

## THE 1931 STROGANOFF COLLECTION SALE (SAMMLUNG STROGANOFF) SOLD IN GERMANY TO BENEFIT THE SOVIET STATE



The 1931 Stroganoff sale in Germany was a landmark auction of a noble Russian family's centuries-old art collection by the Soviet state. This rare catalogue enumerates the family's highly important paintings and decorative arts seized during the Russian Revolution and dispersed throughout the world.

Rudolph Lepke's Kunst-Auctions-Haus, Berlin. *Sammlung Stroganoff Leningrad*. May 12-13, 1931. Hardcover, 251 pages, 253 lots, illustrated. In German.

The Stroganov family (also spelled Stroganoff) was among the richest and most prominent families in Russia for several centuries. Originally successful businessmen in the salt-making industry, the Stroganovs came into the favor of Ivan the Terrible in the mid-sixteenth century and began to amass political power and land holdings. After steadily gaining money and influence for over a century and a half, they were made nobility by Peter the Great in the eighteenth century and became Counts. The sumptuous Stroganov Palace in Saint Petersburg, built in the 1750s, was filled with the erudite family's vast collections of art, books, and antiquities. The Stroganovs left Russia after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and lost their palace and collections to the Soviet Union. A similar fate befell the homes and collections of many other Tsarist Russian noble families. Many objects entered the collections of Russian museums, particularly the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (called Leningrad during the Soviet period), while others were sold in this auction to benefit the Soviet State. Many works ended up in important American collections being forming in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Stroganov sale was comprised of paintings (including works by Annibale Carracci, Albert Cuyp, Giovanni Bellini, Lucas Cranach the Elder, Claude Lorrain, Francois Boucher, Nicolas Poussin, Rembrandt, Rubens, Jacob van Ruysdael, Anthony van Dyck, and Cornelis de Vos), porcelain, metalwork, art objects, clocks, furniture, sculpture, bronzes, tapestries, and icons. Some of the content came from other collections, though it is not clear which items did not come from the Stroganovs or where those other items came from. The Stroganov collection is known to have included all of these masters are more.

The catalogue is written in German and includes introductions by the auction house and by German art historian and museum director Otto von Falke (1862-1942). Some lots are illustrated with tipped-in photographs. The catalogue is in fine condition. Worldcat lists only sixteen copies of this catalogue in library collections worldwide; only three are in the United States. The Stroganoff sale is important not only for the quantity and quality of works sold, but also for the historical significance of the family and of their collection's dispersion by the Soviets.



**\$400.00**

For more about the Stroganov family and their collection, see:

<http://stroganofffoundation.org>

<https://www.kimbellart.org/exhibition/stroganoff-palace-and-collections-russian-noble-family>

[http://www.shop.hermitagemuseum.org/html/En/04/2003/hm4\\_1\\_54.html](http://www.shop.hermitagemuseum.org/html/En/04/2003/hm4_1_54.html)

[http://www.shop.hermitagemuseum.org/html/En/04/b2003/hm4\\_2\\_18.html](http://www.shop.hermitagemuseum.org/html/En/04/b2003/hm4_2_18.html)

