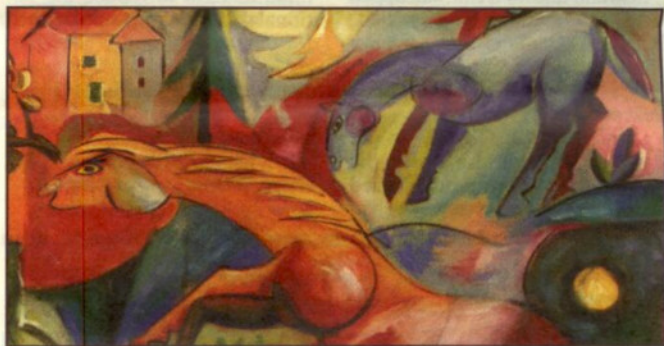


Four to go on trial in German forgery case

COLOGNE. Germany's most high profile forgery case comes to trial in Cologne in September, after more than a year of criminal investigations (The Art Newspaper, October 2010, p65). The defendants are to face charges of organised fraud and forgery relating to the so-called "Werner Jäger" collection, purported to include masterpieces by Max Ernst, Heinrich Campendonk and Max Pechstein. Fourteen paintings worth, if genuine, around €34m, from a total 47 being investigated, form part of the initial trial.

Günther Feld, Cologne's senior prosecutor, has begun a separate inquiry, filed by the owner of one of the works, against Henrik Hanstein, the owner of German auction house Lempertz,



Campendonk's *Landschaft mit Pferden?* Maybe not...

which had auctioned five of the works from this "collection". Edgar Abs, a spokesman for Lempertz, said that this investigation is of secondary importance, adding that Hanstein "has at no

time made any statements against his better knowledge".

Meanwhile, Berlin's state criminal police office also identified that one of the works in evidence at the trial, Campendonk's *Landschaft mit Pferden* (Landscape with Horses), 1915, was once owned by the US actor and comedian Steve Martin, who bought it privately in July 2004 and then sold it at Christie's in February 2006 for £344,000. Christie's declined to comment on the sale. Investigators now say this and the other works were probably created by the alleged ringleader Wolfgang Beltracchi, accused alongside his wife Helene, her sister, Jeanette, and another accused forger, Otto Schulte-Kellinghaus. They had allegedly been selling forgeries since the mid-1990s, saying that the works all came from a collection amassed by Werner Jägers, the grandfather of Beltracchi's wife and sister. Martin is not accused of any wrongdoing. ■

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