Israel Museum Returns Nazi-Seized Klee Drawing to Heir of Jewish Victim

By Catherine Hickley - Sep 29, 2010

The Israel Museum in Jerusalem restituted a drawing by Paul Klee to the heir of a Jewish telephone maker who fled the Nazis in 1937.

The 1920 drawing, “Veil Dance,” was among works that Harry Fuld left with a transportation company when he escaped Germany for England. His art collection was seized by the Nazis in 1941. The Klee drawing was among works handed over by the allies to the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization in 1948.

Fuld inherited the art collection and the telephone-making company in 1932. After losing the business under Nazi “Aryanization” laws, he emigrated to Britain. When he died in 1963, he left his estate to his housekeeper, Gisela Martin. She, in turn, bequeathed her estate to the U.K. branch of Magen David Adom, Israel’s emergency medical service, in 1992.

“It is gratifying that, in restituting this work, it is donated to an organization that supports a major charitable cause in Israel,” James S. Snyder, the director of the museum, said in an e-mailed statement today.

In November last year, Berlin’s museum authorities reached a settlement with Magen David Adom for a medieval alabaster relief that was also part of Fuld’s collection. The charity also recovered a painting by Henri Matisse from the Pompidou Center in Paris, and is seeking to recover objects as diverse as 12th-century Buddha statues and 16th-century Italian masters.

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