

<b>Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest, Case 9 (2022-2023) Set of 120 original drawings of animals by Joseph Wolf</b>	
<b>Statement from Expert Adviser</b>	Statement of the Expert Adviser to the Secretary of State that the drawings meet Waverley criteria one and three.  <b>See below</b>
<b>Statement from the Applicant</b>	Statement from the applicant referencing the three Waverley criteria against which the Committee will consider whether an item referred to it is of national importance.  a) <i>Is it so closely connected with our history and national life that its departure would be a misfortune?</i> b) <i>Is it of outstanding aesthetic importance?</i> c) <i>Is it of outstanding significance for the study of some particular branch of art, learning or history?</i>  <b>See below</b>
<b>Note of case hearing</b>	<b>See below</b>
<b>Press release</b>	A press release was issued by the Secretary of State on 7 <sup>th</sup> November 2022: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/news/outstanding-collection-of-joseph-wolf-animal-drawings-at-risk-of-leaving-the-uk">https://www.gov.uk/government/news/outstanding-collection-of-joseph-wolf-animal-drawings-at-risk-of-leaving-the-uk</a>
<b>Recommended price</b>	£119,700
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Deferral period</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> February 2023
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Deferral period</b>	n/a
<b>Note of outcome</b>	At the end of the initial deferral period, no offer to purchase the drawings had been made and we were not aware of any serious intention to raise funds. An export licence was therefore issued.

## **RCEWA – Set of 120 original drawings of animals by Joseph Wolf**

**Statement of the Expert Adviser to the Secretary of State that the drawings meet Waverley criteria one and three.**

Please note that images and appendices referenced are not reproduced.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **Brief Description of object(s)**

##### ***Set of 120 original drawings of animals by Joseph Wolf***

120 original paintings and sketches of animal studies completed by Joseph Wolf (1820-1899) the German-born wildlife artist. The drawings, except one which is signed and dated "Wolf 1870" but all would have been undertaken during the mid-to-late nineteenth century.

#### **2 folio solander boxes:**

Volume 1: 66 paintings and sketches on paper pasted onto 24 sheets of card  
Volume 2: 54 paintings and sketches on paper pasted onto 24 sheets of card (4 of which have window apertures as there are sketches on both sides of the paper)

The paintings and sketches which represent a wide diversity of mammals and birds have all be undertaken on paper in a range of mediums including watercolour, ink, charcoal, and pencil.

The drawings are of various sizes and have been pasted onto mounts measuring either 512 x 465 mm or 510 x 365 mm. They range from one individual drawing on a sheet up to 9 drawings on a sheet. The mounts are housed loose in two contemporary book-style half Morocco boxes.

The mount card upon which the drawings have been pasted onto all show signs of medium to heavy spotting and in some cases has developed on the drawing itself. The solander boxes which contain the collection are both in poor condition and are not conservation grade. It could be fairly assumed that the collection has not been accessed or assessed since its original acquisition.

#### **Provenance**

The collection was acquired by Henry Rogers Broughton, 2nd Baron Fairchild possibly through a London bookdealer. An entry exists for the collection in the notebook ledgers which Broughton maintained, however the ledgers are not chronological and do not list any previous provenance or how they were acquired by Broughton.

It is known that Broughton assembled his significant collection between 1927 and 1960. The extent of Broughton's private collection has remained unknown since

their acquisition and so there has been no recorded appreciation of this collection existing until now.

The drawings are by Joseph Wolf, who was and is regarded as of the most outstanding animal/wildlife artists of all time – an opinion expressed by the distinguished landscape artist Sir Edwin Landseer (1802-72) who referred to Wolf '*without exception, the best all-round animal painter that ever lived*'.

Born in the village of Mörz, Germany, Wolf showed a talent for wildlife art from an early age and that '*coupled with the overpowering love of nature, there was a power of observation altogether phenomenal*' (Palmer, p.4). Following an apprenticeship as a lithographer, he trained for a year at art school in Darmstadt before moving to England in 1848 where he lived until his death in 1899. His grave is in London at Highgate Cemetery.

Wolf possessed a unique ability to draw and paint animals as wild and instinctive creatures, displaying an infinite variety of movement and attitude, at a time where photography was not available to assist artists. His extraordinary perceptive ability is demonstrated in many of the items in this collection and represent first-hand his artistic technique which continues to set him apart from others. A favourite truth of Wolf's being "*we see distinctly only what we know thoroughly*".

