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CONCORDIA ANNOUNCES THE RETURN OF AN IMPORTANT FRENCH PAINTING LOST TO MAX STERN DURING THE NAZI REGIME

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MONTREAL/October 18, 2006—

Concordia University in Montreal (Quebec/Canada) is acting on behalf of the executors of the estate of Dr. Max Stern and its three university beneficiaries (Concordia, McGill University/Montreal, Hebrew University/Jerusalem) is pleased to announce the return of the first painting from the hundreds forced out of German-Jewish art dealer's hands at the infamous sale that took place at Lempertz Auction House in Cologne in 1937. Aimee, a Young Egyptian (1869) by renowned French historical painter, Emile Lecomte-Vernet (1821-1900), was unveiled at a press conference on Thursday, October 19th at 1:00pm at Concordia's FOFA Gallery, 1515 St. Catherine Street West, Montreal.

The New York State Banking Department's Holocaust Claims Processing Office (HCPO) has been pursuing an art restitution claim of more than 200 paintings on behalf of the estate, including the Orientalist portrait of Aimee - a sensuous Egyptian dancer gazing down at her finger cymbals. Sotheby's played an instrumental role in securing this particular picture's return. "On behalf of the Holocaust Claims Processing Office and its members who worked so hard for the return of this painting to the estate of Max Stern, I commend Concordia University and Sotheby's for their swift co-operation and dedication on this matter. Their regard for the provenance of Holocaust-looted art, and their extensive efforts to return that art to its rightful owners is an example to be emulated by all" said New York State Banking Superintendent Diana L. Taylor.

"We know that soon after the end of the Second World War, Max Stern pursued his own claims and managed to recover a few paintings - two of them with the assistance of the Canadian military forces in Germany. The repatriation of the Lecomte-Vernet to Stern's adopted home, almost sixty years since these last recovery efforts, reinforces our commitment to the Max Stern Art Restitution Project and to Concordia's leadership in this international endeavor," said Concordia University President, Dr. Claude Lajeunesse. About forty Stern works have resurfaced on art databases in the last decades and are starting to be pinpointed across the world including in museums in Germany, Holland, Spain and Taiwan.

Given how Max Stern left the majority of his assets to charitable causes serving the public, the executors and university beneficiaries in conjunction with the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts have agreed to place the painting on loan to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA). Nathalie Bondil, Chief Curator of the MMFA, added "We're proud to present this work in our galleries, as it attests to the longstanding collaboration between the Museum and Concordia University, as well as to our desire and that of Max Stern to share our love of art with the broadest possible audience. The MMFA is also pleased to work with other institutions on efforts to track down works plundered during World War II to ensure that justice is served."

"The return of the Lecomte-Vernet arrives at an auspicious moment; just in time for the Montreal launch of Auktion 392: Reclaiming the Galerie Stern," D. Seldorff noted Concordia's Dr. Clarence Epstein, who is spearheading the Max Stern Art

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Restitution Project. This exhibit and publication, originating at Concordia's FOFA Gallery, is co-sponsored by Christie's and Sotheby's. It will travel to venues in North America, Europe and Israel to sensitize the public to the Stern Project and to resolving the injustices caused by Nazi policies.

As one of the fastest growing universities in Canada, more than 43,500 students from 157 different countries attend Concordia each year. The university offers more than 500 undergraduate and graduate degree programs within four faculties: Arts and Science, Engineering and Computer Science, Fine Arts and the John Molson School of Business.

The Max Stern Project <http://maxsternproject.concordia.ca>
AUKTION 392: Reclaiming the Galerie Stern, Düsseldorf (www.auktion392.com)

[Aimée, a young Egyptian](#)
[Biography of Charles-Emile-Hippolyte Lecomte-Vernet \(1821-1900\)](#)
[AUKTION 392 - Reclaiming the Galerie Stern, Düsseldorf](#)
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