

Ford House sells Cezanne painting for \$100 million

GROSSE POINTE SHORES, Mich. (AP)

The Edsel & Eleanor Ford House kept secret its 2013 sale of an oil painting by post-impressionist Paul Cezanne to a private buyer for \$100 million to help protect Detroit-owned artworks under threat due to the city's bankruptcy.

The sale removes from the 1929 Grosse Pointe Shores mansion a painting that had been in the Ford family since the mid-20th century.



"La Montagne Sainte-Victoire vue du bosquet du Château Noir," 1904 depicts a mountain in southern France.

Ford House officials didn't release news of the sale for fear of causing problems for the Detroit Institute of Arts, which was the focus of debate over whether city-owned pieces of its collection should be sold as part of Detroit's bankruptcy.

Detroit Institute of Arts Director Graham Beal, who was unaware of the Cezanne sale until recently, said the publicity and price would have emboldened creditors in their arguments against the museum's absolutist stance against selling art.

The Ford House, which is on solid financial footing and carries no debt, is using proceeds from the sale to create a special endowment for preservation, conservation and restoration. It includes the 87-acre estate of auto industry pioneer Henry Ford's only son on the shores of Lake St. Clair as well as furnishings and objects inside the mansion.

Ford House trustees received an unsolicited offer for the painting in mid-2013 but at first turned it down. The buyer came back with other offers and the Ford House's board gave the idea more consideration.

"This was really a once-in-a-lifetime offer," Mullins said. "The family thought it was a way to guarantee the estate would be taken care of the way Eleanor would have wanted."

Mullins said the Cézanne sale was done within the legal terms of Eleanor Ford's will. She said the board is not selling more art. The buyer of the Cézanne painting also had offered to purchase a watercolor by Cezanne in the collection, she said, but the board said no.

The Ford House, which draws about 60,000 visitors a year for tours and events, has a separate operating endowment of \$86 million.



Robbery: Cézanne's *The Boy in the Red Vest*, valued at \$ 110 million, was stolen from a Swiss museum in 2008. It was recovered in a Serbian police raid in 2012, along with works by **Degas**, **Monet** and **Van Gogh** which were found first. It was being sold well below its worth at \$ 4.6 million. The police found the Cézanne hidden in the roof of the thieves' van.

Pyramid of Skulls, c. 1901. Today the skulls themselves remain in Cézanne's studio in a suburb of Aix-en-Provence. - Wikipedia



Picasso referred to Cézanne as "the father of us all" and claimed him as "my one and only master!" Other painters such as Edgar **Degas**, Pierre-Auguste **Renoir**, Paul **Gauguin**, Kasimir Malevich, Georges Rouault, Paul **Klee**, and Henri **Matisse** acknowledged Cézanne's genius. - Wikipedia



A prize in his memory, called the **Cézanne medal**, is granted by the city of Aix en Provence, for special achievement in the arts.

France 2006 **Paul Cezanne**
1.5 Euro Silver Proof



Paul Cezanne Quotes

“I could paint for a hundred years, a thousand years without stopping and I would feel as though I know nothing.”

“I want to die painting.”

“God knows how the old masters got through those acres of work.... I exhaust myself to death trying to cover fifty centimeters of canvas.”

“Genius is the ability to renew one’s emotions in daily experience.”