

**Fateful Choices: Art from the Gurlitt Trove  
Exhibition at The Israel Museum, Jerusalem**  
24 Sept. 2019 – 24 Jan. 2020**In collaboration with the Kunstmuseum Bern, an exhibition presenting over  
100 artworks from the 'Gurlitt art trove' could be realised in Israel.**

Under the title of *Fateful Choices*, the Israel Museum in Jerusalem is presenting 110 works of art from the bequest of the art dealer Hildebrand Gurlitt (1895-1956), many of which have never been on show in an exhibition before. The exhibits comprise paintings, sculptures and prints. They include not only exceptional pieces of seventeenth-century early German and Dutch paintings but also French art from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as well as German expressionist art. Illustrious artists' names such as Pieter Brueghel, Gustave Courbet and Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Emil Nolde, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Max Beckmann and Otto Dix are represented by their works.

The exhibition investigates the development of Hildebrand Gurlitt's personal career as historian and art dealer, and how his operations were linked to the art policies of the Weimar Republic and Nazi Germany. *Fateful Choice* addresses the devastating effects of Nazi art policy on modern culture and palpably illustrates the dimensions of art dealing against the backdrop of Nazi persecution and extermination policies. The exhibition at the Israel Museum gives its visitors the chance to learn about Gurlitt's methods of acquisition and the provenance of each and every work.

**The 'Gurlitt Art Trove'**

The Gurlitt art trove encompasses a total of 1,566 items. The son of the art dealer Hildebrand Gurlitt, Cornelius Gurlitt (1932–2014), bequeathed the trove to the Kunstmuseum Bern as sole beneficiary in 2014. Following Cornelius Gurlitt's decease, the Kunstmuseum Bern, the German Federal Republic and the Free State of Bavaria signed a fundamental agreement, committing themselves to clarifying the provenances of the artworks and returning any Nazi looted art. With the current state of provenance research it has been possible to single out nine works as looted art. By August 2019 six works could be restituted to their rightful owners.

German Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media Monika Grütters declared that *'The presentation of this exhibition of the Gurlitt art trove now in Jerusalem, after being on show in Germany and Switzerland, is a major step in the cultural cooperation between Germany and Israel as well as a momentous sign of trust. We are aware that researching these holdings has great significance internationally – especially in those countries that are home to many Holocaust survivors and their descendants. In Germany, we consider it our historical responsibility to meet our responsibilities also toward those fates of individuals behind the stolen and confiscated artworks. The exhibition at the Israel Museum is playing its part in contributing to this, and in this context I would like to express my deepest thanks to the curator Shlomit Steinberg, member of the 'Taskforce Schwabinger Kunstfund' for the clarification of the provenances of the artworks. The successful collaboration between The Israel Museum, the Kunstmuseum Bern and the Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn in working for this exhibition shows how important and beneficial international cooperation is in researching and clarifying Nazi looted art.'*

*'The Kunstmuseum Bern accepted the Gurlitt bequest in 2014 in order to assist in the research of the artworks' origins and the historical context as well as to make the uncomplicated restitution of stolen art possible and to ensure that the Gurlitt trove become accessible to the public. We are especially delighted to be able to bring the Gurlitt case in direct reach of the Israeli public with this exhibition',* said Dr. Marcel Brühlhart, member of the Umbrella Foundation Kunstmuseum Bern – Zentrum Paul Klee and representative for the Gurlitt trove.

A catalogue will be published for the exhibition in Modern Hebrew and English.

A cooperation of The Israel Museum, Kunstmuseum Bern and the Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn.

**Curator of the exhibition**

Dr. Shlomit Steinberg, The Israel Museum Jerusalem

**Contact person**

Maria-Teresa Cano

Head of Communication and Public Relations, Kunstmuseum Bern – Zentrum Paul Klee  
[press@kunstmuseumbern.ch](mailto:press@kunstmuseumbern.ch) , Tel.: +41 31 328 09 44

Please use the link of the Kunstmuseum Bern press department to download free press, image and video material: [Webseite](#)