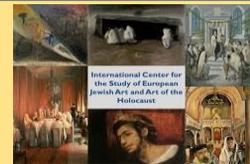


International Center for the Study of European Jewish Art and Art of the Holocaust



Newsletter – July 2015



**From the Director
Ronit D. Appel**

I hope you are all having an enjoyable and relaxing summer. The Center is pleased to present its July 2015 newsletter. We invite you to share the newsletter with your friends and family and we look forward to seeing you at the Center's lectures and classes.

Featured Lecture

Stolen Treasures

The Recovery of Art Looted During the Holocaust

On May 27, 2015, a crowd gathered at Congregation Edmond J. Safra on the Upper East Side to hear our Director speak about the recovery of art looted during the Holocaust. Ronit D. Appel spoke about the difficulties in recovering looted art, numerous court cases involving looted art, and the need for reform in the area of looted art to ensure the restitution of looted art to its rightful owners. One of the paintings discussed at the lecture was a Nazi-looted oil painting by Max Liebermann. You can read more about that painting, which was auctioned off in London several weeks after the lecture, below.

Restituted Nazi-Looted Painting Auctioned Off at Sotheby's in London for Nearly 1.9 Million Pounds

At a June 24, 2015 auction held at Sotheby's auction house in London, an oil painting by Max Liebermann titled *Zwei Reiter am Strand Nach Links* (*Two Riders on a Beach*), painted in 1901, was sold at auction for close to 1.9 million pounds (approximately 3 million dollars), including the buyer's premium.

The painting was looted by the Nazis during the Holocaust from its Jewish owner, David Friedmann, and was just recently returned to Friedmann's heirs after the painting, along with over 1,200 other works of art, was discovered in 2012 in the Munich apartment of Cornelius Gurlitt, son of Hildebrand Gurlitt (1895-1956), a prominent German art dealer and art historian who worked as an art dealer for the Nazis during World War II.

Cornelius Gurlitt passed away in 2014. In his will, he bequeathed his art collection to the Kunstmuseum Bern in Switzerland. The museum accepted the bequest but agreed that any work of art whose provenance is suspicious will remain in Germany pending a determination of an independent task force established to determine if works in the collection were looted by the Nazis. The museum emphasized that it would not accept any works of art that are determined to have been looted by the Nazis.

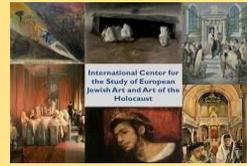
Two Riders on a Beach was one of the first Nazi-looted paintings from Cornelius Gurlitt's collection to have been restituted to its rightful owners. It was returned to David Friedmann's heirs in May of 2015 and was the first work of art from the collection to have been auctioned off. The painting, which has immense historical value, fetched far more than what Sotheby's estimated it would sell for (\$540,000 - \$850,000).



Max Liebermann, *Zwei Reiter am Strand Nach Links* (*Two Riders on a Beach*), 1901

Several additional paintings from the Gurlitt art trove have been determined by the special task force to have been looted by the Nazis. The task force is still in the process of making determinations regarding many other works of art in the collection.

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Featured Artwork - *The Artist's Family*

The Artist's Family, which hangs in the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, was painted by world-famous Romanian/Israeli artist Reuven Rubin in 1926 and is one of Rubin's most famous paintings.

Rubin arrived in Palestine from Romania in 1912. Dissatisfied with the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts in Jerusalem, he left to study art in Paris in 1913. In 1923, he returned to Palestine, where he settled permanently. *The Artist's Family* depicts Rubin and the members of his family, his mother, brother, and sister, who joined Rubin in Palestine after Rubin's father passed away in Romania in 1925. In the painting, Rubin is holding a palette and paintbrush and is dressed in typical clothing worn by Jewish pioneers in Palestine in the 1920's. His integration into the local community is evident from his dress, which distinguishes him from his family members, whose more formal attire hints at their having just recently arrived in Palestine.



Reuven Rubin, *The Artist's Family*, 1926, Oil on canvas

Featured Artist - Abel Pann

Abel Pann (named Abba Pfeffermann at birth) was born in 1883 in the town of Kreslawka in the Vitebsk region of White Russia. The son of a Rabbi who was also the head of a yeshiva, Pann received a Jewish education until the age of twelve. As a boy, he studied drawing for several months with the artist Yehuda Pan of Vitebsk, who also taught Marc Chagall. At the age of twelve, he began traveling between cities in Russia and Poland, earning a living as an apprentice in sign workshops. In 1898, he was accepted to, and enrolled in, the Academy of Fine Arts in Odessa.



Abel Pann in 1912

In 1903, the Kishinev pogroms broke out in the city of Kishinev in the Russian Empire. Pann traveled to Kishinev, where he produced documentary drawings of the horrors he observed there. Later that year, he moved to Paris, where he spent ten years working as an artist, illustrator, and cartoonist. In 1913, Pann traveled to Palestine, where he headed the painting department of the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts for several months while the school's founder, Boris Schatz, embarked on an extensive overseas fundraising trip.

In 1914, Pann returned to Europe to settle his affairs before settling permanently in Palestine. World War I broke out while he was in Europe and he was prevented from returning to Palestine. In 1920, Pann returned to Jerusalem and taught at the Bezalel school, becoming one of the leading Jewish artists in Palestine. Pann gained widespread recognition for his unique paintings depicting biblical characters.



Abel Pann, *Rachel*, 1950, Oil on cardboard

After Pann's youngest son was killed in Israel's War of Independence in 1948, he shifted his focus to painting scenes of the Holocaust. Pann died in Jerusalem in 1963.

About the Center

The Center was established in January of 2015 in New York City with the purpose of promoting research on European Jewish art and art of the Holocaust, including art looted during the Holocaust, furthering the public's understanding of the roots of Jewish and Israeli art, furthering the public's knowledge of European Jewish art and art of the Holocaust, and ensuring that the lives and artwork of the great Jewish artists who risked their lives to paint during the Holocaust are remembered for eternity.