

PRESS RELEASE

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RESTITUTIONS COMMITTEE ADVISES ON TWO ART CLAIMS

THE HAGUE – The Restitutions Committee is publishing two recommendations it issued in December 2011, in which it advised the State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science to return one work of art to the heirs of S. Rosenberg. The State Secretary recently (31 January 2012) adopted the recommendations.

Rosenbaum

On 19 December 2011, the Restitutions Committee issued a recommendation on thirteen objects claimed as being formerly owned by I. Rosenbaum N.V. This Amsterdam art dealership was run by German-Jewish art dealers who had left Germany because of Hitler's coup. In addition to the art dealership in Amsterdam, members of the family managed art dealerships in Paris, London and New York.



The Holy Family with John the Baptist and St. Catherine, from workshop of J. Palma il Vecchio, photo RCE, (NK 1436)

In its recommendation, the Committee concludes that one of the thirteen claimed works, a 16th-century panel from the workshop of *Palma il Vecchio* (NK 1436), would have to be returned to the grandson of Saemy Rosenberg, who was director of art dealership Rosenbaum at the time. It transpired that during the occupation, this painting was seized by the Dienststelle Mühlmann, a German looting organisation.

The Committee recommends rejecting the claim to the other twelve objects. Seeing as art dealership Rosenbaum worked closely with another Amsterdam art dealership at the time, and that the art dealerships had each other's works on consignment as well as jointly owning works, one of the difficult tasks in this case was to determine whether Rosenbaum could be considered owner of the works. As regards two of the claimed paintings, the Committee has found that they cannot be considered the property of Rosenbaum (*Meester van de Cappella Medici Polyptiek, St. Nicolas of Myra* (NK 2915), and N. Maes, *Portrait of a man* (NK 3269)). The Committee therefore advises to reject the claim to these works. It also transpired that three other works of art had been owned by Rosenbaum but ownership had been transferred to the other art dealership mentioned

above in the course of 1940 (N. Neufchatel, *Portrait of a man* (NK 1457); I. van Ostade, *Stable interior with three children playing* (NK 1474) and J. van Loo, *Three men in a wine cellar* (NK 2173). The Committee does not consider this transfer of ownership to have been involuntary. The Committee also recommends rejecting the claim to the other seven objects (mainly porcelain and ceramics) because of uncertain ownership.

Gutmann

The second recommendation, dated 19 December 2011, concerns four bronze sculptures claimed by the heirs of Jewish banker and art collector Herbert Gutmann. These works of art were part of the collection of Herbert's father, Eugen Gutmann, at least in 1912, and they were acquired by Jewish banker and art collector Fritz Mannheimer in Amsterdam at an unknown point in time prior to 25 June 1934. The Committee's investigation demonstrated that between 1912 and Hitler's coup in 1933, a period of 21 years, various objects from Eugen Gutmann's collection were sold to Fritz Mannheimer. In its recommendation, the Committee concludes that it is not likely that the four claimed artworks were still part of the Eugen Gutmann collection during the Nazi regime. It therefore advises the State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science to reject the claim.

The Restitutions Committee

Since January 2002, the Advisory Committee on the Assessment of Restitution Applications for Items of Cultural Value and the Second World War has issued 107 recommendations and 130 claims were presented to it. The Committee is chaired by Willibrord Davids.

See http://www.restitutiecommissie.nl/en/overzicht_adviezen.html for the recommendations in the restitution cases on Rosenbaum-B (RC 1.82-B) and Gutmann IV-A (RC 1.115-A).

More information

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