

- What we do
- University affairs
- Campus beat
- Community engagement

Dutch Old Master painting returned to Max Stern Estate with assistance of Christie's

MEANWHILE, MAJOR GERMAN AUCTION HOUSE REJECTS STERN ESTATE CLAIMS TO OTHER PAINTINGS

Posted on December 6, 2007

Like Share 1 Print

MONTREAL/December 6, 2007—



"An extensive landscape with travellers on a track near a walled town with a castle and church, a village beyond", Jan de Vos I (1593 – 1649), Oil on canvas, unframed, 73.7 x 97.1 cm

- <http://maxsternproject.concordia.ca>
- <http://auktion392.com>
- <http://benuri.org.uk>

Concordia University in Montreal, Canada, acting on behalf of the executors of the Estate of Dr. Max Stern and its three university beneficiaries (Concordia, McGill University/Montreal, Hebrew University of Jerusalem) is pleased to announce the recovery of an extensive landscape scene by the seventeenth-century Dutch artist Jan de Vos I. It is one of hundreds owned by German-Jewish art dealer, Max Stern, which was sold under duress from 1935 to 1937. The announcement was made in London, England at Ben Uri Gallery, The London Jewish Museum of Art, which is the current venue of the Stern exhibition now traveling across Europe.

Last seen at a 1968 exhibition at the University of Mainz, Germany, the de Vos painting was tracked in 2005 by the New York State Banking Department's Holocaust Claims Processing Office. Its recovery, in which Christie's played an instrumental role, marks the third work restituted to the Estate in just over a year.

"We are delighted to have facilitated the return of the painting to the Max Stern Estate. We take the question of works of art looted during the Nazi-era very seriously and are committed to working with clients, the claimant community, museums and dealers in finding clarity on such complex issues and in helping to

[NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP](#)

[SUBMIT A STORY IDEA](#)

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

[MOST READ](#) [TOP STORIES](#)

- [Don't miss these important dates](#) (1456)
- [Tips to avoid exam stress](#) (1429)
- [Funding opens doors to research](#) (1350)
- [Concordians win the Great Canadian Appathon](#) (1316)
- [CIADI readies for takeoff](#) (1242)

find solutions where these arise." said Monica Dugot, Senior Vice President and Director of Restitution for Christie's worldwide.

The discovery of letters in Gestapo files has made it irrefutable that beginning in 1935, Dr. Stern was ordered by Nazi officials to abandon his profession and wind up operations of his family's gallery. He fought off those orders for many months, with the final step in his expulsion being the well-publicized 1937 forced sale of his remaining paintings (known as Auktion 392) at Lempertz auction house in Cologne.

While the Christie's announcement is another positive example of the Estate's collaboration with major European auction houses, certain members of the art trade in Germany have not been as cooperative. Van Ham auction house in Cologne has, at its own discretion, returned to its consignors paintings with claims pending by the Estate. In one surprising instance, Van Ham even issued its own press release (April 2007) declaring that it had identified a Stern painting, yet recently rejected the Estate's right to its restitution.

"We are extremely concerned by such a position which challenges that Dr. Stern was not acting under conditions of great duress during those final two years", noted Dr. Clarence Epstein, Director of the Max Stern Art Restitution Project. "However, we remain hopeful that this latest return will heighten the sensitivity to Dr. Stern's predicament among other members of the art trade, especially those in Germany, where it is believed that the bulk of his paintings are still located", Dr. Epstein added.

The traveling exhibition Auktion 392: Reclaiming the Galerie Stern, Düsseldorf showing at Ben Uri Gallery, The London Jewish Museum of Art has been extended to 24 December in response to unprecedented international interest. The de Vos painting will return to Canada where it will be put on public display at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

For more information, please contact clarence Epstein at Clarence.epstein@concordia.ca.

- 30 -

Source :

Christine Mota

Director, Media Relations
Concordia University
Phone: 514-848-2424, ext. 4884
Cell: 514-952-5556
Fax: 514-848-3383
Email: chris.mota@concordia.ca
Twitter: twitter.com/ChristineMota

Like

Share

1

Print

GIVE
FEEDBACK