

News

Rod Stewart sails into concert 'curfew' storm

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Southwest Correspondent

When Rod Stewart played to fans in Plymouth on Saturday night, he intended the show to end with his 1975 anthem *Sailing* as the perfect tribute to the city's historic naval status.

But the Scottish singer, 78, has found himself in deep water after wrongly blaming the lord mayor of Plymouth for stopping his concert early and robbing fans of a memorable singalong.

Audience members at the city's Home Park said that just after 10.30pm the stage was plunged into darkness when a "man in black" walked onto the stage to speak to Stewart halfway through *Da Ya Think I'm Sexy?* — at which point the singer left and the lights came up.

According to reports, Stewart told the crowd "the lord mayor had put a stop to it", despite the stadium having a licence until 11pm.

Footage taken at the concert shows Stewart telling the audience: "That's it from us, thank you. Sorry but we can't play any more because of a curfew. We were going to do *Sailing* but we can't do it because the ... the lord mayor's, he told me to shut the f*** up."

Some disappointed fans took out their anger on the lord mayor, councillor Mark Shayer, who has denied involvement. A Royal Navy veteran who served for 25 years in the submarine service, Shayer said that he had faced a

barrage of abuse despite not even attending the concert. He said that the first he knew of the controversy was on Sunday morning when he started receiving messages.

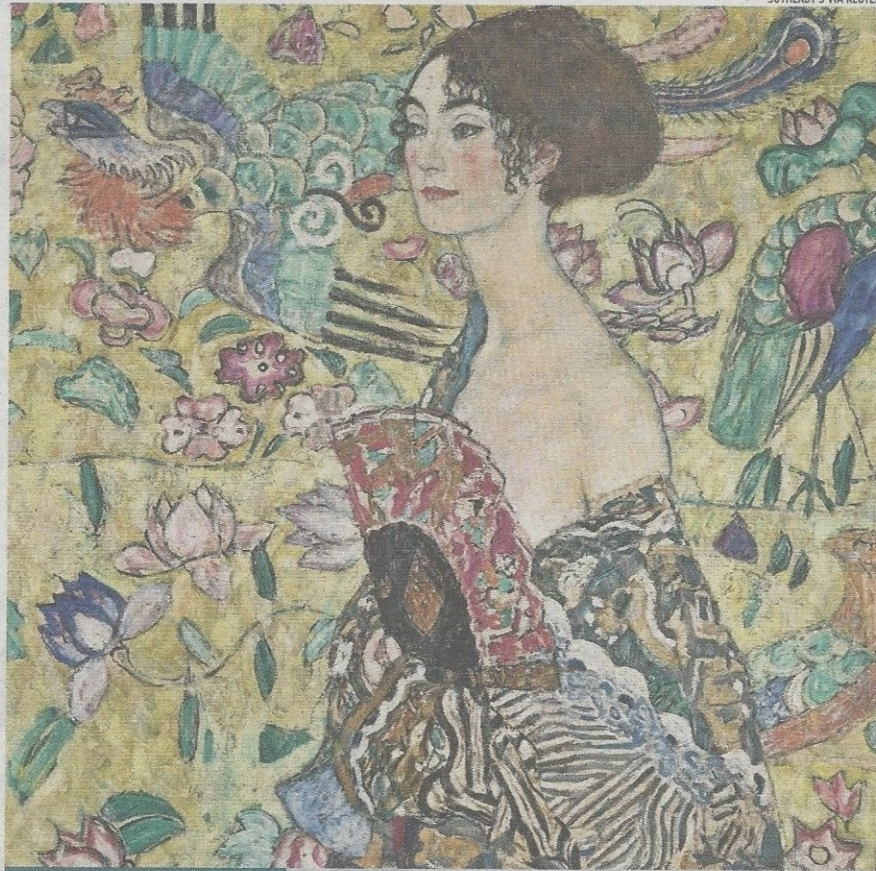
"I'm horrified to be implicated," he said. "To say I stopped Rod Stewart singing what is one of my favourite songs, on Armed Forces Day, it's ridiculous. I'm livid." He did not go to the concert because it clashed with Armed Forces Day events.

Although Home Park has permission for concerts to run until 11pm, it is understood that the singer was due to finish at 10.30pm.

A spokesman for Plymouth city council said: "Despite social media rumours and inaccurate, unsubstantiated reports online, Plymouth city council and Home Park did not ask Rod Stewart to stop his concert on Saturday night. Any allegation that the lord mayor asked the performer to stop are also untrue. The lord mayor was not at the concert.

"The venue had an 11pm special events certificate, issued by the safety advisory group, which the venue made clear to the artist's promoter. As with any concert, should a performer decide to end their set before the licensed curfew set out in the special events certificate, it is not because of any decision made by the local authority or the venue."

Representatives of Stewart have been contacted for comment.



SOOTHERBY'S VIA REUTERS

Record £85m for Klimt's last portrait

Gustav Klimt's last portrait became the most expensive work of art sold in Europe at Sotheby's in London yesterday (Peter Chappell writes).

Dame mit Fächer (Lady with a Fan), a portrait of an anonymous woman, fetched £85.3 million after a ten-minute competition involving four bidders pushed the price £10 million above the estimate. The hammer

Lady with a Fan was found on an easel when Gustav Klimt died in 1918 at the age of 55. Sotheby's said it was more experimental than most of the Austrian's work

came down at £74 million with the remaining £11.3 million made up of auction fees.

Patti Wong, an art adviser, won on behalf of a Hong Kong collector after beating an anonymous bidder on the phone. Wong, a former chairwoman of Sotheby's, launched her Asia-focused firm in January.

The portrait was found on an easel when the Austrian artist died of a stroke and pneumonia in 1918 at the age of 55.

The sale broke the record held by Alberto Giacometti's sculpture *L'Homme qui marche I*, which made £58 million in the same room in 2010.

The portrait is more experimental than most by Klimt, Helena Newman, chairwoman of Sotheby's Europe, said. "Many of those works, certainly the portraits for which he is best known, were commissions. This, though, is something completely different: a technical tour de force, full of boundary-pushing experimentation."