



21 JULY 2017

**THE 13TH RESTITUTION BY THE BAYERISCHE
STAATSGEMÄLDESAMMLUNGEN:**

'RAISING OF LAZARUS' FROM THE COLLECTION OF JAMES BLEICHRÖDER

21.07.2017, 11.30 A.M.

Since 1998, the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen (Bavarian State Painting Collections) has restituted a total of twelve works from eight collections. With this **13th restitution**, the Bavarian State Painting Collections and the joint heirs of James von Bleichröder have reached a good solution for all parties, after lengthy and intensive groundwork.

The case concerns the painting:

'THE RAISING OF LAZARUS'

C. 1530-1540, SOUTH-GERMAN MASTER

SOFTWOOD, 107 X 160.2 CM

As early as 2004, the Bavarian State Painting Collections made the painting's provenance public in the richly annotated publication 'Die Kunstsammlung Hermann Görings', written by the provenance researcher Ilse von zur Mühlen. Two years later, the painting was posted on the 'Lost Art' database, directly following the database's creation, because its origin in the Göring collection suggested that it had might have been a work of looted art. After a representative of the joint heirs subsequently got in contact with the museum association in 2011 and submitted a formal restitution claim in 2015, historical research began into the persecution of the family and the painting's chain of custody.

The painting 'The Raising of Lazarus' comes from the estate of James von Bleichröder (1859-1937), a royal Prussian cavalry captain and doctor of jurisprudence. James von Bleichröder was one of the sons of the banker Gerson von Bleichröder, owner of a private bank of the same name that was ruined under Hitler. Because of his Jewish heritage, James von Bleichröder was among those persecuted from 1933 on. Similar to the fate of the bank, the Von Bleichröder family lost their social standing. Several family members lost their lives in the Holocaust.

After James von Bleichröder's death in 1938, the painting was auctioned at the Lepke auction house, where it was acquired by the art dealer Böhler of Munich and sold to Hermann Göring shortly afterward. It remained in Hermann Göring's collection until 1945 and was transferred by the Trust Administration for Cultural Assets (Treuhandverwaltung für Kulturgut) of West Germany to the Bavarian State Painting Collections as 'relocated state property' in 1961.

Its restitution follows the 'Washington Principles' and is in accordance with the guidelines of the 16 German states for the implementation of the 'Declaration of the Federal Government, States, and Central Municipal Associations for the Recovery and Restitution of Nazi-Confiscated Cultural Property, Especially from Jewish Owners'.



The heirs of James von Bleichröder and the Bavarian State Painting Collections have jointly and bindingly agreed that the work is first to be restituted and subsequently purchased by the Bavarian State Painting Collections.

In an emphatic statement, Director-General Dr. Bernhard Maaz said: 'It is important to me that we apply all energies in accounting for this dark chapter of history. I am pleased that, after protracted groundwork and lengthy efforts, we have managed to find justice for the Bleichröder family, and that the painting could be acquired with the Bavarian State Painting Collections' own funds, combined with additional donations.'

Speaking on behalf of one part of the 'community of heirs', the lawyer Dr. Frank Winkel stated:

'As heirs of James von Bleichröder, we are satisfied with the resolution. The Bavarian State Painting Collections reviewed and approved the restitution claim with great care and deliberation. We cannot undo the crimes of the Nazi era, but we can provide legal closure. This has been achieved.'

In a statement on behalf of the other part of the 'community of heirs', **James Palmer, founder of Mondex Corporation, said:**

'I am very pleased that the restitution claim for this important painting has been amicably resolved. Justice, respect, closure and understanding are all important elements in any restitution project. On behalf of the family of James von Bleichröder, we are grateful to the researchers at the Bavarian State Painting Collections, and in particular to their Director-General Dr. Bernhard Maaz, and we thank them for their help and cooperation with Mondex Corporation.'

The painting, 'The Raising of Lazarus', has undergone restoration and will again be on display in the branch of the Bavarian State Painting Collections located at Schloss Johannisburg in Aschaffenburg, as soon as a construction project there has been completed. In future, an honorary plaque will give details of the restitution and the fate of the family that once owned it.

In response to the restitution, Bavarian Minister of Art Dr. Ludwig Spaenle stated: 'The restitution of the painting 'The Raising of Lazarus' by a South-German master from the sixteenth century, which comes from the estate of Dr. James von Bleichröder (d. 1937), demonstrates that the Bavarian Ministry of Culture and state collections and institutions are committed to vigorous provenance research with the goal of rectifying injustices of the Nazi era.'

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