

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART AND STEICHEN HEIRS ANNOUNCE SETTLEMENT OF LITIGATION OVER MATISSE PAINTING

August 10, 1990....Richard E. Oldenburg, director, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and Attorney John D. Paul, the administrator of the estate of Charlotte Kate Rodina Steichen, jointly announced today that a settlement has been reached in pending litigation concerning an Henri Matisse painting, *Vue de Collioure à l'Eglise* (1905).

The Museum has decided not to pursue its claim to the painting, which will now be turned over to the Steichen estate. In return, the estate has agreed to drop its suit against the Museum.

The painting had been formally presented to the Museum in 1973 by Kate Steichen as a promised gift in memory of her father Edward Steichen, the photographer and former director of the Museum's Department of Photography. At that time, along with confirming correspondence, the Museum received a copy of Miss Steichen's will, in which the work was bequeathed to the Museum. The painting was then placed on view as part of its permanent collection.

The gift had been in dispute since shortly after Miss Steichen's death on April 18, 1988, when the Museum first learned that she had changed the terms of her will. The new will stated that Miss Steichen had bequeathed the work to her grandniece.

Mr. Oldenburg stated, "Given its long relationship with Edward Steichen, the Museum does not wish to be in conflict with his family. Because protracted litigation would be burdensome to both sides, we have decided to arrive at a settlement with the Steichen heirs."

Mr. Paul added, "We are pleased to have reached this settlement with the Museum. We are happy that this work, which was given to Edward Steichen by Matisse in 1908, is returning to his family."

At the same time, the Museum was privileged to announce the partial gift of an extraordinary Matisse landscape of the same year and *fauve* style as the Steichen picture from a generous trustee and noted collector, Mrs. Bertram Smith. This brilliant painting, *Paysage de Collioure* (1905), is widely considered to be one of the masterworks of Matisse's *fauve* period.

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