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Monet's £28m masterpiece blocked from leaving UK by government

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Image copyright DCMS Image caption Claude Monet, Le Palais Ducal, 1908

A "spellbinding" Monet painting has been blocked from leaving the UK by the government in an attempt to find a buyer who can keep it in the country.

The 1908 work *Le Palais Ducal* had been in the same family for almost 100 years until **it was sold for £27.5m** to a foreign buyer at auction in February.

But the government can temporarily stop important artworks going overseas.

British galleries now have three months to try to raise the funds to match the auction price, plus £706,800 VAT.

Monet painted the Doge's palace in Venice and its reflection from a boat moored on the Grand Canal in autumn 1908.

The painting was acquired by Berlin-based textile manufacturer Erich Goeritz in 1925. He moved to the UK in the 1930s and the painting stayed in the family until they decided to sell it in February.

At the time, Helena Newman, chairman of Sotheby's Europe, said: "This spellbinding painting is a true masterpiece and among the very greatest Monet painted during his first and only encounter with Venice."



Image copyright GETTY IMAGES It went under the hammer for the first time since being painted

Neither Sothebys nor the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport would say who bought it or which country it could be exported to.

Export of the artwork was blocked because it is a beautiful painting from an important period in the career of such an important artist, according to the reviewing committee.

Monet's post-1900 travelling works are rare in UK public collections, they said.

Committee member Aidan Weston-Lewis added: "This exceptional painting brilliantly demonstrates the pivotal status of Monet's later art between impressionist representation and modernist abstraction."

Arts Minister Rebecca Pow said: "This is a rare and beautiful example of Monet's Venetian studies and I hope that the funds can be raised to keep this treasure in the UK." It comes a week after the government placed **an export bar on a £10m painting by JMW Turner.**