

SOTHEBY'S SUED¹



-The Cardsharps-

A painting sold by Sotheby's in London for £42,000 is at the centre of a legal battle. [...] It could actually be the work of Italian baroque master Caravaggio and worth up to £11m.

Former owner Bill Thwaytes has accused the auction house² of "professional negligence". When it was sold in 2006, it was attributed to a follower of the artist. Mr. Thwaytes said more should have been done to determine whether it was by Caravaggio, who died in 1610.

The oil painting, The Cardsharps depicts a wealthy man falling victim to two cheats at a card table. It was bought by the Thwaytes family in 1962 for £140.

In 2006, Mr. Thwaytes asked Sotheby's to value the work and the auction house concluded that the painting was one of several copies made of the original, which is on display at the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas. [...] Sotheby's decided the copy was not created by the Italian master himself and attributed it to a 17th century follower. The painting was sold for £42,000. But its new owner - a British collector - has declared it to be by Caravaggio and worth millions.

'Preposterous'³ valuation

Speaking at the High Court in London, Henry Legge QC, for Mr. Thwaytes, said the issue was not whether it could be proved on the balance of probabilities that the painting was by Caravaggio. The core of the case, he said, was a claim⁴ of negligence. He said Sotheby's had failed to thoroughly research the painting, consult outside experts or properly advise Mr. Thwaytes. Sotheby's is defending the claim and has described suggestions the painting is worth £11m as "preposterous".

Adapted from, <http://www.bbc.com>, October, 27th 2014.

¹ sued = attaqué en justice

² auction house (Sotheby) = maison de vente aux enchères

³ preposterous = grotesque, ridicule.

⁴ claim = cas

ORAL SECTION EUROPÉENNE : ANGLAIS				
BREVET DES METIERS D'ART / BAC PRO Artisanat et Métiers d'Art				
Sujet N°5	Préparation	Durée	Coefficient	Page
Session 2015	0h20	0h10	1	1 sur 1