



**Henri Matisse**

**Femme assise dans un fauteuil (Woman sitting in an armchair), 1921**

Oil on canvas, 55.4 x 46.5 cm (65 x 56.2 cm)  
on recto, lower right, signed: "Henri Matisse"  
on verso, upper left, French customs stamp

**Provenance:**

With Georges Bernheim

28 March–3 April 1923: Paul Rosenberg, Paris, acquired from the above

5 September 1941: Seized from Rosenberg in Libourne by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (per Rogeneau List)

From 24 July 1942: Gustav Rochlitz, Paris, ERR Exchange no. 21 (as UNB 353)

By latest 1953: Hildebrand Gurlitt, Dusseldorf

By descent to Cornelius Gurlitt, Munich/Salzburg

From 6 May 2014: Estate of Cornelius Gurlitt

May 2015: Restituted to the heirs of Paul Rosenberg

**Exhibitions:**

*Henri Matisse: exposition organisée au profit de l'Orphelinat des Arts*. Exh. cat., Galeries Georges Petit, 16 June–25 July 1931. [no. 79, as *Figure à l'éventail*]

Albert C. Barnes and Violette de Mazia, *The Art of Henri Matisse*, 1933. [no. 116, as *Figure with a Fan*]

**Bibliographical references:**

Dauberville, Guy-Patrice, and Michel Dauberville. *Henri Matisse chez Bernheim-Jeune*. Vol. II, *Catalogue des œuvres répertoriées No. 261 au No. 798*. Paris: Éditions Bernheim-Jeune, 1995. [no. 543, Henri Matisse, *Femme à l'éventail*, 1923, ill. Photo taken by Bernheim Jeune in April 1923, no. 4560]

*Henri Matisse: the Early Years in Nice 1916–1930*. Exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2 November 1986–29 March 1987. [p. 236, fig. 3 shows the installation of the 1931 Matisse retrospective at Galerie Georges Petit in Paris, with *Figure à l'éventail*]

Barnes, Albert C., and Violette de Mazia. *The Art of Henri Matisse*. New York: Scribner's, 1933. [no. 116]

Hector Feliciano, *The Lost Museum*. New York: Basic Books, 1997. [pl. A7]

Taskforce Schwabing Art Trove, *Schlussbericht zu Matisse Sitzende Frau*, 25 July 2014.

[www.taskforce-kunstfund.de/fileadmin/\\_downloads/TFK\\_2014-07-07\\_Schlussbericht\\_Matisse\\_Sitzernde\\_Frau.pdf](http://www.taskforce-kunstfund.de/fileadmin/_downloads/TFK_2014-07-07_Schlussbericht_Matisse_Sitzernde_Frau.pdf)

**Primary sources:**

Archives Nationale, Paris:

Documentation (selected) regarding Rochlitz, Rosner, Fabiani, Klein and Gurlitt, 1945-46;  
Matisse and Fabiani Documentation, AN AJ 38 and Z6

Bundesamt für zentrale Dienste und offene Vermögensfragen, Berlin:

Roganeau List (Coffre de la BNCI, Libourne), 6 May 1941;

Documentation relating to Paul Rosenberg Art Confiscations in Paris, Floirac and Libourne, 1940-41, including documentation of the Devisenschutzkommando Frankreich Seizure at BNCI, Libourne, 5 September 1941, with Roganeau List (handwritten and typed);

Restitution Correspondence, i.e., 8 January 1958; 12 August 1959 and 8 March 1958;

Floirac Seizure Observations, November 1940 and 4 December 1944;

Hofer to Goering, 26 September 1941;

Jacques Dubourg List of Non-Recuperated Losses and German claim correspondence, 26 February 1958 and 9 August 1960;

Settlement Correspondence noting *Femme Assise* included in Settlement, 13 June 1960;

Rosenberg Restitution Settlement with Republic of Germany, 12 December 1960;

Rosenberg art claims post-Settlement correspondence, 1970–1971

Bundesarchiv Koblenz:

Addendum to List of 20.10.1942, Goering Picture Choice List, 9 April 1943, BKO B323 70;

Annotated Exchange Program List, BKO B323 191;

*Répertoire des Biens Spoliés en France Durant La Guerre 1939-1945*, *Femme Assise* Entry, Nr. 1126, BKO B323 207;

Documentation on Separated and Missing Artworks, Paris, BKO 323 267/BKO B323 293;

Paul Rosenberg ERR Inventory, Dr. Eggemann and Dr. Tomforde, 17-18 July 1942, BKO B323 288;

