

Provenance Research

Research is continually underway in museums and galleries around the world to determine and strengthen the provenance (or history of ownership) of artworks and objects in permanent collections. The Vancouver Art Gallery is committed to researching the provenance of works in our collection.

In response to the Guidelines Governing the Unlawful Appropriation of Objects during the Nazi Era—adopted by the Association of Art Museum Directors and the Canadian Art Museum Directors Organization—the Gallery is particularly interested in tracking the ownership history of European art in our collection from the period of 1933 to 1945.

The seven works from the Gallery's collection published below have no provenance records for the period from 1933 to 1945. The works were all donated to the Gallery in 1983, and we believe they come from London, England. Such gaps in our knowledge of their ownership are not uncommon and do not necessarily prove that these works were acquired illegally or inappropriately. However, by publishing this list, the Gallery makes their provenance open to inquiry and will hopefully result in valuable data being uncovered.

For more information about these works, or to share related insights with us, please contact the Curatorial Department at curatorial@vanartgallery.bc.ca.

Artworks Under Review



Willem van de Velde
Untitled (Warships on a calm sea), 1678
oil on canvas
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Davidson



Peeter Neeffs, The Elder
Untitled, n.d.
oil on panel
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Davidson



Abraham Storck
Untitled (View of the port of Amsterdam), n.d.
oil on canvas
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Davidson



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Untitled (View of the port of Amsterdam), n.d.
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Bathasar van de Ast,
Untitled (Still life with peaches and shells), n.d.
oil on panel
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Davidson



Jan van Huysum,
Untitled (Still life with flowers and fruit), n.d.
oil on panel
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Davidson



Jan van Goyen,
Untitled (Frozen river landscape with skaters), 1627
oil on panel
Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery
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The reconstruction of a complete history of ownership for any given work of art can be laborious and sometimes impossible to piece together. Records of ownership may have been lost or destroyed and are commonly separated from the object to which they pertain. Much archival information remains undiscovered or difficult to access. In addition, any provenance information the Gallery receives or uncovers must be treated cautiously, since documentary evidence could have been misattributed to the object.

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