As well as creating original artworks on a variety of mediums, Wolf provided a significant number of illustrations for many publications - demonstrating Wolf as the preferred illustrator for explorers and naturalists of the time including Sir Richard Burton, Alfred Russel Wallace, Henry Walter Bates and David Livingstone. His main publications are listed in the appendix of Palmer's biography (1895) <https://archive.org/details/lifeofjosephwolf00palm/page/290/mode/2up>.

A prolific artist, Wolf however remained relatively unknown until the 1990s largely because of the relative inaccessibility of his art. Individual items including his oil paintings have come onto the market, however a collection of this size is very rare.

Although most of the drawings are not fully finished watercolours, in some cases the drawings and sketches are the precursor to the final published originals which appeared in some of the most prestigious scientific journals of the day – *The Proceedings and The Transactions of the Zoological Society of London (ZSL)* and *The Ibis*.

(See **Detailed Case** for a summary of which paintings and drawings in this collection directly relate to the plates published in these volumes which were a key method of scientific communication at the time).

### **Key literary and exhibition references**

In 2000, an exhibition on Wolf travelled around Europe celebrating Joseph Wolf to four locations which included the Natural History Museum. A catalogue of Wolf's original works was compiled titled *Joseph Wolf (1820-1899) Tiermaler, animal painter* edited by Karl Schulze-Hagen and Armin Geus. This catalogue included additional original works not included in the exhibition as well as those held in

private collections; there exists no reference to this collection of drawings in the catalogue thereby implying their existence/location was unknown.

The two paintings of the Siamang in this collection were published in A. H. Palmer's book *The Life of Joseph Wolf, animal painter* in 1895 with the caption '*unfinished watercolour sketch from life*'. Palmer's narrative indicates that paintings would have still been in the possession of Joseph Wolf at the time of writing "*the lithographs were frequently preceded by careful watercolour sketches painted direct from life; a series of which is still in the artist's possession*" (Palmer, p.97).

No other references exist to this collection, which to date has not been researched or catalogued to any extent.

## **WAVERLEY CRITERIA**

This collection of paintings meets **WAVERLEY one** as the collection is closely connected with one of the most prestigious and historical natural history societies and zoological gardens in the world. It is representative of a period where new species were arriving in the country as well as representing a new style of a more naturalistic wildlife art led by Wolf.

This large and significant collection of his works holds a strong connection and relationship to the scientific publications of the Zoological Society of London for whom Wolf was the primary artist for over 30 years. Wolf had the incredible opportunity to sketch a wide variety of animals from life when previously artists relied on dead specimens or skins. His studio in Primrose Hill was near to the Zoological Gardens, enabling him to observe and undertake drawings of newly arriving animals from around the world through a constant supply from Britain's Imperial networks. Many were new species to Western science of which Wolf often sketched the type specimen (the specimen to which the first scientific name of that organism is attached) of the species.

Lord Zuckerman, FRS and President of the Zoological Society from 1977-84 regarded Wolf's association with the Society as a proud chapter in the Society's history (Tryon and Moorland Gallery, foreword, 1981). In addition, Wolf's biographer A. Palmer wrote "*If Joseph Wolf had done no other work in England than that which he did for The Zoological Society, he would have deserved a pre-eminent place in the history of that branch of art; and from Science herself, no little gratitude*" (Palmer, p.95).

The collection also meets **WAVERLEY three** in that the drawings are of outstanding significance for the history and study of natural history art and illustration. In particular, due to the collection having been in private ownership for so long, Wolf's drawing processes and techniques remains an area of study for further investigation, would not be possible were the collection have the misfortune of departing from the UK.

With few examples of Wolf's unfinished/preliminary works held in UK institutions, this formerly unknown collection therefore holds national importance. It is representative of the drawing techniques and skill of one of the finest natural history artists in the world with strong potential for study, research and enlightenment as outlined.

## **DETAILED CASE**

### **What is depicted?**

The drawings in this collection represent a wide collection of different species of birds and mammal including deer, monkeys and apes, cattle, armadillo, aye-aye, wolves and foxes, wild boar and wild cats. The drawings range from pencil outlines to outlines with watercolour references and finished compositions. They show the depth and quality of Wolf's artistic style and provide insight into his techniques to accurately depict animals and their behaviour and movement.

### **What does it tell us about that period?**

Wolf arrived in Britain during a time of discovery especially when many new species were being imported into private collections, menageries, and zoological gardens. Following his arrival in England, it was noted '*the Council of ZSL, impressed with a sense of the great value of an accurate artistic record of the living form and expression of the many rare animals which exist.... The Council was fortunate enough to secure the services of Mr Joseph Wolf, who may be fairly said to stand alone in intimate knowledge of the habits and forms of Mammals and Birds*' (Palmer, p.109).