Exchange Contract, Kurt Von Behr and Gustav Rochlitz, 24 July 1942; Dr. Beltrand List of Estimates for 24 July 1942; Exchange National Archives, BKO B323 72/191/289;

Exchange Program Summary, BKO B323 72/191/289

Documentation of the Devisenschutzkommando Frankreich Seizure at BNCI, Libourne, 5 September 1941, with Roganeau List Documentation (handwritten and typed), BKO B323 293;

Post-War Matisse Exchange Notations; List of Confiscated Works taken to the German Embassy, BKO B323 295;

UNB List, BKO B323 297;

Bundesamt für Äussere Restitution, to TVK, Munich, 16 March 1961, BKO B323 297;  
Annotated UNB List with PR and Baden-BadenReferences, BKO B323 297;  
Annotated Selected Paintings List, BKO B323 308;  
Documentation concerning Rosenberg art losses, including Rochlitz, Petrides, 28 June and 13 June 1960; Rep. II Chart about fate of confiscated Rosenberg Works, including *Femme Assise*, 13 June 1960; List of Non-Recuperated Artworks Lost during the Occupation from the Collection of Paul Rosenberg, Annotated with Biens Spoliés numbers, 13 September 1953, BKO B323 431;  
Rochlitz/Drouot Documentation, BKO B323 437;  
UNB 353 Photograph, ERR Fotothek, BKO B323 1060

Cultural Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg:  
Database of Art Objects at the Jeu de Paume [Unb. 353; PR 41 and PR 42 ERR Cards]

Memorial de Shoah Archive, Paris:  
PA AA 1321, PA AA 2490, MSA Zeitschel V 98-107

Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Archives diplomatique, Paris:  
Rosenberg Collection Photo Cards, 209 SUP 997;  
Exchange Nr. 21 Documentation, CRA Cote 297 C 9;  
Paul Rosenberg Paris Post-War Art Recovery Materials, RA 1 45-15;  
Rose Valland to Edmond Rosenberg, 25 June 1956, RA 1 45-15-33 and RA 635;  
Documentation relating to Post-War Claims process for Edmond and Paul Rosenberg with French authorities, i.e. Albert Henraux and Rose Valland, and Rosenberg Claim File List with Matisse Inverted Size Order, RA 1 302 376;  
Documentation (selected) from French Rosenberg restitution claim, including annotated Libourne loss list, RA 637-37954; RA 1 1/3 146-423;  
Documentation concerning Rochlitz art losses en route to Baden-Baden, RA 15 147/1 14

Musée d'Orsay Archive, Paris:  
Galerie Paul Rosenberg Photographs

National Archives, College Park, Maryland (NARA):  
ALIU CIR 1, Exchange Nr. 21, 24 July 1942;  
ALIU CIR Report on Gustave Rochlitz and I. Rosner;  
Art Looting Suspects Documentation on Drouand David

Paul Rosenberg Archives, New York:  
Receipt, Georges Bernheim to Paul Rosenberg, 28 March 1923;  
*Femme Assise* Photo Card, Nr. 1721;  
*Femme Assise* Photo;  
Photo Entry Book for Nr. 1721;  
Photography of Matisse in Galerie Rosenberg in Paris in 1937

Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Berlin:  
June 1940-November 1941, Seizure Documentation relating to French Jewish Collections

Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, Munich:  
*Femme Assise* Photo Cards, MCCP Photo Collection

Seizure Inventory [Sicherstellungsverzeichnis], 2012, no. SV 32/14

**Note:**

This 1921 oil painting by Henri Matisse, *Femme Assise dans un Fauteuil* (also known as *Femme Assise*, *Figure à l'éventail*, *Jeune femme à l'éventail bleu*, *Frau mit Kopftuch in geblümter Bluse*, *einen Fächer haltend*, *auf braunem Polstersessel*, and *La Blouse Roumaine*) was not on any known registers of works located at the end of World War II and it was not found among lists of works in any of the US Central Collecting Points.

Research by the Taskforce established that the Gurlitt Matisse had been looted in Nazi-occupied France and had been inventoried by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR) among a group of artworks known as "Unbekannt" (UNB) or "Unknown" works, all of which had become disassociated from their source collections in the process of looting and storage by Nazi authorities. The Matisse was inventoried as UNB 353, noted in ERR Cards and in a photograph that is found today in the ERR Fotothek collection in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz.

