

# Phoenix Art Museum

## News Release

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## Phoenix Art Museum and Valley of the Sun Jewish Community Center Partner to Present Nazi-Looted Art Expert in Community Event

*On the trail of Nazi art thieves: David and Hannah Lewis on looted art, surviving the Shoah, and Jewish art in London*

**PHOENIX (April 3, 2017)** – Phoenix Art Museum and Valley of the Sun Jewish Community Center (VOSJCC) have partnered to present a community presentation by David Lewis, co-founder of the Commission for Looted Art in Europe, and founder of the internationally-renowned Schorr Collection, one of the most important collections of Old Master and 19<sup>th</sup>-century European paintings in the United Kingdom. The event, which will be hosted at the VOSJCC on April 26, beginning at 7:30 pm, will also feature remarks by Hannah Lewis, a Holocaust survivor and co-founder of the Schorr Collection. Mr. Lewis will speak on his work in identifying, locating and restoring looted works of art to families, as well as Mrs. Lewis' personal experiences as a survivor, and their unique perspectives on the UK's Jewish community in 2017. Tickets to the community lecture and discussion are offered at \$10 to the general public, and \$5 for members of Phoenix Art Museum or VOSJCC.

"At Phoenix Art Museum, we are excited to partner with Valley of the Sun Jewish Community Center to present this important and meaningful opportunity to our community," said Amada Cruz, the Sybil Harrington Director and CEO of Phoenix Art Museum. "We are honored to host David and Hannah Lewis, and to learn from their personal experiences, both through important work in restoring these artworks to their rightful homes and their passion and dedication for supporting arts and culture. They serve as role models for the ways in which arts and culture can connect diverse communities and ultimately teach us more about ourselves."

"The Valley of the Sun JCC prides itself on being a true center of the community, offering quality programs such as this one for both The J and community members," said Kim Subrin, chief operations officer of The J. "The work David Lewis has done in recovering art looted by the Nazis is of great importance to Jews and non-Jews alike. We are pleased to partner with the Phoenix Art Museum and invite the community to learn from these experiences."

The keynote speaker, David Lewis, will speak on his work as the co-founder and co-chair with Anne Webber of the Commission for Looted Art in Europe (CLAE), founded in 1999, and co-founder of the Central Registry of Looted Cultural Property 1933-1945. The Registry serves as an international research center and online repository of detailed research, news and information from 49 countries and an online database of 25,000 objects. Since the CLAE was first founded in 1999, it has been instrumental in the location and restoration of more than 3,500 Nazi-looted objects to their rightful owners, including paintings, drawings, silver, books, and manuscripts, which reflects the range of cultural property stolen by the Nazis between 1933 and 1945. Along with the active search and restoration of artwork, CLAE also works closely with European governments and institutions to negotiate new policies and procedures that enable the return of Nazi-looted works of art, including Resolution 1205 of the Council of Europe (November 1999) the Final Declaration of the 2000 Vilnius Forum, which help to remove impediments to the identification, location and restoration of looted property.

Hannah Lewis, who cofounded the Schorr Collection with her husband in the late 1960s, collecting approximately 430 important Old Master and 19<sup>th</sup>-century paintings, will speak some of the most important Old Master and 19<sup>th</sup>-century

European paintings in the world, will speak on her experiences as a survivor of the Holocaust. Mrs. Lewis was born in Wlodawa, Poland near the Ukraine border in 1937, when in 1942, she and her family were rounded up and forced into a work camp. The entire family, save for her mother, were murdered. When the SS invaded their work camp to deport the Jews living there, Mrs. Lewis witnessed her mother shot to death. Mrs. Lewis managed to survive in the work camp until she was later discovered starved and hiding in a ditch by a Russian soldier. Her father survived having joined the partisans. In 1949, she emigrated to London as an 11-year-old refugee to live with a great-aunt and -uncle. She married in 1961 and raised children and grandchildren. Today, Mrs. Lewis speaks at colleges, universities and schools about her experiences, seeking to raise awareness and build understanding with younger audiences.

The Lewises will speak in honor of the opening of *Selections from the Schorr Collection*, a long-term exhibition of nearly 50 paintings and prints from their internationally-renowned collection, which will be on view at Phoenix Art Museum beginning April 26. The works, which the Lewis family has generously loaned to Phoenix Art Museum on a long-term basis, will travel to the US from their recent exhibition in Tel Aviv. The Schorr Collection, recognized as a musée imaginaire, or museum without walls, is one of the largest private collections in the UK, and approximately half of the “Old Master” section is loaned to museums and public institutions in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Israel.

This community event will be presented April 26 at 7:30 pm at the Valley of the Sun Jewish Community Center, located at 12701 North Scottsdale Road, in Scottsdale. Tickets are \$10 for the general public and \$5 for members of Phoenix Art Museum and Valley of the Sun Jewish Community Center. For general public and Museum Members, purchase tickets at <http://bit.ly/LewisAtVOSJCC>. For Valley of the Sun Jewish Community Center members, use coupon code ‘VOSJCC’ at checkout to receive the member price of \$5.

For press inquiries, contact Margaree Bigler, Office of Marketing and Communications at Phoenix Art Museum, at 602.257.2105 or [margaree.bigler@phxart.org](mailto:margaree.bigler@phxart.org), or Laura Toussaint-Newkirk, Senior Director of Marketing at Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix & Valley of the Sun JCC, at 480.481.1794 or [LTNewkirk@jewishphoenix.org](mailto:LTNewkirk@jewishphoenix.org).

#### **About Phoenix Art Museum**

Phoenix Art Museum has provided access to visual arts and educational programs in Arizona for more than 50 years and is the largest art museum in the Southwestern United States. Critically acclaimed national and international exhibitions are shown alongside the Museum’s permanent collection of more than 18,000 works of American, Asian, European, Latin American, modern and contemporary art, and fashion design. The Museum also presents festivals, a comprehensive film program, live performances and educational programs designed to enlighten, entertain and stimulate visitors of all ages. Visitors also enjoy vibrant photography exhibitions through the Museum’s landmark partnership with the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona. To learn more about Phoenix Art Museum, visit [PhxArt.org](http://PhxArt.org), or call the 24-hour recorded information line at (602) 257-1222.

#### **About Valley of the Sun JCC**

The Valley of the Sun JCC is an inclusive community center that enriches physical, mental and spiritual growth through relationships and an array of programs, including child development, youth, fitness and social engagement. The J serves people of all faiths, backgrounds and abilities.

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