

Press Release from the Heirs of Prof. Dr. Curt Glaser

Fair and Just Solution Reached Between the Kunstmuseum Basel and the Heirs of Curt Glaser

(New York, March 27, 2020 for immediate release) The Kunstmuseum Basel and the heirs of Curt Glaser have agreed on a fair and just solution according to the principles of the 1998 Washington Conference.

The parties involved have agreed that the approximately 200 works of art in question will remain in the Kunstmuseum Basel and thus remain accessible to the public. The Kunstmuseum Basel will pay a financial compensation to Curt Glaser's heirs and will also organize a comprehensive exhibition in 2022 regarding Curt Glaser and his work as a collector, art historian, art critic and museum director.

Prof. Dr. Curt Glaser, physician, prominent art historian, art critic, author of important art historical works and well-known art collector, worked in Berlin museums starting in 1909. In 1924 he took over the office of Director of the State Art Library located in Berlin.

When the National Socialists came to power, he was persecuted because of his Jewish origins. With the loss of his employment and as a result of the persecution measures directed against himself and the Jewish population, Curt Glaser lost both his personal and professional future in Nazi Germany. In June 1933 he emigrated with his wife via France, Switzerland, Italy and Cuba, finally reaching the USA, where he died in Lake Placid, New York, in 1943.

Prior to this, he auctioned off large parts of his extensive art collection, art library and home furnishings in two large auctions in May 1933 at the Berlin auction houses Internationales Kunst und Auktionshaus GmbH as well as at Max Perl. At the last auction on May 18-19, 1933, the Kunstmuseum Basel acquired about 200 works of art from Glaser's collection. In affidavits given in damages proceedings in the 1960's, both his sister in law, Elly Glaser, and his wife Maria Glaser, testified that Prof. Glaser had told them at the time of the auction that he had lost over 100,000 Reichmarks and that the auction was practically a "total loss".

After the Kunstmuseum Basel initially did not agree to enter into negotiations for a fair and just solution in 2008, the case was reopened in 2017. In 2018 the Board of Trustees, after a new comprehensive examination and reappraisal of the entire historical facts, recognized that Prof. Curt Glaser was a Nazi victim, that the Washington Conference Principles apply, and that a fair and just solution should be reached.

The heirs of Curt Glaser welcome the initiatives and the goodwill of the Board of Trustees and the Basel Kunstmuseum in conducting provenance research in order to find fair and just solutions

with the heirs of those persecuted by the Nazi regime. Thus, the solution now reached between the Kunstmuseum Basel and the heirs of Prof. Dr. Curt Glaser has been achieved in a procedure based on professionalism and mutual respect.

David J. Rowland, attorney for the Prof. Curt Glaser heirs, said: "We want to thank the Board of Trustees and the Kunstmuseum Basel for their willingness to reexamine this matter, review the historical circumstances under which Prof. Glaser lost his art collection, and for their professionalism in handling this case and finding a fair and just solution. We also look forward to the upcoming exhibition regarding Prof. Glaser. This is an outstanding example of how fair and just solutions can be found in Nazi looted art cases."

The agreement with the Kunstmuseum Basel follows the fair and just solutions that Curt Glaser's heirs have already found with the Landesmuseum Hannover, the Rijks Museum Amsterdam, the Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz Berlin, the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung Munich, the Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg, the Museum Ludwig of the City of Cologne, the Kunsthalle Hamburg, the Museums of the City of Bamberg and numerous private collectors.

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