Intensive research by the Taskforce team resolved open discrepancies in the documentation regarding size, date and identification between the Matisse that was found in the Schwabing Art Trove and a Matisse looted by the Nazis from Rosenberg's bank vault in Libourne on 5 September 1941. Based on documentation located in Koblenz, Berlin, Paris and New York, it was likely that this Rosenberg Matisse was separated from other Rosenberg art seized by the Nazis, and although briefly designated with the Rosenberg ERR categorization "PR", it was soon redesignated as UNB 353 on the "Unknown" List, thereafter losing the connection information to the Rosenberg loss.

On 24 July 1942, the Matisse was found to have been subject to ERR Exchange Nr. 21 through Kurt von Behr with art dealer Gustav Rochlitz. The fate of the Matisse after the 1942 Exchange has not been confirmed to date; however possibilities were explored including transport by Rochlitz to Baden-Baden, and sale or exchange to dealers Isidor Rosner or Martin Fabiani in Paris in the 1940's.

In summary, the Taskforce research supported the conclusion that *Femme Assise* was looted from Paul Rosenberg in Libourne in 1941, and that the Gurlitt Matisse was the same work which was designated variously by the Rosenberg family and by ERR and post-war authorities as Rosenberg 1721, PR 41, UNB 353, and as *Biens Spoliés* 1126. The Matisse was duly restituted to the Rosenberg heirs in 2015.

From March until May 2014, Taskforce researchers conducted intensive research in Germany, France and the United States. New relevant materials have been located since 2014, found among the Gurlitt papers in Salzburg. These were not available to the research team in 2014, however it is understood that they evidence that the Matisse came into Hildebrand Gurlitt's possession ca. 1953.

Among the sources that were located and consulted in 2014 was a receipt that Matisse's *Femme à l'éventail bleu* was purchased on 28 March/3 April 1923 by Paul Rosenberg from dealer Georges Bernheim, for 8,000 French francs. The Matisse was catalogued in the Rosenberg records as Nr. 1721, documented by a Photo Card and a page from an Accessions or Photo Book. The work was published as belonging to Rosenberg in an exhibition at Georges Petit in Paris in 1931, without illustration but shown in a photograph of that exhibition. The Matisse is not included in the standard catalogue raisonné on the artist published in 1982 by Pierre Schneider and Massimo Carra (the work was considered "disappeared" since the war), however, the Taskforce research team located a reference from 1933, in Albert Barnes and Violette de Mazia, *The Art of Henri Matisse*, 1933, as Nr. 116, *Figure with a Fan*, 21 7/8 x 18, *Collection Paul Rosenberg, Paris* (no illustration). The eight-year gap between 1933 and 1941 was the weakest link in the provenance at the time of the Taskforce research, as Paul Rosenberg was not simply a

private collector, but also a dealer. His collection and stock, including *Femme Assise*, may have been subject to sale during the 1930's. This gap was fortunately narrowed by the claimants' provision of an image of the painting in a Galerie Paul Rosenberg photograph from ca. 1935–1937.

A Matisse of this subject was noted on a list of the art looted from Rosenberg's bank vault in Libourne, France, on 5 September 1941 (known as the Roganeau List), however discrepancies in the size, canvas orientation and dating of the Matisse on this list impeded clear association of the Libourne and Gurlitt painting at first review. Since Matisse certainly painted many works of the subject of *Femme assise*, consideration of Rosenberg's Matisses was necessary to determine if there was another work of this subject with the dimensions 46 x 56 cm (inverted dimensions from the *Femme Assise*).

Intensive review was undertaken among documentation at the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz related to the full Rosenberg art seizures in Paris, Floirac and Libourne during June/July 1940–1942, as well as in documentation about the UNB group. UNB 353 was part of Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR) Exchange Nr. 21 via Kurt von Behr to art dealer Gustav Rochlitz on 24 July 1942, as documented in the Exchange Contract and numerous other documentary sources.

After the war, the Allies undertook in-depth review of the works that had been subject to the Goering and ERR Exchanges. The fate of the Matisses in Exchange Nr. 21 was related variously in interrogations of Rochlitz by the Allies (the Rochlitz Report); as having been lost in a shipment of art to Baden-Baden in June 1944, as having been subject to further sale to dealer Isidor Rosner in 1942–1944, and possibly turned over or to French dealer, Martin Fabiani, in January 1944. Rochlitz's veracity concerning the Baden-Baden lost shipment has been proven to be questionable in numerous art restitution cases. However, a faint French customs stamp found on the Matisse canvas suggested the work was exported from France at some point.

