



## Pressedienst

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23. November 2023

### **Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf and Max and Iris Stern Foundation launch research project**

The Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf and the Max and Iris Stern Foundation are launching a research project under the working title "Transactions with Jewish customers 1933 to 1935". The project is in cooperation with the Landesverband der Jüdischen Gemeinden von Nordrhein K.d.ö.R (State Association of Jewish Communities of North Rhine) and funded by the Deutsches Zentrum für Kulturgutverluste (German Centre for the Loss of Cultural Property).

The aim of this collaboration is to reconstruct the transactions of the Jewish-owned Galerie Stern Düsseldorf, which thus far received little or no attention. There will be focus on the documented clients from 1933 to 1935 so as to fundamentally increase knowledge on the gallery's business activities - and compile information on Jewish art collectors during the Nazi era.

In order to gain insights into the gallery's Jewish clients and possible forced sales between 1933 and 1935, the transactions of the Galerie Stern will be analysed. The data will be relevant not only for the Stern Foundation, but also for many research projects and disputes. The ongoing debate regarding victims of first and second degree has not yet been fully clarified despite the regulation that was enacted in the post-war period. Max Stern was persecuted and forced to close his gallery. He fled Germany in 1937 and managed to start a new life in Canada, where he became one of the country's most important dealers.

The project is built on the seminal work of the Stern Cooperation Project (SCP) in 2018-2022, which investigated the history of the Stern art dealing family and its art holdings. The project was used as an example for studies on German-Jewish art dealers who survived the Holocaust. With this broad-based approach to basic research, the SCP entered a field that was spearheaded by the Max Stern Art Restitution Project (MSARP) since 2002. The Stern Foundation has been rebuilding the history of both the Stern family and the



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Stern Gallery for more than 20 years.

### **Background on the collaborating partners**

Max and Iris Stern Foundation:

Founded in 1987, the charitable Max and Iris Stern Foundation manages the legacy of the Jewish art dealer Max Stern from Düsseldorf, who was forced to close his gallery by the Nazi regime in 1937. The foundation coordinates research and exhibition projects regarding the gallery owner couple and will therefore contribute all its documents and information to the project. Their main aim is for the findings - as well as the research desiderata from the SCP to be transferred to the new project.

Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf:

Due to its numerous international exhibitions and events and its important collection of artworks by Jewish artists, the Stadtmuseum has extensive knowledge of and an intensive relationship with, the Landesverband der Jüdischen Gemeinden von Nordrhein K.d.ö.R. (State Association of Jewish Communities of North Rhine). In addition it maintains close and constant communication with the German Jewish communities, the Zentralrat der Juden (Central Council of Jews), the Jewish communities in Europe and Canada and the World Jewish Congress.

Landesverband der Jüdischen Gemeinden von Nordrhein K.d.ö.R.:

Essential for the successful realisation of the project is the cooperation with the Landesverband der Jüdischen Gemeinden Nordrhein K.d.ö.R. It is the largest Jewish association in Germany, whose main tasks include the preservation and conservation of Jewish cultural heritage. The association represents over 15,500 members of the surrounding Jewish communities and covers the majority of the area in which the business of the Galerie Stern was concentrated. With its extensive network, the regional association contributes essential insights to the project. The historical records and specific knowledge about its members during the National Socialist era will be of particular importance.

Textversion:



Landeshauptstadt Düsseldorf  
Amt für Kommunikation

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