In terms of the prospering market for illustrated books and journals, arising from new importations of animals, Wolf '*transformed book illustration and was able to add a further dimension of capturing a moment in the life of his subjects presenting them in a way to involve the onlooker in the story of that animal's life*'. (Schulze-Hagen and Geus, p.19).

### **Who made it/painted it/wrote it?**

Joseph Wolf painted all the items in the collection. Obsessed with natural history from a young age, by the age of sixteen he was apprenticed to Gebrüder Becker, lithographers at Koblenz for three years. A meeting in Frankfurt with Eduard Rüppell, the ornithologist and explorer who was impressed by the quality of Wolf's sketchbooks, led to an introduction to Johann Kaup, director of the Natural History Museum at Darmstedt. Kaup not only taught Wolf taxonomy but was able to arrange many commissions for Wolf which included Hermann Schlegel and H. Wulverhorst in Leyden for their *Traité de fauconnerie* (1844). In 1847, after battling a bad attack of ague for a month, he eventually returned to Darmstadt where he attended the local art school to learn how to draw and paint in oils, in particular Dutch oil painting techniques whilst continuing his ornithological commissions.

The following year, and partly as a result Kaup having promoted Wolf's work in London, Wolf relocated to London at the invitation of David William Mitchell, Secretary of the Zoological Society of London. Initially he assisted Mitchell illustrating Robert Gray's *Genera of Birds* (1844-49), but he soon found himself

working with the pre-eminent publisher John Gould (1804-1881) and American zoologist Daniel Giraud Elliot (1835-1915) whilst also undertaking commissions for the 13<sup>th</sup> Earl of Derby (1775-1851) at Knowsley. Wolf would then work for nearly 30 years producing illustrations for the Zoological Society's journals the *Proceeding and Transactions*.

Mitchell commented on the calibre of Wolf's early work for him in Grey's *Genera of Birds* "I was fortunate enough to obtain the assistance of Mr. Wolf of Coblenz; and I have the pleasure of believing that, as I thus secured the best available talent in Europe as a substitute for my own pencil" (Palmer, p.53).

Wolf himself sums up his opinion of this work in his usual simple way: "I did it as I saw it".

### **No. of comparable objects by the same artist already in the UK, in both public and private collections**

Art UK lists 31 art works by Wolf: [https://artuk.org/discover/artists/wolf-joseph-18201899/view\\_as/grid/search/artists:wolf-joseph-18201899/page/1](https://artuk.org/discover/artists/wolf-joseph-18201899/view_as/grid/search/artists:wolf-joseph-18201899/page/1)

The majority of items are held at the Harris Museum and Gallery, Nature in Art (1) and the Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery (1) and depict different species to those in this collection.

The Zoological Society of London has approximately 140 drawings and watercolours by Wolf (a few are unsigned but are attributed to Wolf); most of these are the drawings for 'Zoological Sketches' with a few others are preliminary sketches for others prints. They do not hold any oil paintings by him. The Natural History Museum Library and Archives holds a handful of examples of Wolf's – a watercolour of a deer and five watercolours which are part of the Sir Richard Owen drawings collection. A watercolour of an aye-aye is also preserved at the British Museum (1944,0708.5).

Examples of Wolf's original material in the UK appears therefore to be few and sparsely distributed, particularly examples of his sketches and those illustrative of his drawing processes. This is surprising for such a pre-eminent and prolific artist who was based in the UK for much of his life.

Outside of the UK, Wolf's works can be found in the Ellis collection, Kansas City; the Blacker-Wood Library, Montreal; and the American Museum of Natural History, New York.

### **Significance of subject-matter**

Wolf provided illustrations for 350 plates in the Zoological Society of London's *Proceedings and Transactions* between 1848 and 1880. Many of the drawings in this collection are preliminary sketches for the published lithographic plates accompanying scientific papers describing these species. Wolf also provided bird illustrations for the journal *Ibis* to accompany papers about species of birds.

Some of the drawings also appear to be the initial sketches for the 100 lithographic plates in Wolf's publication titled '*Zoological Sketches*' for which the ZSL's Secretary, Philip Lutley Sclater provided the text (first published 1861; second series in 1867). ZSL has many of the original drawings for these volumes and upon inspection, at least some of the initial sketches seem to be in this collection. For example, the clouded leopard sketch – ZSL has a more 'finished' completed drawing with the final version (i.e. the lithographic plate) published in the '*Zoological Sketches*' (as a clouded tiger). This succession of stages of illustration provides an outstanding example and insight of Wolf's drawing process of which few examples exist.

