



PRESS RELEASE

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Allentown Art Museum comes to agreement with heirs of Jewish collector who fled Nazi Germany

Museum to share story in special display and program

ALLENTOWN, PA—The Allentown Art Museum has entered into an agreement with the heirs of Henry Bromberg, who sold works from his collection while fleeing Nazi Germany, including *Portrait of George the Bearded, Duke of Saxony* (ca. 1534) by Lucas Cranach the Elder and workshop. The painting was purchased by the Museum from a New York gallery in 1961 and has been on view at the Museum since.

Allentown Art Museum President and CEO, Max Weintraub, says, “It was extremely important to the Museum to engage in the ethical dimensions of the painting’s history in the Bromberg family. This work of art entered the market and eventually found its way to the Museum only because Henry Bromberg had to flee persecution from Nazi Germany. That moral imperative compelled us to act. We hope that this voluntary act by the Museum will inform and encourage similar institutions to reach fair and just solutions.”

The Bromberg family says, “We are pleased that another painting from our grandparents’ art collection was identified and are satisfied that the Allentown Art Museum carefully and responsibly checked the provenance of the portrait of *George the Bearded, Duke of Saxony* and the circumstances under which Henry and Hertha Bromberg had to part with it during the Nazi-period. After emigration to the United States, our grandparents first settled in New Jersey. After several years, they moved to Yardley, Pennsylvania, to be near their son Edgar and his family. This makes the fair and just solution for the painting in the Allentown Art Museum particularly special.”

The Allentown Art Museum was pleased to reach a fair and just solution with the Bromberg heirs in the spirit of the Washington Conference Principles on Nazi Confiscated Art, and applicable guidance from the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), and the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD). The Pennsylvania Attorney General has approved the Museum’s decision to deaccession the painting. In January 2025, it will be included in Christie’s Old Master sale in New York.

The Museum will highlight the work in a special display of two paintings owned by Jewish families in Germany in the years leading up to the Second World War, illustrating the different trajectories of the artworks during and after the Nazi period. The installation will be on view **August 29 through October 20, 2024**, and will include educational information about the

Museum's decision to deaccession, or officially remove, *Portrait of George the Bearded* from its collection based on its prior ownership by the Bromberg family of Hamburg, Germany.

On September 28, 2024, at 1 p.m., the Museum will host a Dynamic Conversation on Nazi-era art and restitution with distinguished experts **Richard Aronowitz**, Christie's Global Head of Restitution, and **Eileen Brankovic**, Christie's International Business Director of Restitution, moderated by **Elaine Mehalakes**, Vice President of Curatorial Affairs at the Allentown Art Museum. Together they will delve into the history and scholarship of art restitution, shedding light on the complexities and significance of addressing the injustices of the past.

Admission to the Museum is always free, and there is free parking in the Museum's lot at Fifth and Linden Streets. The galleries are open 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. every Thursday through Sunday, with extended hours on Third Thursdays until 8 p.m.

ABOUT THE ALLENTOWN ART MUSEUM

The Allentown Art Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that participates in the cultural, educational, and economic life of the Lehigh Valley. Defined by a unique combination of tradition and innovation, our collections, educational partnerships, community-based programs, and exhibitions are dedicated to inspiring the broadest possible public engagement, access, and service. For more information please visit AllentownArtMuseum.org.

ABOUT CHRISTIE'S

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IMAGE CAPTION

Lucas Cranach the Elder and Workshop (German, 1472-1553), *Portrait of George the Bearded, Duke of Saxony*, ca. 1534, oil on panel. Courtesy of the Allentown Art Museum