

Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
Cultural Property Unit

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afzien  
anduidelijkheid  
over het LB versake  
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afspelen dat  
DCE voorlopig  
contactpunt is.  
S. G.

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Dr J Riezenkamp  
Director-General  
Cultural Affairs & Labour Relations  
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science  
PO Box 25000  
2700 LZ Zoetermeer  
The Netherlands

12 September 2001

Dear Dr Riezenkamp  
KOENIGS COLLECTION

I had the pleasure of meeting you and your colleague Ferdinand Dorsman earlier this summer when you visited the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to gather information on the setting up of our Spoliation Advisory Panel.

During that meeting, I mentioned that we had been advised that a claim was likely to be made by the Koenigs family regarding three paintings in the Courtauld Institute Gallery of the University of London. We have now heard that this claim has been formally presented to the gallery.

Formally, this Department has no role to play until a claim reaches the stage of being referred to the Spoliation Advisory Panel. At the moment it is a matter for the trustees of the Courtauld Institute Galleries. (In fact the matter is more complicated in that the ownership of the paintings is vested in a separate group of trustees who loan the paintings to the Courtauld Institute Galleries.)

However, we wish to ensure that with a claim that has such an international dimension as the Koenigs collection, no actions are taken without a full appreciation of the repercussions that might follow for institutions elsewhere who



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Graag je alhoed om uit pagina 1 van 2  
PCE / arbeidskunst / international desk

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

have been served notice of a claim from the Koenigs family. Similarly we would like to be able to help the Courtauld, should they ask, by passing on any experience which other countries have gained from dealing with earlier claims, which I assume will still be outstanding.

Therefore, I would be most grateful if you could give me the name and address of a contact in the Netherlands who would be able to act as a liaison point with us on this issue.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely  


Gerry McQuillan  
Cultural Property Unit



*Courtauld Gallery*  
**COURTAULD INSTITUTE OF ART**

Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN  
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*from John Murdoch, Director of the Courtauld Gallery*

18 April 2002

direct tel. 020 7848 2538

Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen  
Inspectie Cultuurbezit  
Attn. of Drs. C. E. Rappard-Boon  
Postbus 11583  
2502 AN DEN HAAG  
The Netherlands

Ingekomen	: 23/4/02
Behandelaar	: CR
Kopie	:
Briefnummer	: 02-00217
Antwoordtermijn	: ja / neen

Dear Charlotte van Rappart-Boon

I have been advised to write to you by my colleague Chris Dercon, Director of the Boymans-van Beuningen Museum in Rotterdam. His opinion was that it might be useful for you to know that the Samuel Courtauld Trust, which owns many of the works of art in the collections in the Courtauld Institute Gallery, has received a claim from Miss Christine Koenigs in respect of three oil sketches by Rubens, formerly in the collection of her grandfather, Franz Koenigs.

These paintings came to the Trust under the will of Count Antoine Seilern in 1978. Seilern had purchased them in 1940 from the well-known dealer Jacques Goudstikker, who had been empowered to act by the liquidators of the Lisser and Rosencratz Bank. The paintings formed part of a collection pledged to the bank by Mr Koenigs as security for a loan which he was unable to redeem. The greater part of the Koenigs collection was, as you know, purchased by Mr van Beuningen and presented to the Boymans Museum. The three sketches by Rubens formed part of a group of works not purchased by Mr van Beuningen, and therefore offered for sale by the liquidators.

Miss Koenigs claims in effect that the circumstances in which her grandfather's collection was sold were, although entirely legal, unconscionable within the meaning of the recent Washington Declaration, and of other policy statements by the various participating governments. She seeks redress.



