

Media information

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"Fair and equitable solution"

The drawing "East Choir of the Bamberg Cathedral" from the former collection of Prof. Curt Glaser is to be restituted

The City of Bamberg and the Museums of the City of Bamberg are again restituting a work of art. The drawing concerned is the "East Choir of the Bamberg Cathedral", which is signed C.W. and was previously attributed to Georg Christian Wilde. It was sold at auction by its former owner, Prof. Dr. Curt Glaser, at the Auktionshaus Max Perl auction of May 18 and 19, 1933 and sold in 1934 to the City of Bamberg by Antiquariat [antiquarian bookstore] Altmann of Berlin. It remains in the collections of the Museums of the City of Bamberg until today. Given that the loss of the work of art was due to Nazi persecution, the drawing will be restituted to the heirs of Prof. Dr. Curt Glaser. Since the City of Bamberg and the Museums of the City of Bamberg are interested in retaining the drawing for the Museum collection because of the subject, the parties agreed to a repurchase of the drawing.

This "fair and equitable solution", according to Museum Director Dr. Regina Hanemann, is due above all also to their mutual respect and willingness to deal with the matter in accordance with the principles of the Washington Conference as well as the tenets of the "Common Declaration of the Federal Government, the States and the associations of local authorities on the discovery and restitution of cultural objects confiscated due to Nazi persecution, especially from Jewish property" of September 14, 1999.

As other owners of works of art from the Glaser collection, both public institutions and museums and private individuals have already done, the City of Bamberg and the Museums of the City of Bamberg, based on their own systematic research on their collections, sought to contact the heirs of Prof. Dr. Curt Glaser and the attorneys representing them.

Professor Curt Glaser, physician, prominent art historian, art critic, author of important works on art history and well-known art collector, had been engaged at Berlin's museums since 1909. During his employment in the Berlin Kupferstichkabinett [Museum of Prints and Drawings] he attained great achievements. In 1924 he took over the post of Director of the Berlin Staatlichen Kunstbibliothek [State Art Library]. When the National Socialists took power, he was persecuted because of his Jewish descent. Before he was forced to retire in September 1933, he had been put on leave of absence from the position of Director of the Kunstbibliothek, as a Jewish Museum Director undesired and persecuted by the Nazis even before the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service was enacted. With the loss of his position and persecution by the National Socialists, Prof. Curt Glaser had neither a professional nor a personal future in Nazi Germany. In June 1933, he emigrated with his second wife, also a Jew, via stopovers in France, Switzerland, Italy and Cuba, finally to the United States, where he died in 1943 in Lake Placid, New York.

To finance his escape, he let large parts of his comprehensive art collection, his art library and home furnishings be auctioned off in two auctions in May 1933 at the auction houses Internationales Kunst- und Auktionshaus GmbH (May 9, 1933) as well as Max Perl (May 18-19, 1933).

The drawing and its provenance was last on view in the well-regarded exhibition "Seeking Evidence: Provenance Research in Bamberg – Insights. Possibilities. Boundaries." in the Historischen Museum [Historical Museum] in Bamberg. The present agreement follows those solutions which the heirs of Prof. Dr. Curt Glaser have already been able to reach with the Landesmuseum Hannover [Hannover State Museum] in Lower Saxony, the Rijksmuseum of Amsterdam, the Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz [Foundation for Prussian Cultural Heritage] of Berlin, the Bayerischen Staatsgemäldesammlungen [Bavarian State Painting Collections], the Germanischen Nationalmuseum [Germanic National Museum], the Museum Ludwig

of the City of Cologne, the Kunsthalle Hamburg [Hamburg Art Gallery] and with various private collectors.

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