



V&A to publish complete list of 'Entartete Kunst' online

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The V&A holds the only known copy of a complete list of 'Entartete Kunst' ('Degenerate Art') confiscated by the Nazi regime from public institutions in Germany, mostly during 1937 and 38. The typescript inventory of 'Entartete Kunst' was apparently compiled in 1941-2 and provides information on the provenance and fate of each work.

The inventory was donated to the V&A by the widow of Heinrich Robert (Harry) Fischer in 1996. The list has been used by scholars internationally since its arrival at the Museum and copies have been shared with institutions around the world, but images of the original pages have not been available online until now.

The list was compiled by the *Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda* (Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda) and is one of the key sources on the provenance of works of confiscated 'Entartete Kunst'. It comprises 479 pages, split into two volumes (A-G and G-Z). The document lists institutions alphabetically by location. For each institution confiscated works are listed alphabetically by artist and include information on what happened to each piece. Often the name of the work's buyer and a price are given, others entries are marked "X" indicating that they were destroyed.

At least two other copies of volume one (A-G) were known to have survived the war, but it was thought that all copies of volume two (G-Z) had perished until the V&A obtained the complete typescript in 1996. A PDF of the document in its entirety will be made available on the V&A's website (www.vam.ac.uk) from the end of January.

Martin Roth, V&A Director, said: "*This list is so significant for all those who work in the field of provenance research. The recent Gurlitt case highlights how important it is for this original document to be made available in its entirety to as wide an audience as possible by publishing it online.*"

Heinrich Robert "Harry" Fischer (born Vienna 30 August 1903; died London 12 April 1977) was an Austrian-born art dealer who fled to Britain in 1938. He served in the British

Army's Pioneer Corps during WWII, an auxiliary corps joined by many Austrian and German refugees. Fischer went on to become one of the founders of Malborough Fine Art in 1946. Fischer became a naturalised British citizen in 1947, and established Fischer Fine Art in the early 1970s. Although it is unknown how, when and for what purpose Fischer obtained the list, he seems to have possessed it from at least the late 1960s.

The widow of Harry Fischer, Elfriede Fischer, donated the list to the V&A as part of the Heinrich Robert Fischer Collection, which comprises 69 books, journals and exhibition catalogues published between 1905 and 1939. Since its acquisition, the list of 'Entartete Kunst' has been used by provenance researchers from around the world. Copies of the original have been available in the National Art Library since 1997, and are also held by several institutions overseas.

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Notes to Editors

- 'Entartete Kunst' was the title of an exhibition held in Munich in 1937 drawn from the works seized by the Nazi regime from German public institutions. The terminology applied by the Nazis translates into English as 'Degenerate Art', and encompassed most works now described as modern art.
- The exhibition was seen by more than 2 million visitors in Munich (over 20,000 visitors a day) and by over 3 million in total in versions of the exhibitions held in other cities of the Reich.
- There is a research centre for 'Entartete Kunst' based at the Freie Universität, Berlin which presents information from the list held by the V&A as well as extensive additional research: http://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/db_entart_kunst/datenbank/index.html
- The National Art Library is a public reference library of fine and decorative arts housed within the V&A. It contains books and documents from many different countries and periods. The Library is open to the public Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday: 10.00 – 17.30; and on Friday: 10.00 – 18.30.

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