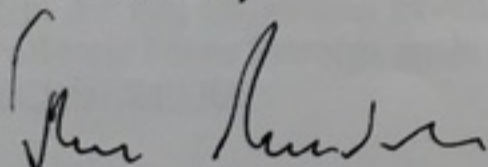
Drs C E van Rappard-Boon

18 April 2002

I have been instructed by the Samuel Courtauld Trustees to investigate the basis of Miss Koenigs' claim, and in particular to seek information from the Boymans Museum. Chris Dercon and his staff have in that respect already been extremely helpful, not least in providing us with information about their recent loan of objects with a Koenigs provenance for exhibition in New York. It is my understanding that your Department advised the United State authorities in the issue of a Declaration of Immunity from Seizure to cover the Boymans loans, and that your advice was based on extensive investigations into the circumstances of the acquisition of the objects by the Museum in 1939-40. Clearly, if there were anything like a formal statement by your Department on the issue of the van Beuningen purchases, it would be of the greatest assistance to my Trustees.

It is our hope that, together with the Boymans, and with any other museum which may have received a claim, we may find ourselves in a position to state our belief that Miss Koenigs' claims are without merit, and that there is no case either in law or conscience for us to answer.

Yours sincerely



Dep THP 28/6

Invullen ..	Uiterlijk bij ..	Met ..	Kenteken ..	Classificatie ..	Minuut ..
indien van ..	bewindspersoon* ..	reden ..			
toepassing ..	Uiterlijk bij (plaats- ..				
	vervangend) sg* ..				
	Uiterlijk bij (plaats- ..				
	vervangend) dg* ..				

mus. blds. city/ICB/oorlogskunst

	Voorparaaf			Medeparaaf			Eindparaaf	
	Eenheid	Datum	Paraaf	Eenheid	Datum	Paraaf	Datum	Paraaf
Chef ..	Sab.G.	(alt. 27/6)						
sectie/bur. ..								
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(onder) afd. ..								
(plv.) dir. ..								
(plv.) dg. ..								
(plv.) sg. ..								

Ontworpen door .. dhr. A.H. Chaudron Datum .. 27-06-02

**Aan** -  
 The Courtauld Gallery  
 Attn. of Mr. J. Murdoch, director  
 Somerset House, Strand  
 London  
 WC2R 0RN

Uw brief van ..	Ons kenmerk ..	Behandelend ambtenaar ..	Zoetermeer ..
-	DCE/02/25935	dhr. A.H. Chaudron	28 JUN 2002
Onderwerp ..			Doorkiesnummer ..
- Claim Koenigs			4483

- Dear Mr. Murdoch,

The Inspectorate for Cultural Heritage forwarded your letter of April 18, 2002 to me. I understand that, with regard to a claim from Mrs. Koenigs to three oil sketches by Rubens, currently in the Samuel Courtauld Trust, you would like to know the opinion of our ministry on the issue of the Van Beuningen purchases.

A member of my staff, Mrs. Sabine Gimbrère, tried to contact you by telephone on several occasions to inform you, but did not succeed.

In March, 2002, Mrs. Koenigs submitted to the State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science a new claim to the objects of the Koenigs collection that are in possession of the Netherlands.

Afschriften aan ..  
 Secretariaat, Archief ..  
 TC, ICB (mw. Ch.E. Van Rappard-Boon)

Ter visie ..  
aan ..

Rappel- ..  
 leren per ..  
 Depo- ..  
 neren ..  
 Mede- ..  
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OCenW 19.505

\* Data invullen (eveneens in het linkergedeelte van de datumkolom);  
 tussenliggende periode minimaal twee dagen



In december 2001 the Dutch government installed the Advisory committee on Assessment of Restitution Applications, also called the Committee Polak after its chairman Mr. J.M. Polak, to advise him on restitution claims of looted art. The State Secretary has asked the Committee Polak to advise him on this claim. Enclosed I send you copies of the decree and explanatory notes establishing the Committee Polak.

The installation of the Committee Polak was a result of the reaction of the Dutch Government on the preliminary recommendations of the Ekkart Committee. The Ekkart Committee supervises the provenance research into the objects in the NK collection and also makes recommendations to the Dutch government. Also enclosed you find copies of the reaction and the recommendations.

As soon as the advice of the Committee Polak will lead to a decision of the State Secretary on the claim of Mrs. Koenigs, I will be pleased to inform you of the outcome.

Director Cultural Heritage,

drs. R.J.M. van Hengstum