MONSERRATE REVISITED – The Cook Collection in Portugal

- On display from 1 December 2017 to 31 May 2018
- Commemorating the 200th anniversary of the birth of Sir Francis Cook
- Temporary return of over 50 pieces, loaned by public and private collections
- Includes a Renaissance relief by Gregorio di Lorenzo

Opening on 1 December at the Palace of Monserrate, Parques de Sintra presents the exhibition “Monserrate Revisited – The Cook Collection in Portugal” in the year commemorating the 200th anniversary of the birth of Sir Francis Cook (1817 – 1901). The sample brings together pieces from the art collection built up by the vastly wealthy British industrialist Sir Francis Cook in the late 19th century for his summer residence, thus enabling the public to view the artistic and historical value of his art collection in Portugal.

This exhibition, which results from extensive and exhaustive research, seeks to convey the cultural dimension of the illustrious first Viscount Sir Francis Cook and the set of works of art that be brought to Monserrate. After its dispersal in 1946, there is once again the opportunity to admire some of the pieces from this collection within the palace setting following their identification and temporary loaning by public and private collections.

This set of over four dozen precious works of art is laid out throughout the various rooms in the now restored palace thereby highlighting the fine beauty of these finely decorated surroundings. Included in the sample is the Renaissance relief by the Florentine sculptor Gregorio di Lorenzo, recently acquired by Parques de Sintra, which now makes its return to the Palace in order to begin establishing the future Monserrate museum collection.
Francis Cook, a renowned collector and patron of the arts, acquired the historical Sintra estate of Monserrate in 1856. He renovated the small palace that had been the residence of the writer William Beckford, filling its rooms with precious works of art, including paintings, sculptures, furniture, ceramics and Asian porcelains, textiles, jewellery, and among others.

This exhibition results from the research hitherto completed on the Cook family collection in Monserrate and also represents the launch of museum installations due to cover the extent of the Palace interiors. This also seeks to publicly reveal the results of research into these historical objects, which is an ongoing project, designed to establish a palace collection featuring the authenticity that enables visitors to grasp how life was lived in Monserrate, similar to other country estates of the period.

The loan of these pieces stems from agreements reached with institutions such as the Portuguese Museum of Ancient Art, the Medeiros e Almeida House-Museum, the Dr. Manuel Vinhas Collection, the John Somerville Collection, São João de Brito College – Ignatian Centre of Lumiar, and the Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva Foundation – Museum of Portuguese Decorative Arts.

The exhibition has an accompanying Catalogue that contains individual studies of the pieces on exhibition as well as background studies on the various different themes that provide insights into the history of the property and its owners. This publication is illustrated by a range of pictures drawn not only from the Parques de Sintra collection but also kindly loaned by various national and international institutions as well as by the Cook and Kingsbury families.

**Information:**
Access to the exhibition comes with the purchase of a ticketed for the Park and Palace of Monserrate, open daily from 10am to 6pm.

For further information, please go to [www.parquesdesintra.pt](http://www.parquesdesintra.pt)
About Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua

Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua, S.A. (PSML) is an entirely state owned company founded in 2000 in order to meet the challenges arising out of the UNESCO classification of the Sintra Cultural Landscape as a World Heritage site. The entity does not resort to the State Budget and the restoration and maintenance of the heritage in its care are ensured by the revenues resulting from sales at its ticket offices, stores, cafeterias and the rental of facilities for the hosting of events. In 2016, the sites managed by PSML (the Park and National Palace of Pena, the National Palaces of Sintra and Queluz, the Chalet of the Countess of Edla, the Moorish Castle, the Palace and Gardens of Monserrate, the Convent of the Capuchos and the Portuguese School of Equestrian Art) welcomed 2,625,011 visits, around 83% of whom were international in origin. In 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016, PSML was distinguished with the World Travel Award for the “World’s Leading Conservation Company”.

The PSML shareholders are the General Directorate of the Treasury and Finance (representing the Portuguese state), the Portuguese Institute of Nature and Forestry Conservation, the Portuguese Tourism Board and Sintra Municipal Council.


Information for the Press:
Communication office – comunicacao@parquesdesintra.pt / +351 21 923 73 00