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# THE ICON CABINET: AN ENORMOUS SILVER-GILT BRONZE GLAZED DISPLAY CABINET

Removed from Kensington Palace where it was built for the display of the iconic dress collection of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, the massive cabinet comprising a moulded cornice above the rectangular vitrine glazed with four fixed panels and four glazed doors, the canted corners also glazed, all framed with silver-gilt struts, the glazed section raised on a moulded timber plinth,

DIMENSIONS: 298cm (117<sup>1/4</sup>"") High, 254cm (100") Wide, 478cm (188<sup>1/4</sup>"") Long

STOCK CODE: 43185

## HISTORY

Throughout its life at Kensington Palace, this large display case was known as "The Icon Cabinet". It displayed some of the most iconic dresses as worn by Diana Princess of Wales. The show had a Memorial and a Charitable aspect to it. The Times Educational Supplement (TES) described the initial clamour to see the collection <https://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=330643> . The cabinet, now for sale at LASSCO Three Pigeons, still has a summary description of each dress applied to the glass panes.

But all was not necessarily as it seemed at the exhibition. By the time of the show, the dresses were actually the property of Maureen Rorech-Dunkel from Tampa USA who had loaned the dresses to the show. She had bought 14 of the frocks at Christies New York, only weeks before Diana's tragic death in 1997, for a total nearing \$1million. Diana had decided to put much of her astonishing wardrobe under the hammer in order to raise money for her favoured charities. In hindsight it is seen as a cathartic decision on her part; Prince William is said to have encouraged her.

Journalist Christopher Wilson followed the progress of the dresses after their residency at Kensington Palace and noted that the locations and manner in which they were displayed was becoming distinctly tawdry as Dunkel appeared to be extracting the maximum mileage from their prestigious provenance as their tour continued. He alleges that the purported charitable intent was seldom realised either.

Even when the collection was housed in the Icon Cabinet at Kensington Palace, Dunkel was using the dresses for collateral against loans for business ventures that were not always successful and, according to Wilson, at one stage bailiffs were making ready to gain entry to the Icon Cabinet at the Palace in order to take possession of one of the frocks. It never came to that but the acrimonious story of the dresses can be followed in the links below!

With a stalled attempt to satisfy circling creditors with an auction of the dresses in Toronto – rather insensitively timed for the arrival of Prince William and the Duchess of Cornwall on an Official Royal Tour of Canada – Dunkel finally put the collection under the hammer in 2014 in London. Some have been bought by private collectors and others are now in the hands of museums and at least two were bought by Kensington Palace.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/theroyalfamily/8590186/On-auction-A-murky-end-to-Princess-Dianas-dresses.html>

and the plot thickens!...

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/diana/8754372/Revealed-the-fake-sale-of-Princess-Dianas-ball-gowns.html>

Dunkel's world un-ravels:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/diana/8754372/Revealed-the-fake-sale-of-Princess-Dianas-ball-gowns.html>

Auction results reported:

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/03/20/princess-diana-s-fabulous-dresses-sell-for-1-2m.html>

The cabinet is large enough to house a prestigious motor-car – with some adaptation (a Formula 1 car will fit). Or it could make a tremendous centre-piece in any exhibition or retail space. It can be viewed all of the way 'round - central to a space.

