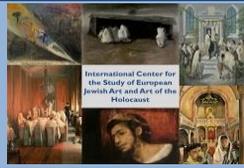


International Center for the Study of European Jewish Art and Art of the Holocaust



Restituted Nazi-Looted Painting by Max Liebermann Auctioned Off at Sotheby's in London for Close to 1.9 Million Pounds

By Ronit D. Appel, July 2, 2015

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).

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.



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



Two Riders on a Beach, along with over 1,200 other works of art, was discovered in the Munich apartment of Cornelius Gurlitt in 2012. Pictured here is the apartment building in which the painting was found.