

Resolution on looted art passed at the General Meeting of the Association of European Jewish Museums held on Monday, 20 November 2006 at The Jewish Community Centre, Venice

At the General Meeting of the Association of European Jewish Museums held on Monday, 20 November 2006 at The Jewish Community Centre in Venice, the following resolution regarding looted art was passed unanimously:

AEJM conference, Venice, November 2006

Acknowledging that several Jewish museums in Europe have carried out provenance research of their holdings during the last years the participants to the Venice conference of the Association of the European Jewish Museums (AEJM) in November 2006 recommend to European Jewish museums to sign the following resolution concerning provenance research (history of ownership), and consequently the return of works of art, works of applied art, Judaica, Books, Manuscripts, archival material, ephemera and household articles formerly belonging to pre-war owners.

In developing a consensus on principles to assist in resolving issues relating to Nazi-confiscated works of art, works of applied art, Judaica, Books, Manuscripts, ephemera, and household articles the AEJM recognizes that among the participating Jewish museums there are differing legal systems depending on the nations they are located in and that countries act within the context of their own laws.

The subject matter of the resolution is the identification and discovery of

- *unlawfully appropriated objects that may be in the custody of European Jewish museums and the restitution of these objects to their former owners or their respective heirs*
- *unconsciously acquired objects of dubious provenance*
- *inherited holdings of not identified provenance including long-term loans and donations*

AEJM acknowledges that during World War II and the years following the end of the war, much of the information needed to establish provenance information and prove ownership was dispersed or lost. AEJM therefore agrees that both full and associate members of the Association are required to follow the Washington Principles in regard to their own collections and to strive to:

- (1) identify all objects in their collections that were issued/created before 1946*
- (2) reasonably consider gaps or ambiguities in provenance in the light of the passage of time and the circumstances of the Holocaust era*
- (3) make available object and provenance (history of ownership) information on those objects and make this information accessible to potential rightful owners or their heirs*

- (4) *publicise works of art, applied art, Judaica, Books, Manuscripts, ephemera, and household articles that are found to have been confiscated by the Nazis and not subsequently restituted in order to locate their pre-War owners or their heirs*
- (5) *take steps to achieve a just and fair solution in cases where the pre-War owners of works of art, applied art, Judaica, Books, Manuscripts, ephemera, and household articles that are found to have been confiscated by the Nazis and not subsequently restituted, or their heirs, can be identified, recognising this may vary according to the facts and circumstances surrounding a specific case*
- (6) *take steps to achieve an appropriate solution in cases where the pre-War owners of works of art, applied art, Judaica, Books, Manuscripts, ephemera, and household articles that are found to have been confiscated by the Nazis, or the heirs of the owners, can not be identified*
- (7) *give priority to continuing provenance research as resources allow.*

An annual report on progress in provenance research is required to be submitted by full and associated members prior to the AEJM conference.