

Press release



All things come to those who wait – Two double restitutions at Van Ham

Once again the Cologne auction house Van Ham took on the responsible role of mediator in two successful restitution negotiations. After five years of research and negotiation, two restituted works from the important art collection of the Jewish porcelain manufacturer Arthur Maier (d. 1935) will be called up in an auction for the first time (!). On 2 June 2021 these two works plus two paintings from the Jacques Goudstikker Collection can be offered at the Fine Art sale, as Van Ham was able to achieve a consensual agreement between the parties involved in advance of the auction.

Until 1935, the two paintings *Hunting Still Life with Songbirds* by Jan Fyt and Antonio Francesco Peruzzi's *Large Landscape with Figure Staffage* were part of Arthur Maier's art collection in Karlovy Vary, which was included in the "series of great European private collections" by the magazine *Der Sammler* (The Collector) in 1925. After Maier's death the collection, as well as the luxurious spa house Villa Splendid, went to his illegitimate daughter **Marianne Matella**, his sole heiress. Due to the tense political situation in the Sudetenland, where the invasion of the German troops was imminent, the spa guests stayed away, which put Matella in financial difficulties. Planning to emigrate to Switzerland, she sold a work by Goya to the National Gallery Prague and gave a painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder to a bank as collateral for a money loan. Yet it was too late for her to emigrate. In her memoirs, which are kept at the State District Archives of Karlovy Vary, among other places, Marianne Matella wrote in 1946: "Immediately after the occupation of Karlovy Vary I was constantly followed by the Gestapo." She further wrote: "On the day on which the local synagogue was burned to the ground, a horde of about 15 Nazis forced their way into my house. I hid in the attic and suffered a nervous breakdown." From that point on she was not "only" under observation of the Gestapo, her assets were also controlled by a trustee from the German Reich. Matella explained: "An auctioneer from the company Lempertz in Cologne was sent to me." In May 2021

another document she wrote: "I was forced to sell a collection of old paintings in Cologne which I had inherited from my father."

This sale took place at the Lempertz Auction House in Cologne on 30 November 1939. The auction catalogue lists 37 works from an "important Sudeten German collection", including the two paintings by Jan Fyt and Antonio Francesco Peruzzini, the latter of which due to the very close artistic relationship to his teacher being ascribed to Alessandro Magnasco at the time. However, the auction catalogue does not mention the provenance of the two lots but refers to two articles by Otto Kletzl in the magazine *Belvedere* from 1931 and 1932. Researching these articles one quickly learns the provenance of the pictures, as the articles are dedicated to the "paintings of the Arthur Maier Collection Karlovy Vary". This also explains the reference to an "important Sudeten German collection" in the first pages of the catalogue.

Since Arthur Maier's community of heirs was only in the process of being formed when the two works were consigned to Van Ham (2016), the Lost Art database contained no references to them yet. It was only through the mediation of Anna Rubin from the HCPO (Holocaust Claims Processing Office) in New York, USA, that an agreement was reached after five years with the Dresden-based lawyer Dr Sabine Rudolph, who represents the heirs of Arthur Maier and Marianne Matella. Thanks to the sellers' awareness of their responsibility towards the past and the support of Markus Eisenbeis, Director of Van Ham Kunstauktionen, who acted as mediator with his experience in restitutions, the respective parties involved were able to agree on a restitution.

Restitution of works from the Jacques Goudstikker Collection

Another restitution could be achieved for two paintings from the former collection of **Jacques Goudstikker**. Goudstikker was probably the most important art dealer of his time. In May 1940 he fled together with his wife Dési and his son Eduard out of fear of persecution by the Nazis. At that time his art collection comprised about 1,400 works, which he left in the hands of his employees. While travelling, Jacques Goudstikker had a tragic, fatal accident – he fell. He had kept a black ring binder in which he had entered an inventory of all artworks. On the basis of this book, the collection can be reconstructed today. Hermann Göring and his accomplice, Alois Miedl, took over the art dealership by way of deceit, thus looting Goudstikker's complete assets, some of which they sold profitably.

Through the mediation of Van Ham, the seller agreed to reconstitute the works *Saint Francis with Animals* from the **circle of Joachim Patinir** and *The Drawing Student in front of a Marble Sculpture* by a **French 18th-century master** to the heiress, Marei von Saher, of Jacques Goudstikker's estate. Marei von Saher is very grateful to Markus Eisenbeis for his competent support in the restitution of the two works. For further questions regarding the Goudstikker Art Research Project, the coordinator and lawyer Dr. Ewald Volhard, Berlin, is at your disposal.

VAN HAM

Restituted works at Van Ham



Jan Fyt (1611–1661)
Hunting Still Life with Songbirds | Oil on canvas | 39 x 58.5 cm
Prov.: Auction at Lempertz on 30.11.1939, Lot 14
Formerly Arthur Maier Collection, Karlovy Vary
Estimate: 5,000–8,000 euros



Antonio Francesco Peruzzini (1643–1724)
with participation of others
Large Landscape with Figure Staffage | Oil on canvas | 90 x 115 cm
Prov.: Auction at Lempertz on 30.11.1939, Lot 30 (sold as Magnasco) | Formerly Arthur Maier Collection, Karlovy Vary
Estimate: 5,000–8,000 euros



French master – 18th century
The Drawing Student in front of a Marble Sculpture
Oil on wood | 20.5 x 18 cm
Formerly Jacques Goudstikker Collection, Amsterdam
Estimate: 3,000–4,000 euros



Joachim Patinir (1475/85–1524) – circle
Saint Francis with Animals | Oil on wood | 25 x 18 cm
Formerly Jacques Goudstikker Collection, Amsterdam
Estimate: 1,000–1,200 euros

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Van Ham – About us

Van Ham Kunstauktionen, founded in 1959, is a family run business, managed in the second generation by Markus Eisenbeis. Annually, approximately 20 internationally renowned auctions take place in the fields of Modern Art, Post War & Contemporary Art, Fine Art, Decorative Art, Fine Jewels & Watches and Art & Interior. With 34 curated Online Only auctions in 2020, Van Ham is the market leader in Germany. In the same year, Van Ham achieved the highest annual result in its history with around 40 million Euros. Regularly achieved auction records make Van Ham one of Germany's leading auction houses.

VAN HAM Kunstauktionen

Anne Rinckens
Press and Public Relations
Hitzelerstraße 2
50968 Cologne | Germany
Tel. +49 (221) 92 58 62-110
Fax +49 (221) 92 58 62-4
a.rinckens@van-ham.com
www.van-ham.com