

The Museum of Modern Art

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ESTATE OF GERTRUDE STEIN

Although Leo, Michael and Sarah sold most of their collections during their own lifetimes, Gertrude Stein retained a great many works of art, only selling a few for necessities, such as publishing a book. When she died in 1946, she left her collection to her nephew Allan Stein, the son of her brother Michael and his wife Sarah, with the proviso that Alice B. Toklas, her companion and secretary, retain possession during her lifetime. Only one painting, the Picasso portrait, was left to a museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. When Allan Stein died in 1961, his interest in the estate was inherited by his children, Michael Stein, Gabrielle Stein-Tyler and Daniel M. Stein.

In 1960, spurred by Miss Toklas' long retreat in an Italian monastery, her Paris landlord brought eviction proceedings against her. Allan Stein's children, who were eventually to inherit the collection, found several pictures missing and obtained a court order sequestering the remainder of the collection on the grounds that it was neglected and unprotected. As a result of this dispute, the collection was placed in a vault of the Chase Manhattan Bank of Paris in 1961. Miss Toklas died in 1967 and the heirs subsequently sold the 38 Picassos and 9 Gris paintings to a group of American collectors; Andre Meyer, William S. Paley, David Rockefeller, Nelson A. Rockefeller and John Hay Whitney.

The five buyers, of whom four were Museum of Modern Art Trustees and the fifth, Mr. Meyer, a Patron of the Museum Collection, drew lots to determine the order in which they would choose pictures for their own collections. Each agreed to make a promised gift to the Museum of those works it thought most significant for its own collection.

Additional material available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director of Public Information, 956- 7501- 7504.