



Charles F Stewart, CEO
Sotheby's

31 August 2023

Via e-mail: charles.stewart@sothebys.com

Dear Mr Stewart:

I'm writing from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) regarding the late Princess Diana's "black sheep" knitted jumper, which we understand will be auctioned at Sotheby's inaugural Fashion Icons sale. Because the garment is made of wool, we ask that you consider honouring the princess' compassionate nature and love for animals by withdrawing the item and instead donating it to PETA so that it can be used as part of our educational campaign to protect sheep.

More than a style icon, "the people's princess" was kind and charitable, as I'm sure you already know. Diana cared greatly for animals of all species and was known for her opposition to hunting and refusal to wear fur. In her youth, she took her guinea pig, Peanuts, to boarding school with her so he wouldn't be alone, and she was later patron of Chipangali Wildlife Orphanage until her death.

In the 1990s, when Diana originally wore this jumper, most people were still unaware of the suffering caused by the wool trade. The princess would no doubt have been shocked by [the abuse that has now been documented in shearing sheds](#) – which includes video footage showing gentle sheep being violently kicked, stamped on, and beaten. It is for this reason that ever-more people are choosing plant-based alternatives to wool. This year, the original makers of Diana's iconic "black sheep" knit, the London brand Warm & Wonderful, released a new version of it made from 100% cotton.

There is also the environmental impact of sheep farming to consider. Sheep produce a large volume of the greenhouse gas methane. This, along with the animals' waste, the huge amounts of land required to raise them, the chemicals used to clean wool, and the industry's energy use, has led the Made-By Environmental Benchmark for Fibres to rank wool as a "Class E" material – the worst category possible.

Never one to ignore the most pressing issues of the time, one can pretty safely assume that the late princess would have been at the forefront of the fight to save the planet from the climate catastrophe. This, coupled with her kindness towards all living, feeling beings, means that giving this woollen item to a charity to use for educational purposes would be a fitting tribute.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Ingrid Newkirk
Founder, PETA

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