Other sketches in this collection appear to be the basis of plates in more than one published work. For example, the Aye-Aye is used in ZSL's *Transactions* to accompany a paper by the outstanding anatomist and palaeontologist Sir Richard Owen whilst also being featured in Wolf's '*Zoological Sketches*'. Similarly, what appears to be his sketches of the first living gorilla to reach Britain, would have subsequently been used as a basis of plates in a variety of publications. Other sketches of mammals also appear to be the basis of illustrations in '*The life and habits of wild animals*' (1874) which Wolf provided.

Of Wolf's lithographs in *The Proceedings* there are between 330 and 340 which he executed from 1850 to 1865 inclusive (Palmer, p.96-7). Palmer goes on to comment '*the best show to perfection his literally unrivalled knowledge, and his unrivalled skill in applying that knowledge*' (Palmer, p.98).

### **Local/regional/national importance of the drawings collection**

Although examples of Wolf's sketches and finished watercolours have come to market in previous years, this is one of the most complete collections of his work and demonstrate his outstanding skill and artistry for depiction of animal behaviour and movement for which he was so highly regarded by his contemporaries. Wolf's legacy of magnificent paintings is only exceeded by his legacy of artistic freedom. The norm of painting the animal performing a natural action within a natural habitat had been established by Wolf (p.30).

### **Summary of related objects in public/private ownership in the UK**

The Aberystwyth University School of Art, Museum and Galleries collection has 49 images by Joseph Wolf; 47 of those are wood engravings taken from 19<sup>th</sup> century periodicals such as *Once a Week*, *Sunday Magazine*, *Good Words* and *Quiver*. They also hold two oil paintings – a young Bacchus with a leopard (OP155) and a leopard (WD452) received as part of the Powell bequest to the University.

### **References**

Fisher, Clemency (2004) *Wolf, Joseph [formerly Mathias] (1820-1899)*. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29829> Accessed 19/09/2022

Obituary: Mr Joseph Wolf. *The Ibis*, 7th ser., 5 (1899), 468–71 Accessed 20/09/2022 <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/36067#page/520/mode/1up>

Palmer, A. H. (1895) *The Life of Joseph Wolf, animal painter*. London and New York, Longmans, Green & Co., 328p. Includes A catalogue of some of the principal works illustrated entirely or partly by Joseph Wolf, (p.[291]-328).

Schulze-Hagen, Karl and Geus, Armin (2000) *Joseph Wolf (1820-1899) Tiermaler – animal painter*. Marburg an der Lahn. Basilisken-Presse. 361 p.

Schlegel, H. & A.H. Verster van Wulverhorst (1844-53) *Traité de Fauconnerie*. Leiden & Düsseldorf.

Skipworth, P. (1979) *The great bird illustrators*.

The Tryon and Moorland Gallery (1981) *The art of Joseph Wolf, R.I. 1820-1899*. 11<sup>th</sup> November – 21<sup>st</sup> December 1981. London.

## **RCEWA – Set of 120 original drawings of animals by Joseph Wolf**

### **Applicant's statement**

Please note that images and appendices referenced are not reproduced.

### **Is the item closely connected with our history and national life?**

We do not consider that this group of drawings is especially closely connected with our history and national life. Joseph Wolf was German-born but worked in Britain. His work was zoological, as here, and related to natural history rather than specifically British national history. The provenance of this group of drawings, while undoubtedly distinguished, is no more connected to our national life or history than any other from a British collection; and in our view this provenance does not constitute such a close connection with our history and national life that the departure of these drawings from the UK from the UK would be a misfortune.

### **Is it of outstanding aesthetic importance?**

This collection of drawings cannot in our view be said to be of outstanding aesthetic importance. These are rather rough preliminary sketches, lacking the finesse of Wolf's finished work.

### **Is it of outstanding significance for the study of some particular branch of art, learning or history?**

These drawings are not of outstanding significance for the study of a particular branch of art, learning or history. British institutions abound with examples of Wolf's work. Christine Jackson, in her Dictionary of Bird Artists, lists substantial holdings of work by Wolf at the Natural History Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Zoological Society of London, as well as several other British locations.

## **Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest, note of case hearing on 12 October 2022: *Set of 120 original drawings of animals* by Joseph Wolf (Case 8, 2022-23)**

### **Application**

1. The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest (the Committee) met on 12 October 2022 to consider an application to export *Set of 120 original drawings of animals* by Joseph Wolf. The value shown on the export licence application was £119,700 which represented the hammer price at auction (£95,000) plus the buyer's premium (£23,750) and the overhead premium (£950). The expert adviser had objected to the export of the collection of drawings under the first and third Waverley criteria on the grounds that its departure from the UK would be a misfortune because (i) it was so closely connected with our history and national life and (iii) it was of outstanding significance for the study of natural history art and illustration.

