

# Emil Nolde

PRESS

The heirs of Otto Nathan Deutsch have demanded that a painting currently in the Moderna Museet collection, Blumengarten by Emil Nolde (1917), be returned to them. The background is that the painting disappeared when Otto Nathan Deutsch left Germany in 1939 to escape Nazi persecution. The government has now ordered Moderna Museet to resolve the issue together with the heirs of Otto Nathan Deutsch.

Moderna Museet was initially contacted in 2003 by an American lawyer regarding this matter. The lawyer referred to the principles of the Washington Conference on Holocaust Era Assets in 1998, and demanded that the painting be returned to its rightful owners. Sweden participated in the Washington Conference, but the principles that were adopted there have not led to any new Swedish legislation. The principles state that a "just and fair" settlement shall be achieved as soon as possible, and with consideration taken to all relevant circumstances.

The work was purchased in good faith by Moderna Museet in 1967 from a well-renowned auction house in Lugano, Switzerland. In accordance with a decision by the public authorities in Germany, a so-called Vergleich, in 1962, the heirs obtained what was deemed full compensation for the work at that time.

Moderna Museet is not authorised to hand over works of art from the collection without the government's permission. Accordingly, Moderna Museet has referred the matter to the government, which on 20 June, 2007, assigned Moderna Museet with the task of coming to a settlement with the heirs, in line with the Washington Conference.

The government's decision:

The government hereby assigns to Moderna Museet to resolve the dispute concerning the painting "Blumengarten" by Emil Nolde, in accordance with the Washington Conference, and to come to a settlement with the heirs of Otto Nathan Deutsch.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact our head of communications, Lovisa Lönnebo, on +46 8 5195 5239.