

NEWS & NOTES

LOST & FOUND

Retained: A fight over four watercolors signed by Adolf Hitler and a huge archive of photographs, some of which were used by prosecutors at the post-war Nuremberg trials, is to be left in the possession of the U.S. Government, after a federal court ruling.

Found: The oldest written fragment of the Nibelungen myth, an oral tale later standardized into the most famous Germanic text of the Middle Ages, has been found in a monastery in Austria. These are pieces of parchment older than existing official versions, which date to the late 12th century.

Found: Three ancient marble heads, looted 12 years ago from an Albanian museum, have been returned to Albania. The sculptures of two women and one man, dating from Roman times, were taken in 1991 from the Butrini National Archeological Museum when it was vandalized after Albania's Communist regime ended.

Found: Two 4,000 year old tombs containing a gilded human face mask and terracotta pots have been found by Belgian archaeologists excavating in south Egypt.

Retrieved: A 1730 Canaletto painting that hung in a modest kitchen in the Islington section of London for a day has been returned to the Bowes Museum in England. Two brothers won the painting, "Regatta on the Grand Canal", depicting gondolas in Venice, for a day in early July as the first prize in a contest. The competition was organized by the National Art Collection Fund to increase public interest in art galleries and museums. A curator accompanied the painting, and two muscular guards flanked it during its outing. The brothers also won a trip to Venice.

Lost and Found: Russian Culture Minister announced plans to distribute to churches some 200 Russian Orthodox icons stolen in a wave of church burglaries in the 1960s and 70s, smuggled to Italy and recently returned. The authorities are working on the repatriation of 700 more.

Returned: Nine years after it was stolen from a temporary exhibition in Frankfurt, a Caspar David Friedrich painting that was the subject of a \$1.6 million ransom demand will go on view once more at the Kunsthalle in Hamburg, Germany. "Waft of Mist," an oil on canvas depicting a famer and his cottage against a turbulent landscape, was returned to the museum in late August. No ransom was paid.

MUSEUMS

The Museum of Contemporary Crafts changed its name 23 years ago to the American Craft Museum, and now has changed its name to the **Museum of Arts & Design** in Manhattan. Not everyone is happy about this, including Sam Maloof, dean of American studio furniture makers, feeling it's a shame to eliminate the word "craft" from the title.

And the California College of Arts & Crafts is now the CCA (California College of Arts)—there's something in the air, wouldn't you say?

• **Terra Museum of American Art** in Chicago has announced its closing next year. About 50 of its most important paintings, including works by John Singleton Copley, George Caleb Bingham and Edward Hopper, as well as its entire collection of 350 works on paper, will be sent to the Art Institute of Chicago on extended loan. The Terra Foundation, however, will continue to sponsor American art programs and run its Musée d'Art Américain in Giverny, France.

• The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam will undergo a new \$230-million renovation, which includes a grand entrance hall to shelter ticket buyers from the elements. It will begin in the autumn and is scheduled to be finished by 2008.

• The sacred vase of Warka, one of the most valuable artifacts of the Iraq National Museum collection, was returned in the trunk of a car to the National Museum in Baghdad. Discovered in 1940 by a group of German archeologists, the vase is widely studied in art history and archeology. It depicts Sumerians offering gifts to the goddess Innin as well as scenes of daily life in the ancient city of Uruk. It was carved about the time that the city's Sumerians were inventing writing.

• A museum in Shanghai has paid a record \$4.5 million to buy a 1,000-year-old set of Chinese calligraphy books from an American art dealer. The "Chunhuage Tie" includes the only known works by several master calligraphers.

• The Metropolitan Museum of Art has acquired its first Roberto Matta painting, "Being With" (1946), a reaction to World War II by the Chilean-born Surrealist painter.

• The new \$21-million **Ogden Museum of Southern Art**, affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution and the University of New Orleans, is the new home for 2,750 Southern artworks, nearly half of them from the collection of Louisiana real estate developer and philanthropist Roger Ogden.

The new museum is a repository for Southern

art, i.e. artists working in the South.

