



Press Release

Kunstsammlung Rudolf-August Oetker GmbH to return painting by Hans Thoma (1839–1924) to the family of Hedwig Ullmann

<Bielefeld, 10 January 2017> In October 2016, the Kunstsammlung Rudolf-August Oetker GmbH announced that an audit of its art collection was underway. The purpose of the audit is to assess whether any audited artwork belonged to a person persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, ideology or political opposition to National Socialism who was wrongfully deprived of such an artwork. A painting will now be restituted to the heirs of the former owners.

Rudolf-August Oetker bought a painting known as "*Frühling im Gebirge/Kinderreigen*" by Hans Thoma at public auction in 1954. The painting has been in the Oetker Collection ever since. Recently, it was identified by the provenance researcher retained by the Kunstsammlung as having been sold by Hedwig Ullmann in Germany in 1938.

Albert (1862–1912) and Hedwig Ullmann (1872–1945) were well-known Jewish art collectors, who acquired the Villa Gerlach in



Frankfurt towards the end of the 19th Century. As part of that purchase, the Ullmanns also became the owners of a series of wall panel paintings depicting the four seasons, which the previous owner had commissioned Hans Thoma to create.

Mrs Ullmann emigrated from Germany in 1938 in the wake of Nazi persecution of the Jews and was forced to sell the painting as she emigrated.

The Kunstsammlung contacted, of its own initiative, the representative of the heirs of Hedwig Ullmann. The heirs did not know the whereabouts of the painting. The Kunstsammlung advised them that the painting was in its possession and that it wished to return it to them on moral grounds. The heirs have gratefully accepted.

The Board of the Kunstsammlung is delighted that the Ullmann family is being reunited with the painting.

The attorney representing Hedwig Ullmann's heirs, David J. Rowland, made the following statement on behalf of his clients:

“Our clients, the heirs of Albert and Hedwig Ullmann, want to acknowledge the commendable work of the Kunstsammlung Oetker. This is an outstanding example of a private collection doing the right thing regarding Nazi looted art and sets a standard of best



practice in this field. The Ullmann heirs are grateful to the Oetker Collection for returning the Thoma painting 'Springtime in the Mountains' to them in such a responsible manner."

Please direct your enquiries to:

Dr. August Oetker KG
Senior Executive Manager Corporate Communications
Dr. Jörg Schillinger
Phone: +49 (0) 521/155-2619
Fax: +49 (0) 521/155-11-2619
email: joerg.schillinger@oetker.de