# James Stunt’s lavish ties to King Charles III overshadowed by forged artworks and cocaine scandal



James Stunt, a former high-profile tycoon known for his extravagant lifestyle and connections to the British royal family, continues to draw attention due to his tumultuous past and its intersections with royal affairs. Stunt, who has openly acknowledged a history of cocaine addiction, previously gained notoriety as the ex-husband of Petra Ecclestone, daughter of Formula 1 mogul Bernie Ecclestone.

Despite a life marked by controversy, Stunt managed to establish a relationship with King Charles III when he was still the Prince of Wales. Details of this connection have surfaced in light of revelations from John Gilmour, Stunt's former butler, who provided insights about the extent of Stunt's relationship with the royal family in an exclusive interview with *The Mail on Sunday*.

According to Mr Gilmour, Stunt once loaned Charles a series of paintings that were later revealed to be forgeries, a situation that culminated in embarrassment for the royal family. Stunt is reported to have contributed a total of £140,000 to Charles's charitable causes between 2014 and 2016, which included a £65,000 donation to the Prince’s Trust and £50,000 to Dumfries House, a mansion in Scotland saved for the nation through Charles's charity.

Mr Gilmour detailed instances where Stunt visited royal palaces such as Clarence House and Buckingham Palace, where he participated in private audiences and lavish banquets. During an evening gathering at Stunt’s residence, he even heard Stunt converse with the then-Prince on speakerphone. This proximity to royalty was facilitated by Michael Fawcett, a significant aide to Charles, who allegedly received gifts from Stunt, including an expensive watch intended for the Prince.

The relationship between Stunt and Charles raises questions about the connections forged through financial contributions to royal charities. Previous controversies regarding donations have emerged, one notably involving Qatar’s former Prime Minister, who was reported to have handed a million euros in cash for royal charities, which further complicates Charles's appeal to wealthy donors.

Stunt’s trajectory, however, has not been devoid of legal troubles. In March 2023, he was cleared of involvement in a £266 million money laundering operation, although four other individuals were convicted in the matter. Alongside these legal battles, Stunt's behaviour has been scrutinised, particularly concerning his substantial cocaine use and interactions with escorts, claims that Mr Gilmour illuminated during the interview.

Reports indicate that Stunt was consuming cocaine daily and had a penchant for high-priced escorts. Gilmour shared that the tycoon would sometimes even provide gold bars as payments for services rendered, although Stunt has denied these claims. The narrative surrounding his life has become interwoven with themes of excess and exploitation, culminating in his 2019 bankruptcy declaration, with debts exceeding £5 million.

Despite the controversies surrounding him, Stunt’s prior connections to royalty and his lavish lifestyle serve as a stark contrast to his current financial state and public reputation. With pending investigations related to dubious artworks and relationships with powerful figures, Stunt's future remains uncertain, with continued coverage likely following the revelations from Mr Gilmour.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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