



Karl Spitzweg

Das Klavierspiel (Playing the piano), c. 1840

Ink and pencil on paper, 164 x 130 mm

on recto, lower right, signed: "Spitzweg"

on verso, centre, inscribed in black: "Spitzweg / Aus der Sammlung Geh. Rat / Hinrichsen – Leipzig";
lower centre, framer's label: "ERICH BRETTSCHEIDER / EB / Rahmen / Leipzig / Harkortstr. 7 / 29737 / Tel.- "; lower right, inscribed in pencil: "Hinrichsen" [?]

Provenance:

(...)

Sale: Handzeichnungen von Karl Spitzweg, Galerie Helbing, Munich, 9 April 1908, lot 76

(...)

Henri Hinrichsen, Leipzig

31 August 1939: Seized by the Nazi authorities and thereafter deposited in the Museum für Bildende Künste, Leipzig

7 January 1940: acquired by Hildebrand Gurlitt, Hamburg

By descent to Cornelius Gurlitt, Munich/Salzburg

From 6 May 2014: Estate of Cornelius Gurlitt

13 October 2014: Recommended for restitution to the Hinrichsen heirs

Bibliographical references (selected):

Handzeichnungen von Karl Spitzweg. Auct. Cat., Galerie Helbing, Munich, 9 April 1908. [lot 76, ill.]

Buchholz, Erika. *Henri Hinrichsen und der Musikverlag C. F. Peters: deutsch-jüdisches Bürgertum in Leipzig von 1891 bis 1938*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001.

Wichmann, Siegfried. *Carl Spitzweg: Verzeichnis der Werke, Gemälde und Aquarelle*. Stuttgart: Belser, 2002. [compositional study for no. 161]

Gibas, Monika. *“Arisierung” in Leipzig: Annäherung an ein lange verdrängtes Kapitel der Stadtgeschichte der Jahre 1933 bis 1945*. Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2007. [pp. 289–305]

Primary sources:

Hildebrand Gurlitt and Cornelius Gurlitt Papers:

Photographs: BArch, N 1826 Bild-1611 [12.1_F1212] [n. d.]

BArch, N 1826 Bild-1181 [9.2_F9248] [n.d.]

Sales ledger 1937–41: 7 January 1940 [no. 85]

4 January 1942 [no. 136]

Sales ledger 1937–?: 7 January 1940 [no. 1295]

4 February 1942 [no. 1295]

Seizure Inventory [Sicherstellungsverzeichnis], 2012, no. SV (Part 1)/005

Hildebrand Gurlitt and Cornelius Gurlitt Papers – possible references:

Correspondence: BArch, N 1826/183, fol. 315ff. [vol. 8, fol. 250ff.] Eduard Trautscholdt to Hildebrand Gurlitt, 5 September 1947

BArch, N 1826/178, fol. 227ff. [vol. 6, fol. 458ff.] Walter Hinrichsen to Hildebrand Gurlitt, 22 September 1947

BArch, N 1826/172, fol. 351ff. [=vol. 5, fol. 173ff.] Wiedergutmachungsämter Berlin to Helene Gutlitt, 5. December 1966

Archive of the Museum der Bildenden Künste, Leipzig:

Folder “Acquisitions, Donation and Bequests VI, March 1937–1941”

Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague:

Folder Spitzweg 4

Further sources consulted:

Bundesamt für zentrale Dienste und offene Vermögensfragen, Berlin

Bundesarchiv Koblenz

Cultural Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg: Database of Art Objects at the Jeu de Paume

Database “Central Collecting Point München”

Database “Kunstsammlung Hermann Göring”

Getty Provenance Index, German Sales Catalogs

Haberstock-Archiv der Stadt Augsburg

Lootedart.com

Lost Art

Museum Georg Schäfer Schweinfurt (Spitzweg-Archiv)

Répertoire des Biens Spoliés

Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv

Stadtarchiv Leipzig

Verzeichnis national wertvoller Kunstwerke (“Reichsliste von 1938”)

Note:

This work originated with Geheimrat Dr. Henri Hinrichsen (1868–1942), the owner of the famous music publishing company C. F. Peters in Leipzig, and a well-known collector and patron of the arts.

The Hinrichsen family was persecuted by the Nazis as Jews. C. F. Peters was “Aryanized” by the Nazis, and Henri Hinrichsen was arrested in both 1938 and 1939.

In August 1939, some of the best works from the Hinrichsen collection were seized by the state revenue authority (Oberfinanzpräsident) in Leipzig, and deposited in the Museum für Bildende Künste, the city’s museum of fine art. This Spitzweg drawing was subsequently sold to the Kunstkabinett Dr. H. Gurlitt, Hildebrand Gurlitt’s gallery in Hamburg. The purchase price was paid into a barred account with Deutsche Bank which Dr. Hinrichsen had no access to.

Shortly thereafter, Henri Hinrichsen and his wife Martha fled to Brussels. Martha Hinrichsen, who suffered from diabetes, died in 1941 during the Nazi occupation of Brussels, when she was deprived of insulin. Henri Hinrichsen was deported in mid-September 1942 to Auschwitz concentration camp, where he was murdered. Two of the Hinrichsens’ sons, Paul and Hans-Joachim, perished in the Holocaust.

In 1966, the Wiedergutmachungsämter Berlin, the office responsible for compensation payments to Nazi victims, investigated the misappropriation of Hinrichsen property. On inquiry, Hildebrand’s widow, Helene Gurlitt professed to have no knowledge of the Spitzweg drawing, and claimed that her husband’s business records had all been destroyed in the war.

The personal papers found in Cornelius Gurlitt’s Salzburg home include a collection of about 2,400 photographs of artworks. Photograph no. 12.1_F1212 is a reproduction of this work; inscribed on verso, a statement of authenticity by art expert André Schoeller of Paris, 13, Rue de Téhéran, dated 18 February 1944. This document shows that the work was on the market in the 1940s in occupied France; there is a high probability that Gurlitt acquired the work during that period.

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