

Germany puts 590 works from Nazi art trove online

BERLIN - Germany will catalogue online from this week 590 artworks thought to have been looted by the Nazis that is part of a vast art treasure trove found in a garbage-strewn flat.



One of the painting identified by a Dutch museum that was found in the grubby flat in Germany, thought to hold hundreds of value paintings looted by the Nazis. Image: [Yahoo](#)

Publishing images of the paintings, watercolours, drawings and prints on [Lostart](#) aims to help identify the rightful owners of the masterpieces from the spectacular find of more than 1,400 works.

Germany has faced international criticism for dragging its feet on publicising the discovery of the artworks, that including famous masters such as Matisse, Rodin and Delacroix. The works were found almost two years ago.

Chancellor Angela Merkel's government and the state of Bavaria have since set up a task force and pledged to work with Jewish advocates and art experts to quickly establish the provenance of much of the find.

"With the publication on [Lostart](#), the origin of the recovered artworks can be established as quickly and transparently as possible," said the head of the task force, Ingeborg Berggreen-Merkel.

Hundreds of images must still be published

So far, just 25 artworks have been published on the government website, which has frequently crashed amid a global wave of interest.

The 590 works to go online starting this week are those suspected of having been bought under duress from Jewish owners or plundered from museums amid Adolf Hitler's crackdown on avant-garde art which the Nazis dubbed "degenerate".

German customs police first seized the works in the Munich home of the elderly recluse Cornelius Gurlitt in February 2012, but the find was kept secret until a news magazine reported it nearly two weeks go.

The man is the son of Hildebrand Gurlitt, a powerful art dealer commissioned by the Nazis to sell confiscated, looted and extorted works in exchange for hard currency.

Cornelius Gurlitt, depicted in media reports as an eccentric loner, is officially under investigation for tax evasion and misappropriation of assets.

Bavaria's Justice Minister Winfried Bausback, in an interview in the Munich daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung, said he hoped for an amicable settlement with Cornelius Gurlitt.

Citing Germany's responsibility to make amends for its past, he suggested that helping return works stolen from Jewish and other Nazi-persecuted groups would earn Gurlitt "respect and appreciation".

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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