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# **ICE returns second painting stolen during Holocaust**

## ***Italian Old Master work belonged to a Jewish art dealer who was forced to sell it by the Nazis***

NEW YORK - The widely publicized return of a painting by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) two weeks ago led to the recovery of another work of art belonging to the late Jewish art dealer Dr. Max Stern. Today, at the Leo Baeck Institute for the study of the history and culture of German-speaking Jewry, ICE and the U.S. Attorney's Office returned a depiction of St. Jerome back to the university beneficiaries of Stern's estate.

An ICE investigation revealed the late 16th century oil painting was forcibly sold by the Nazis through Lempertz Auction House in 1937. The St. Jerome painting by famed Italian artist Ludovico Carracci (1555 - 1619), was in the private collection of prominent Manhattan art dealer Richard L. Feigen. Feigen unwittingly bought the painting, valued at \$55,324, when it was reoffered by Lempertz in 2000.

The ICE repatriation on April 21, 2009, of another painting from the 1937 forced sale of Stern property, "Portrait of a Musician Playing a Bagpipe," garnered extensive media coverage. News accounts of that ceremony led Feigen to take a second look at the St. Jerome painting. When he realized that it was an exact match with the one lost in 1937, Feigen immediately made the information known.

Stern consigned more than 200 paintings to the Lempertz in Cologne, Germany, after the Nazi regime forced him out of business. The proceeds from these coerced sales were never forwarded to Stern, who fled Germany to avoid further persecution and eventually settled in Canada.

"When we returned the "Bagpiper" two weeks ago, we made a plea for art dealers everywhere to return all paintings stolen in the Holocaust," said Peter J. Smith, special agent in charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in New York. "ICE and the US Attorney's Office are grateful for the cooperation of art dealer Richard Feigen in the recovery of the Carracci and hope that his leadership will encourage his peers in the trade to take a good look at their own works."

"On Holocaust Remembrance Day, we had the honor of returning a painting stolen by the Nazis to the estate of Dr. Max Stern. Today, thanks to Richard Feigen's selfless action upon hearing about that event, we have the honor of returning another painting stolen by the Nazis to Dr. Stern's estate. Our Office and ICE are committed to the goal of repatriating all surviving works of art stolen by the Nazis," said Lev L. Dassin, acting US Attorney. "Each work of art recovered is an act of remembrance, a measure of redemption, and a commitment to justice."

"Our research has determined that there are numerous German auction houses that have regularly offered tainted property in the post-war period", said Clarence Epstein, head of the Max Stern Art Restitution Project at Concordia University. "Such decisions to offer works with problematic ownership histories into the international art market is clearly backfiring."

"The depiction of the hermit St. Jerome may have been utilized by prominent artists such as Sir Joshua Reynolds and passed through Italian and French aristocratic families before I acquired it for my own collection," said Richard Feigen of Richard L. Feigen & Co. "It was as a result of the news on the

"Bagpiper" that I made the connection between the painting and its forced sale in 1937. There was then no question in my mind as to how to proceed."

Stern and his wife started a foundation that supports universities and museums across North America and Israel. The Max Stern Art Restitution Project directly benefits Concordia University and McGill University in Montreal and Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Dr. Clarence Epstein, director of special projects and cultural affairs at Concordia University, accepted the portrait on behalf of the executors of the estate.

ICE, the largest investigative agency of the Department of Homeland Security, handles investigations into cultural artifacts that show up on the world market.

ICE is represented by Senior Special Agent Bonnie Goldblatt in the Department of State, Office of Holocaust Art Recovery Working Group. The group is a representation of U.S. experts in the area of Holocaust looted art in the government and private sector.

<http://www.ice.gov/pi/nr/0905/090506newyork.htm>

For more about ICE's cultural heritage investigations, please go to:  
<http://www.ice.gov/pi/news/factsheets/index.htm>.

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