

Editorial

Three years ago, a sketch by Max Liebermann was sold at auction in London. It showed a pleasant outdoor subject of two riders on a beach, loosely painted and described as inspired by the artist's trips to Scheveningen in the summers of 1900 and 1901. The sale, however, was the result of the picture's complex history. It had been found in 2012 in the flat of Cornelius Gurlitt, the son of the dealer Hildebrand Gurlitt, who had been active on behalf of the Nazis. The original, Jewish owner of the picture, the Breslau industrialist David Friedmann, had been forced to relinquish the painting due to racial persecution. Sold at auction locally, the picture first went to the Silesian Museum of Fine Arts and later passed to Hildebrand Gurlitt. It was confiscated from him by the Allies in 1945. In another twist, it was later returned to him as the presumed rightful owner. Based on research into its history and a claim to title by the heir of David Friedmann, it was restituted in 2015 before being sold for a multiple of its estimate, thus entering another cycle of circulation.

Because of the research undertaken by a government-funded research project, we could easily map the picture's journey: from Liebermann's studio in Berlin to David Friedmann's villa in Breslau, to a local Breslau auction house, then the now-defunct Breslau museum which, incidentally, was damaged in World War II and lost most of its holdings stored in various safekeeping locations, to a dealer's stock stored in a castle in Bamberg, the art storage facility of the Allies in Wiesbaden, a flat in Munich, and then to auction in London. Many of its movements were linked to art trade activities, while the underlying causes of the translocation were rooted in shifts in political and economic power.

The second issue of 2018 will focus on trading movements in specific circumstances: the translocation of cultural assets in relationships of political or economic imbalance. Of course, the art trade is only one of several facilitators in the movement of cultural objects. It can be primarily driven by political and economic factors, as in the colonial trade with African or Asian art, or by commercial acumen, as entrepreneurial dealers educate and encourage a newly rich clientele to develop expensive and refined tastes in consumerism. To some extent, all trade activities lead to the movement of objects. The articles in this issue present a deep and multi-faceted field of expertise with many interconnecting

points: dealing with art; provenance as the history of more or less legally and ethically acknowledged ownerships over time; the circumstances of translocating art throughout history, museums and the visibility of the history of their collections; and even current and potential technical advances in presenting and interpreting large bodies of related research data.

For many years, Forum Kunst und Markt / Centre for Art Market Studies, the publisher of this journal, has been embedded in a wider department structure at TU Berlin. The Institute of Modern Art History focuses on all aspects pertaining to the production, circulation and consumption of art, including provenance research, museum studies, and art market research. As of last autumn, the Institute's project cluster „Translocations“ launched a programme of extensive historical enquiries into the displacement of cultural assets, which in turn will certainly touch on subjects related to art market studies.

While all contributions to this journal focus on the subject of the art market, our team is ever excited and our publication always enriched by being part of a wider academic landscape. On behalf of Bénédicte Savoy, Johannes Nathan and Dorothee Wimmer, I am delighted to present this issue to our readers.

Susanne Meyer-Abich