The opening show is "The Story of the South: Art and Culture 1890-2003" which breaks the mold or understanding of what most people think of as Southern art. There is a whole gallery of outsider art, as well as work by Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns.

• **The Rosengart Collection** is now open in Lucerne, Switzerland with the collection of both father and daughter with 60 Impressionist and post-Impressionist paintings, 32 oils and more than 50 drawings by Picasso, and 125 paintings, watercolors and drawings by Klee.

DATELINE: Dublin

Some colorful fiberglass life-size cows decorated by Irish artists and public figures have been vandalized. The cows are the latest manifestation of the Cow Parade, already touted in New York, Chicago and London. But after one cow was beheaded and another had its wings torn off and a third was stolen for a while, the organizers removed the first 10 from streets in the center of Dublin and changed the location of others. The 70 cows were reinstalled either indoors or protected at night.

LIBRARIES AND ART

The Upper School at Greenwich Academy in Greenwich, Connecticut, a posh girls' school on 32 manicured acres, now can boast of a lobby and reading room now called "light chambers" in which Mr. Turrell has imbedded fiberoptics along with wiring to control the lights in one-foot sections. The library reading room cycles through an 18-minute display of colors ranging from hot pink to midnight blue. Turrell would like to extend the 20 minutes to two hours, but his schedule doesn't allow it for now.

• The Library of Congress has acquired Art Wood's collection of 36,000 works by 2,800 artists, the largest private collection of cartoons in the world. Wood is a renowned cartoonist.

ART ATTENDANCE STATISTICS

American women attend arts events at higher rates than men. The median age of people visiting concerts and museums is going up. About 1/4 of the adults reported said they visited a museum or art gallery. 40 percent said they performed or created art. About 5 percent took an arts-related class. Between 1992 and 2002 the median age of adults visiting art museums rose by five years, to 45 from 40.

FLUXUS

Willem de Ridder & Harry Ruhé will organize, in collaboration with the Centraal Museum Utrecht, a big Fluxus Festival on October 23-26. Many Fluxus artists will be invited. They will all

stay at the Hilton Hotel, Amsterdam, where they will present events. The Fluxus collection from Harry Ruhé will be exhibited at the Centraal Museum. Concerts and lectures will take place in different places. For more information: Harry Ruhé, fax (31.20) 6752602 harryruhe@zonnet.nl

DATELINE: London

Damien Hirst has created a controversial new piece, *Amazing Revelations*, a triangular collage made of thousands of dismembered butterfly wings. A show at an East London gallery featuring it has drawn criticism from animal rights activists, says the BBC.

DATELINE: Baghdad

A collection of archaeological artifacts from Baghdad's museum, much of it recovered from looting after the American raid of the city, will travel to the U.S. Included is a collection of 8th century Assyrian jewelry known as the Nimrud artifacts. 1,200 looted artifacts had been returned to the museum, but 2,200 were still missing, and that the museum would not be reopened for a year to 18 months, according to an Italian official in charge of Iraq's cultural activities.

DATELINE: Barcelona

7,000 strangers gathered on a sweeping Barcelona boulevard in early June who—for reasons of exhibitionism, artistic impulse, rash promises to their friends or general tippy curiosity—had volunteered to pose at daybreak in a vast, unclad, art project, created by Spencer Tunick, a New Yorker whose travels have already resulted in exhibitions around the world and huge mass photographs of nudes in places like Switzerland, Chile, Brazil, Finland and Australia.

DATELINE: Berlin

Having spent 40 years trying to tear it down, now a German artist wants to rebuild the entire Berlin Wall for its 45th anniversary in 2006, coinciding with the city holding the football World Cup.

Christof Blaesus, an events manager based in Cologne, has been working for 3 years to raise the \$55.4 million he says it will take to rebuild a 46-kilometer plastic copy of the Berlin Wall across the city. Sections of the white plastic replica would be lifted to allow traffic to pass underneath. On the busy Potsdamer Platz the wall would be symbolized by gas balloons carrying a floating screen on to which pictures of the original wall would be projected, so that Germany's capital can continue to function.

