

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

U.S. Departments of Justice and homeland security return rare painting of Bagpiper to Universities in Canada and Israel

Posted on April 21, 2009

Like Share 1 Print

MONTREAL/April 21, 2009—

*SWIFT ACTION FOLLOWS
LANDMARK RULINGS ON MAX
STERN WORKS
LOOTED DURING NAZI ERA*

<http://maxsternproject.concordia.ca>
<http://auktion392.com>
<http://www.ice.gov>

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/Jerusalem) is pleased to announce the recovery of a rare early-seventeenth-century portrait of a musician holding bagpipes that was lost by the German-Jewish art dealer in 1937. The work will be turned over to university representatives on Holocaust Remembrance Day at the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust (36 Battery Place, New York, NY, at 10:00 am)



Less than two months ago, the New York State Banking Department’s Holocaust Claims Processing Office spotted the Dutch Old Master painting in the inventory of an American art dealer who was en route to The European Fine Art Foundation (TEFAF) fair in Maastricht, Holland. Upon return shipment to the United States, the art dealer was notified by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the U.S. Attorney’s Office of the paintings dubious ownership history, at which time he handed the painting over. “It is only fitting that we return this precious work on Holocaust Remembrance Day,” said Peter J. Smith, Special Agent in Charge of ICE Office of Investigations in New York. “Hundreds of Max Stern’s paintings were sold by force. We are committed to finding those stolen works of art and returning them to the university beneficiaries”.

In rulings of historical significance regarding another painting taken from Max Stern – Franz-Xaver Winterhalter’s Girl from the Sabine Mountains – U.S. Federal Courts determined that by the time Dr. Stern had been forced to relinquish the picture in November 1937 in what was known as a “Jew sale”, it had become stolen property. Since Dr. Stern had to give up a total of 228 pictures in that sale, his Estate together with U.S. law enforcement agreed that all outstanding pictures from the 1937 sale are stolen property and should be pursued accordingly.

Despite recent comments by Germany’s Culture Minister Bernd Neumann that his government stands by its historical and moral responsibility, his country’s auction houses continue to freely trade Nazi-looted objects. A troubling discovery is that

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)

the painting of the bagpiper had been unwittingly bought by a British art dealer at Lempertz auctioneers in Cologne in November 2007– exactly seventy years after it was part of a forced sale at the same auction house. Lempertz made no mention of the 1937 Stern provenance in its 2007 catalogue and continues to refuse to acknowledge the Estate’s claims to such works.

“We remain extremely concerned about the irreverent attitude of members of the art trade in Germany. Hopefully the exemplary actions of American government agencies will not go unnoticed by their European counterparts”, said Clarence Epstein, Director of the Max Stern Art Restitution Project.

- 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

[A-Z index](#) [Contact us](#) [Maps](#) [Shuttle](#) [MyConcordia](#) [Webmail](#) [Libraries](#) [Jobs](#) [Giving](#)

© [Concordia University](#) | [Terms](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Accessibility](#) 1455 De Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3G 1M8 Tel. 514-848-2424

GIVE
FEEDBACK