being shared between 18 people. When the list was first published in 2012 there were none.

Karen Mattison, co-

founder of Timewise, said: "I really think this is a trend that is going to keep on growing. I don't think it is ever going to be a case of 'a job-share is the only way'. But it's a sign that both businesses and individuals are getting creative about how jobs get designed."

Other job-shares in the list include the joint leaders of the Green Party, Caroline Lucas and Jonathan Bartley, and the joint political editors of The Guardian newspaper, Anushka Asthana and Heather Stewart.

Kate Joseph, 43, was working full-time at 10 Downing Street until the birth of her twins just over two years ago and now works for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. She was initially sceptical about the idea of job-sharing until her boss matched her with Claudia Kenyatta, 42, who has three young children. The pair have just been promoted — together — to become the department's directors of corporate strategy next month. Kenyatta works Monday to

Wednesday — "the big meetings half of the week" — and Joseph works

Wednesday to Friday — "the crisis half of the week". The two share email and do a handover on Wednesday.

Ainsley and Cherry do the same, and try to ensure that the handover is not a document that is "longer than War and Peace".

Joseph said: "It is fantastic for us. I find it really great having an almost mirror image of me I can discuss things with or work through problems. It is also good for our employer, who gets two brains on an issue and two sets of experience."

Ainsley rejects the idea that doing a job-share is bad for your career, pointing out that both she and Cherry had worked at GE Capital for more than a decade before landing a bigger job at Lloyds together. "We feel that we wouldn't have taken this path on our own. It is very much about the unitedness of the job-share and being together and the confidence that that gives us," she said. @beckymbarrow



Alix Ainsley, left, and Charlotte Cherry share finance jobs

Poor 'face higher risk' of fines for term-time breaks

Sian Griffiths
EDUCATION EDITOR

PARENTS who are financially badly off are far more likely to be convicted for taking their children out of school in term time than richer ones, a campaigning father said this weekend as he attacked "a ridiculous postcode lottery".

Jon Platt, a businessman from the Isle of Wight, made his comments as he prepared to go to court for a third time on Tuesday after refusing to pay a fine for taking his seven-year-old daughter on a term-time holiday to Disney World in Florida in 2015.

Platt's legal team will present evidence to the Supreme Court from more than 100 freedom of information requests to local councils. It shows that some authorities have fined thousands of parents for unauthorised school absence, while others have fined none.

Lancashire has issued nearly 4,000 penalty fines since Platt won a High Court ruling in May that he did not have to pay, but Richmond upon Thames in London has never issued any. Cornwall has issued about a dozen fines but neighbouring Devon has issued thousands.

Several councils have stopped issuing fines. They

include Bury, Dorset, Oldham, North Yorkshire and Staffordshire.

"When parents are prosecuted for refusing to pay the fine and can afford a solicitor who understands the law they are usually not being found guilty if their child's attendance is more than 90%," Platt said.

"There is something telling about the areas that issue a lot of fines compared to those that issue few. It is a ridiculous postcode lottery. Is it a class issue?"

Research due out tomorrow will show that the cost of a family holiday this February half-term is nine times more expensive than in term time.

The High Court ruled that Platt did not have to pay a £120 fine to Isle of Wight council for taking his daughter on holiday because, even including the week's absence, her overall school attendance was above 90%.

The council is seeking to overturn that ruling in a final appeal to the Supreme Court, backed by the Department for Education (DfE) which is partly paying the legal fees.

Since his High Court victory Platt has paid for legal advice for several families fighting prosecutions in the magistrates' courts for refusing to pay the fines. With his help families in Swindon, Suffolk, Blackpool and the Isle of Wight have won cases.

Platt, who had feared that he would be left with a legal bill of up to £250,000 if he lost the appeal, revealed that the DfE has agreed to cover his costs even if it wins.

He does not expect the Supreme Court ruling before the start of the February half-term holiday. "Very few people have had to face three criminal prosecutions for the same offence," he said.

The DfE said: "Every extra day of school missed can affect ... [a pupil] achieving good GCSEs, which has a lasting effect on life chances." @siangriffiths6



Platt: took daughter to Florida

Rome chapel rises in National Gallery

Dalya Alberge

VISITORS to the National Gallery in London will be transported to Rome thanks to a replica of a Renaissance chapel decorated by two of western art's greatest masters, Michelangelo and Sebastiano del Piombo.

To recreate the experience of seeing art in the place for which it was created, groundbreaking technology has reproduced the Borgherini Chapel from the church of San Pietro in Montorio, Rome, down to the finest detail.

The replica comes complete with the chapel's curved domed ceiling and carved walls painted with scenes of the Transfiguration and Flagellation of Christ, which were created between 1516 and 1524.

It will be assembled in the Trafalgar Square gallery for the world's first exhibition devoted to the creative partnership between Michelangelo and his protégé, Sebastiano, which opens on March 15, and celebrates some of the most powerful works about life, death and resurrection ever made.

The pair met in Rome in 1511, as Michelangelo was

finishing the Sistine Chapel ceiling, and struck up a friendship that led to several artistic collaborations.

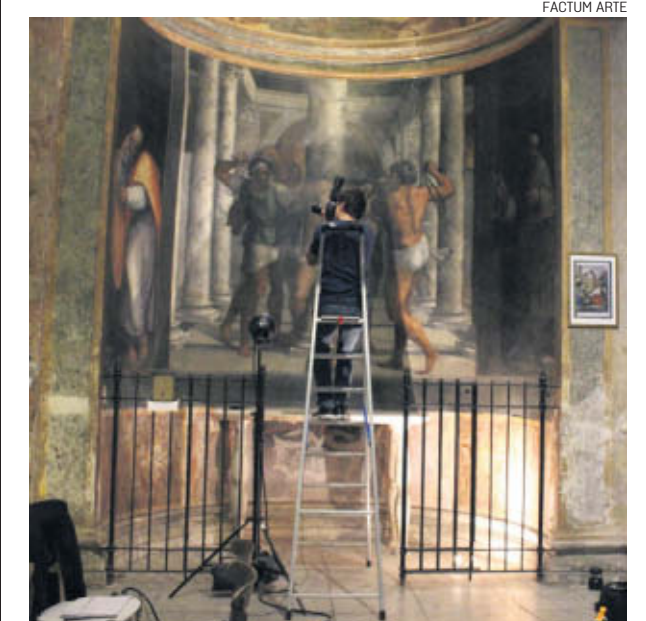
The replica was created by the Factum Foundation, a team of artists, technicians and conservators, whose previous projects include an exact reproduction of the burial chamber of Tutankhamun.

Using the latest digital technology, they took thousands of high-resolution photographs then stitched them together to ensure none of the original details were lost.

Adam Lowe, co-founder of the Factum Foundation, described the final results as "breathtaking".

"The kind of resolution we can get to now is staggering compared to what was possible a few years ago," he said.

At about 20ft tall and 13ft wide, the replica is 90% of the actual size, because anything bigger would not have fitted in the gallery. Gabriele Finaldi, the National Gallery's director, told The Sunday Times that, short of visiting San Pietro, "this is as close an experience ... as you can have".



Pictures are taken at the Borgherini for use in the 3D replica

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