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**UNITED STATES SEIZES TWO JULIAN FALAT PAINTINGS STOLEN
BY THE NAZIS DURING WORLD WAR II FROM THE NATIONAL
MUSEUM IN WARSAW, POLAND**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York and JAMES T. HAYES, JR., the Special Agent-in-Charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office of Homeland Security Investigations in New York ("ICE HSI"), announced the filing of a civil forfeiture complaint against two JULIAN FALAT paintings - "Off to the Hunt" and "The Hunt" - which were stolen from the National Museum in Warsaw, Poland by the Nazis during World War II. The U.S. District Court has also authorized the seizure of the two paintings pending the final outcome of the civil complaint case.

According to the Complaint filed yesterday in Manhattan federal court:

In August 1944, the German S.S. Obersturmbannfuhrer BENNE VON ARENT took over the Polish National Museum and confiscated the most valuable items in the Museum's possession, including "The Hunt" and "Off to the Hunt." Many of those treasures are still missing and have not been returned to the rightful owners. In 2006, the Polish government became aware that two of these national treasures, namely FALAT's "Off to the Hunt" and "The Hunt" paintings, were being offered for sale at two New York auction houses and subsequently enlisted the assistance of

After ICE HSI conducted an investigation into the paintings, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York filed a civil complaint against the two paintings seeking their forfeiture on several bases, including that the

paintings constituted stolen property imported into the United States in violation of law. Subsequent to the filing of the civil complaint, the U.S. District Court authorized the seizure of the two paintings pending final disposition of the civil complaint.

FALAT was born in 1853 in Tuliglowy, Poland, and is well known for his hunting and landscape paintings. The FALAT "Off to the Hunt" painting was first publically displayed at the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Poland (the "Society"), in November 1901, and was subsequently sold to a private individual who later returned the painting to the Society as a gift in 1904. In December of 1939, "Off to the Hunt" was transferred from the Society to the premises of the National Museum (the "Museum") in Warsaw, Poland, which was used by the Nazis during World War II as a German depository of Polish national treasures. This move to the Museum was the last known documented location of the "Off to the Hunt" painting. Sometime during the Second World War, "Off to the Hunt" was removed by the Nazis, without its frame, from the Museum and had been missing until 2006, when the Polish government became aware that it was being offered for sale at Christie's auction house in New York, New York.

The FALAT painting entitled "The Hunt" was bequeathed on June 6, 1914, by its first owner, LUDWIK NORBLIN, to the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Poland. During World War II, "The Hunt" was moved to the Polish National Museum, in Warsaw, Poland, just as the painting "Off to the Hunt" had been moved. "The Hunt" was stolen by the Nazis during World War II and remained missing until 2006 when the Polish government became aware that the painting was being offered for sale at
in New York, New York.

Mr. BHARARA praised the investigative work of ICE HSI in this matter, as well as ICE HSI's ongoing efforts to find and repatriate stolen property.

Assistant U.S. Attorney KAN M. NAWADAY is in charge of the case.

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