DATELINE: Toronto

Suppose you hail a cab on a busy Toronto street and open the door, slipping inside only to discover that instead of the usual grey-on-grey interior accessorized with the odor of cigarette smoke, you have entered a garden. The floor mats are made of AstroTurf, there are patio cushions covering the backseats, the rear of the front seats are covered in lattice work, entwined with roses. Did you have too much to drink at lunch? No—the surreal taxi cab is actually part of Peace Taxi, a month-long installation art exhibit by the South Asian Visual Arts Collective that hopes to provoke thought about the boundaries of public and private space. The mobile medium is the massage. 14 cabs have been transformed, thanks to the cooperation of the Toronto Cab company and the permission of the taxi licensing board. Themes range from aspirations of the drivers themselves, to more political statements about intolerance and human relationships. The project ended at the end of August.

DATELINE: London

A British graffiti artist has launched an exhibition featuring live cows, sheep and goats. Banksy (his real name is Robin Banks) has been hailed as the country's "most celebrated graffiti artist. He painted pigs in police-uniform colors, painted sheep in concentration-camp stripes and covered a cow in images of Andy Warhol's face. The exhibition, at a London warehouse, drew animal-rights protesters, including one woman who chained herself to railings surrounding the cow. Banksy, who prefers to avoid publicity to protect his anonymity, slipped out of the warehouse before the launch party of his first four-day retrospective in an unused warehouse. As soon as the works were in place, Banksy left the building. A spokeswoman said the exhibition did not mark his entrance into mainstream culture. In fact, the public likes his graffiti to such an extent that fellow graffiti artists never tag it, the council leaves it in place for months, and the police haven't caught him for years. www.banksy.co.uk

DATELINE: Changchun, China

The capital of Northeast China's Jilin Province is hosting the country's largest ever urban sculpture conference between 2 August and 8 September, with more than 500 artists from over 80 countries and regions participating. Included is an international sculpture symposium, sculpture demonstrations and the exhibition of original sculpture maquettes. A World Sculpture Park has been created to host the sculpture.

DATELINE: Dallas

Dallas will be seeing the debut of two important centers, first the Latino Cultural Center opening on 16 September, a cultural, performance and educational complex funded by public/private partnership and designed by Mexican architect Ricardo Legoretta including a 300-seat theater, gallery artist work spaces, teaching areas and a "grand plaza" for festivals and other events. Opening on 19 October, the Nasher Sculpture Center, which will occupy a city block in the heart of the downtown Arts District, is dedicated to the exhibition of modern and contemporary sculpture based on the Nashers' collection and designed by Renzo Piano.

PERFORMANCE ART

"Pace", a large bell modeled after those found in Chinese temples, with a gilded life-size cast of the Chinese artist Zhang Huan's naked body hanging next to it, was installed on the plaza of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Lower Manhattan. Zhang Huan, who created the work, inscribed the names of his ancestors from his native village inside the bell.

Viewers may ring the bell not with a gong, but with the sculpture of Zhang Huan's body, as a symbolic way of forcing a confrontation between the artist and his past.

During the first week in October the artist will stage a performance with 25 Buddhist Shaolin kung fu practitioners from a temple in Flushing, Queens. While the artist hangs inside the bell, the others will demonstrate traditional forms of kung fu.

THE POWER OF ART

A horrified British burglar who mistook a work of art for a pickled humn head not only summoned the police to the home he intended to rob but also renounced his life of crime. The "head", afloat in a jar of formaldehyde, was actually some bacon wrapped around a wire frame by Richard Morrison, a conceptual artist who lives near Liverpool. Morrison, who was not at home at the time, returned to discover that his house had been broken into by both the unidentified burglar and by the police, who battered down his door. The very macabre piece of work indicates that a glance might interpret the work as a head, but the artist never expected that the burglar would reform his ways by confessing his crimes to his mother.

IRAQ ARTIFACTS SEIZED

The Art Newspaper reports that over 600 objects looted from Iraq have been recovered in New York, Rome, and a third location—most of which have passed through London. Only one smuggler, an American writer, has been seized.

It also reports on the saving and loss of many books and manuscripts through Baghdad, Basra, Mosul.