UNB 353 was never located after the war and was considered missing until 2013. However, the issue of the identity of UNB 353 as a Rosenberg loss under Nazi duress was already considered in the post-war period by German authorities, by French authorities, and also by Rosenberg and his family and legal representatives. The Taskforce research team relied upon this documentation to try to establish the identification of UNB 353 as Matisse's *Femme Assise*.

In post-war Koblenz documentation, for example, UNB 353 and UNB 354 (a work which was also part of Exchange Nr. 21 and recently found to have been another Rosenberg work, *Odalisque*) were already noted as possibly being Rosenberg pieces. In the typed lists of Rosenberg Inventory by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR), dated 17–18 July 1942, and catalogued by Nazi art staff, Dr. Eggemann and Dr. Tomforde, each object was designated with an individual "PR" number to highlight its Rosenberg seizure provenance. On one of these lists, *Femme Assise and Odalisque* appeared as PR 41 and PR 42 respectively as *Frau mit Schleier* and *Odalisque in grün und violet*, both "exchanged 25.7.42." The Matisses were noted in post-war handwriting to be related to UNB 353 and UNB 354. On another of the lists, the Matisses did not appear as PR 41 and PR 42, and the slots were utilized for other unrelated Rosenberg works. The separation of the Matisses from the Rosenberg lists was highlighted through the comparison of the versions. UNB 353 and 354 were inventoried by the Germans among the works of "Unknown" origin on or after 17 November 1942, at which point they had already been part of Exchange Nr. 21 to Gustav Rochlitz on 24 July 1942 some four months previously, and within a week of the Rosenberg ERR cataloguing.

It was clear to the Taskforce team that the post-war experts went through the same steps as the current research team to try to figure out the fate of works such as UNB 353. They came to the conclusion that UNB 353 and PR 41 were likely one and the same object, and that this work had been exchanged in July 1942 and perhaps lost en route to Baden-Baden. It was necessary to look carefully at the post-war material anew in 2014 and try to understand the contextual inconsistencies as a means of evaluating the plausibility of the current Rosenberg claim.

In the post-war period, Paul Rosenberg was fortunately able to recover most of his collection, but he registered missing works, including *Femme Assise*, in the French *Repertoire des Biens Spoliés en France Durant La Guerre 1939–1945*. Matisse's *Femme assise dans un fauteuil* was listed as Nr. 1126 on page 71 of the publication, with the inverted measurements 46 x 56 cm.

In the 1950's, when Paul Rosenberg and his family applied for reparation for their non-restituted art losses under the new *Bundesrückerstattungsgesetz* in the Federal Republic of Germany, their claim was supported by the existing documentation, including the Roganeau List and extensive family documentation. A *Detailed Lists of Non-Recuperated Artworks* was prepared for the Rosenberg family in 1956–1958 by art expert Jacques Dubourg, specifying the non-recuperated art from Floirac, from Libourne, and from the Paris gallery. The Dubourg List formed the basis for the settlement offered by the German government to Rosenberg in 1960, of 2,319,000 German marks. The figure represented somewhat less than 50% of the Dubourg assessed values of the outstanding lost works.

Matisse's *Femme Assise*, with a value of \$45,000 and noted as Nr. 1721 from the Rosenberg photo inventory numbering, was included in the resolved claim. Therefore, the Matisse was accepted by German and French post-war authorities as having been dispossessed from the Rosenberg family, and was part of the settlement. The settlement stipulated that should any work subsequently be restituted in kind at a later date, that 50% of the settlement value for that specific object had to be repaid to the German government. It was as a result of that settlement that the BADV listed the Matisse on [Lostart.de](http://Lostart.de) in recent years (Lost Art ID: 477894).

There was no record of the Matisse among the extensive art holdings that were sequestered from Hildebrand Gurlitt at the end of the war, and it was not among any of the works he admitted to handling or engaging with during the Nazi era. It was not returned to him after the sequestration was lifted. Business papers or account books that were found in Cornelius Gurlitt's Salzburg home suggest that he acquired the Matisse circa 1953. However, the first priority for research for the Taskforce focused only on the identification of the painting to the Rosenberg's collection and the Rosenberg heirs have offered indemnification in regards to any future claims. The post-war history of acceptance of Matisse's *Femme Assise*, Nr. 1721, as looted from the Rosenberg collection, was a strong foundation for the 2014 research efforts.

### Disclaimer

The research of the Taskforce Schwabing Art Trove focused exclusively on the provenance of the artwork described in this report. This report does not purport to make pronouncements on any legal claims and legal positions. The head of the Taskforce Schwabing Art Trove is responsible for the contents and the publication of this report.

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