

# SPEAR'S

## Why I'm selling a \$20 million Rembrandt and giving the proceeds to charity

EXC: Billionaire art collector Thomas S. Kaplan on selling an Old Master drawing to raise funds for a wildlife charity – and why he plans to fractionalise his Rembrandt collection

BY GEORGE NELSON



Billionaire art collector Thomas S. Kaplan will sell a Rembrandt drawing to raise funds for his wildlife charity, Panthera

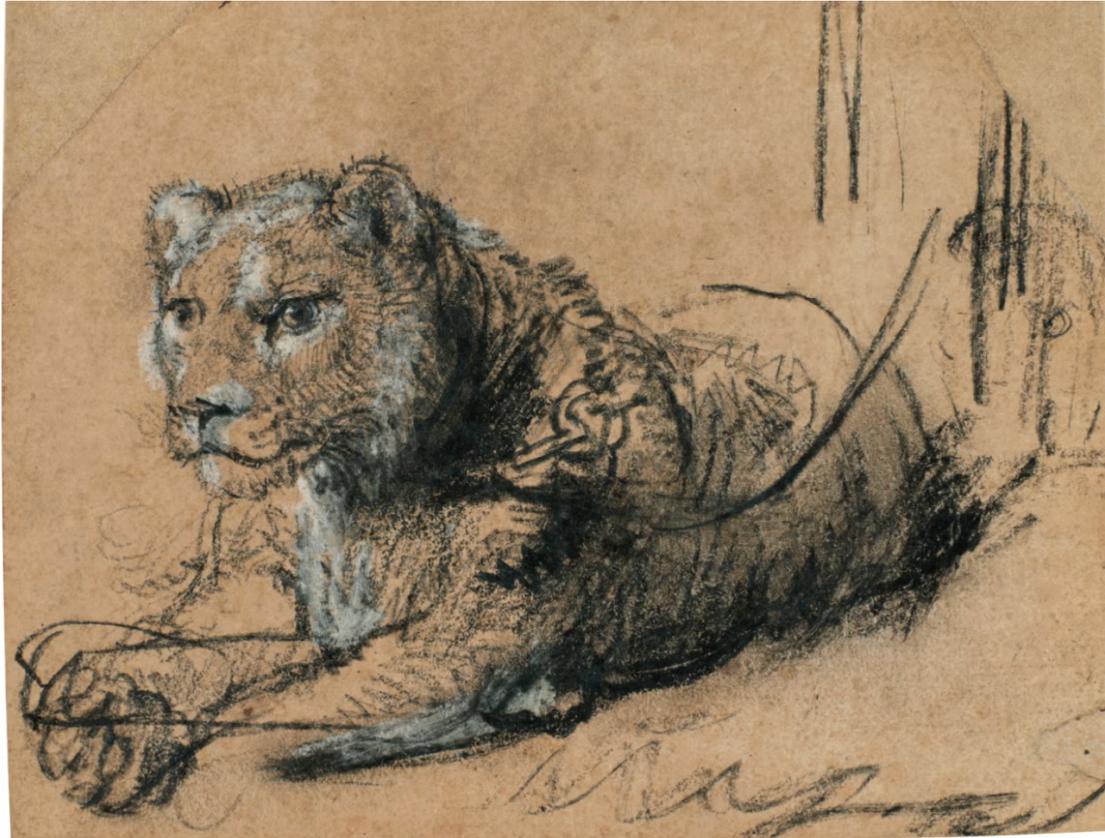
Franco-American precious metals mogul Tom Kaplan will sell a Rembrandt in order to raise funds for a wild cat conservation charity, he told *Spear's*.

The Rembrandt drawing, titled *Young Lion Resting* (circa 1638-42), has a high estimate of \$20 million and will hit the auction block at Sotheby's in New York in February. Kaplan will donate the proceeds to Panthera, the wild cat conservation charity he founded in 2006.

The work is part of a trove of 17th-century Dutch Golden Age art that the billionaire and his wife, Daphne, have collected over the last two decades. Dubbed The Leiden Collection, it includes the world's largest private cache of Rembrandt paintings (17) and the only Vermeer in private hands.

*Young Lion Resting* was displayed at a lunch in Paris this week, where around 20 art experts and members of the press were present, alongside Sotheby's experts.

Skilfully rendered in black and white chalk on brown paper, the drawing is one of only six lion drawings Rembrandt made.



Rembrandt's Young Lion Resting (circa 1638–42) is expected to fetch up to \$20 million when it goes under the hammer at Sotheby's New York in February // Image: Sotheby's

Midway through a first course of *foie gras*, Sotheby's head of Old Master drawings, Gregory Rubinstein, stood up from the table to wax lyrical about the drawing. 'The work has been unveiled today, which I hope stimulates considerable excitement,' he said. 'When Rembrandt made the drawing, he had moved from his native Leiden to Amsterdam. At this point, he had established himself as an extremely popular and fashionable portraitist. The works he made at that time are characterised by ever more energy, confidence, power and passion, and all of those qualities are abundantly clear and evident in this remarkable drawing.'

Kaplan explained how he acquired the work on paper through New York dealer Otto Nauman in 2005. ‘He called me up and he said he had seen something totally unique, and that I needed to check it out because of my passion for lions and Rembrandt,’ Kaplan said. ‘We went to see the drawing at John and Paul Herring’s gallery. It would’ve been the most expensive thing my wife and I had ever bought, even among our paintings at the time. That day, when we got home, I asked my wife what she thought, and she said: “Tom. It’s a Rembrandt. It’s a lion. And it’s beautiful. If it’s not for you, then who is it for?”’