

Art Impounded by Finland Released to Russia

Art works shown at the Louis Vuitton Foundation may travel back to Russia soon.

April 11, 2022



Workers unpack artworks in the presence of journalists in the main building of the Hermitage Museum as they arrive after an exhibition in Milan, Italy. **Alexander Demianchuk / TASS**

Russian art works valued at \$46 million impounded by Finland last week were released and arrived in St. Petersburg today.

On Monday the Russian state news agency RIA [reported](#) that three vehicles containing the art works had left Finland on April 9 and arrived in St. Petersburg. The works, which [included](#) paintings, statues and antiques, had been held by Finnish authorities while they investigated their provenance and determined if they were subject to EU sanctions.

The sanctions prohibit the sale, transfer, supply or export of artworks and other luxury goods to Russia.

Finland had stopped the transfers of the art at the Vaalimaa border crossing between Finland and Russia and impounded them pending the outcome of the investigation.

While the investigation was being conducted, the containers were held at the Ateneum State Museum in Helsinki. They were accompanied to the facility by diplomats from the Russian Embassy, who [warned](#) against breaking the seals on the packing crates.

Among the works were paintings by Antonio Canova, Titian and Pablo Picasso.

In February, Russian museums requested that their works loaned abroad be returned as quickly as possible, and then rescinded their request, asking that the works be returned when it was safe and feasible.

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Another Russian collection that had been on display in Paris, about 200 works of art from the Morozov Collection held in the State Pushkin Museum, has closed. The Louis Vuitton Foundation had shown the works since last September, welcoming more than 1 million visitors to the exhibition.

The works [are exempt from seizure](#) until May 15, but one painting has already been impounded, one is being held, and another is being investigated.

On April 11 it was announced the French authorities had seized the self-portrait of painter Pyotr Konchalovsky, reportedly owned by the Russian billionaire Pyotr Aven, who is under sanctions.

A portrait of Timofei Morozov by Valentin Serov that belongs to the private foundation of sanctioned oligarch Moshe Kantor, may also be subject to sanctions. And yet another portrait of a member of the Morozov family, Margarita, will be held in France until it can be safely returned to the Dnipropetrovsk Museum in Ukraine.

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