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Nazi-Looted Old Master Painting Returned to Max Stern Estate

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MONTREAL/February 27, 2007—

One of Many Stern Works Recycled in Recent Years Through German Auction Houses

Concordia University is 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) and is pleased to announce the recovery of the work Portrait of Jan van Eversdyck by the Flemish-born German Renaissance painter Nicolas Neufchatel (1527-1590). It is one of hundreds owned by German-Jewish art dealer Max Stern and sold by force in 1937 at the infamous sale #392 held at Lempertz Auction House in Cologne. The official announcement will be made this evening in New York City at the Leo Baeck Institute launch of the travelling exhibit, Auktion 392: Reclaiming the Galerie Stern, Düsseldorf. (15 West 16th Street, www.lbi.org).

In the course of her independent research for the Auktion 392 exhibit, Concordia University Professor Catherine MacKenzie came upon an image of the Neufchatel in the collection of the Yannick and Ben Jakober Foundation of Mallorca, Spain. When the Foundation was contacted on behalf of the Stern Estate by the New York State Banking Department Holocaust Claims Processing Office (HCPO) and informed of the painting's tainted history, plans were set in motion for its prompt return. We are delighted by the sensitivity and unequivocal cooperation of the Jakober family and their Foundation team in our cause. They have truly risen to the occasion, said Estate executor, Robert Vineberg.

It was not surprising for the Estate to learn that since 1937, the Neufchatel had been resold twice (1977 and 1996) at Lempertz. In fact, many Stern works have been repeatedly recycled onto the German art market in recent years, most notably at auction houses such as Van Ham, Villa Grisebach and Lempertz. While we are aware of the toll that restitution issues are taking on the German art community, we remain committed to actively pursuing every single claim across Europe, the United States or any other jurisdiction, noted Concordia's Dr. Clarence Epstein, who heads up the Max Stern Art Restitution Project.

In the wake of the October 2006 recovery of an Emile Lecomte-Vernet painting by the HCPO (currently on loan to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts), the Neufchatel now becomes the second Stern work to be restituted. The Estate is further pleased to announce that this painting will be placed on permanent loan in the Jakober Foundation's renowned collection of Old Master portraits of youth. A scale image of the recovered work together with dozens of other works still missing, will be on display in the Stern exhibit at the Leo Baeck Institute (running February 27-May 11, 2007).

For further information, contact Tanya Churchmuck at (514)518-3336 or at Tanya.churchmuck@concordia.ca

<http://auktion392.com>

<http://maxsternproject.concordia.ca>

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Tanya Churchmuh
Senior Media Relations Advisor
Concordia University

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