2. Seven of the regular eight Committee members were present and able to inspect the collection. They were joined in person by three independent assessors, acting as temporary members of the Committee. The Chairman explained that the binding offers mechanism was applicable for this case.

3. The applicant was informed that there is currently an interim process in place for Committee hearings. The Committee is still holding hybrid meetings but any Committee members, including the independent assessors must attend in person so they can inspect the object prior to discussing the case and voting. Any Committee members or independent assessors that are not able to attend in person and view the object are not able to vote.

4. The applicant confirmed that VAT of £4,750 on the Buyer's Premium and £190 on the Overhead Premium would be payable in the event of a UK sale and that this could be reclaimed by an eligible institution. The applicant also confirmed that the owner understood the circumstances under which an export licence might be refused.

### **Expert's submission**

5. The expert adviser had provided a written submission stating that the collection met the first Waverley criterion as it is closely connected with one of the most prestigious and historical natural history societies and zoological gardens in the world. It is representative of a period where new species were arriving in the country as well as representing a new style of a more naturalistic wildlife art led by Wolf.

6. They also stated that the collection met the third Waverley criterion in that the drawings were of outstanding significance for the history and study of natural history art and illustration. In particular, due to the collection having

been in private ownership for so long, Wolf's drawing processes and techniques remains an area of study for further investigation, which would not be possible were the collection have the misfortune of departing from the UK.

7. Although examples of Wolf's sketches and finished watercolours have come to market in previous years, this is one of the most complete collections of his work and demonstrates his outstanding skill and artistry for depiction of animal behaviour and movement for which he was so highly regarded by his contemporaries. Wolf's legacy of magnificent paintings is only exceeded by his legacy of artistic freedom. The norm of painting the animal performing a natural action within a natural habitat had been established by Wolf.

### **Applicant's submission**

8. The applicant had stated in a written submission that they did not consider that the collection met any of the three Waverley criteria. Regarding the first criterion, they noted that Joseph Wolf was German-born but worked in Britain. His work was zoological, as here, and related to natural history rather than specifically British national history. The provenance of this group of drawings, while undoubtedly distinguished, is no more connected to our national life or history than any other from a British collection.

9. In response to the second criterion, they noted that the drawings in the collection are rather rough preliminary sketches, lacking the finesse of Wolf's finished work.

10. Regarding the third criterion, they stated that British institutions abound with examples of Wolf's work. Christine Jackson, in her Dictionary of Bird Artists, lists substantial holdings of work by Wolf at the Natural History Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Zoological Society of London, as well as several other British locations.

### **Discussion by the Committee**

11. The expert adviser and applicant retired and the Committee discussed the case. They agreed that the collection of drawings held enormous research potential, particularly as they sit at the intersection of visual arts and intellectual enquiry. They noted that preliminary material such as these drawings tends to be discarded and that an archive of this size would make a valuable contribution to research on Joseph Wolf's process and development from sketches to final work, particularly as no other significant body of preparatory material from Wolf's later work appears to be recorded. Additionally, as preliminary drawings in development, this collection was in very good condition and the images within it are vibrant.

12. The Committee agreed that though the relationship between Joseph Wolf and the Zoological Society of London was interesting, it wasn't of outstanding significance to our history and national life. However, it was noted that there are no substantial holdings of Wolf's drawings in UK institutions, and they felt that

because Wolf is not particularly well known despite being an influential and key figure in natural history art, the impact that further research would have on the public was significant.

### **Waverley Criteria**

13. The Committee voted on whether the object met the Waverley criteria. Of the ten members, three members voted that it met the first Waverley criterion. All ten members voted that it met the third Waverley criterion. The collection was therefore found to meet the third Waverley criterion for its outstanding significance to the study of natural history art and illustration.

### **Matching offer**

14. The Committee recommended the sum of £119,700 (plus £4,940 VAT) as a fair matching price.

### **Deferral period**

15. The Committee agreed to recommend to the Secretary of State that the decision on the export licence should be deferred for an initial period of three months. At the end of the first deferral period, if the Arts Council received notification of a serious intention to raise funds with a view to making an offer to purchase the object, the owner will have a consideration period of 15 Business Days to consider any offer(s). The Committee recommended that there should be a further deferral period of three months that would commence following the signing of an Option Agreement.

### **Communication of findings**

16. The expert adviser and the applicant returned. The Chairman notified them of the Committee's decision on its recommendations to the Secretary of State.

17. The expert adviser agreed to act as champion if a decision on the licence was deferred by the Secretary of State.