For Immediate Release

Contact: Harold Holzer

STATEMENT BY THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART ON ITS AGREEMENT WITH ITALIAN MINISTRY OF CULTURE

(NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 21, 2006)—The Metropolitan Museum of Art today signed an agreement in Rome that formalizes the transfer of title to six antiquities—including a group of 16 Hellenistic silver pieces—to Italy.

In exchange, the Italian Culture Ministry has officially agreed that the Metropolitan may keep on view the 2,500-year-old Attic krater by the potter Euxitheos and the painter Euphr•nios until January 2008, some nine months after the scheduled April 2007 opening of the Museum's new galleries for Etruscan, Hellenistic, and Roman art. The collection of Hellenistic silver will remain at the Metropolitan until 2010 in a newly designed treasury.

The remaining objects—which, as in the case of the krater and silver, the agreement stipulates were acquired by the Museum in good faith—will be returned to Italy as expeditiously as possible. The Ministry has agreed to provide the Metropolitan with long-term future loans—of up to four years each, as Italian law allows—of works of art of equivalent beauty and importance to the objects being returned. The loans will be chosen from a list of objects submitted by the Metropolitan or by others, with joint approval.

The agreement was signed today by Philippe de Montebello, Director of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and, for Italy: Giuseppe Proietti, representing the Ministry of Culture; Francesco Sicilia, also representing the ministry; and Alessandro Pagano, representing the Culture Ministry of Sicily.

The works of art covered in the agreement are:

- Euphr•nios krater, ca. 515 B.C. (MMA accession number 1972.11.10)
- Hellenistic silver collection, 3rd century B.C. (1981.11.15-22; 1982.11.7-13; 1984.11.3)
- Laconian ky•lix, 6th century B.C. (1999.527)
- Red-figured psy•kter decorated with horsemen, ca. 520 B.C. (1996.250)
- Red-figured Attic amphora by the Berlin painter, ca. 490 B.C. (1985.11.5)

(over)
Commented Mr. de Montebello: “It is with a recognition of its institutional responsibility—coupled with the highest hopes for continued, mutually beneficial relationships with our many colleagues in Italy—that the Metropolitan has concluded these negotiations, which affirm a solution that it first proposed in Rome in November. This is the appropriate solution to a complex problem, which redresses past improprieties in the acquisitions process through a highly equitable arrangement.

“The Met is particularly gratified that, through this agreement, its millions of annual visitors will continue to see comparably great works of ancient art on long-term loan from Italy to this institution.”

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METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART INITIATES RETURN OF ANCIENT LIMESTONE RELIEF TO EGYPT

19th Dynasty Head of a Goddess Had Been on Loan to Met

(New York, April 17, 2001) — The Metropolitan Museum of Art has initiated the return to Egypt of an ancient limestone relief that had been on loan to the Metropolitan from a private owner since 1996. The piece, which depicts the head of a goddess, dates from the reign of the 19th Dynasty Pharaoh Sety I (ca. 1294-1279 B.C.). It was recently shown by a Dutch scholar to have disappeared, probably more than three decades ago, from an excavation in Memphis, Pharaonic Egypt’s ancient capital, which is located about six miles south of present-day Cairo.

Last April, Dr. Jacobus van Dijk, a Dutch Egyptologist with a special interest and expertise in the ancient Memphis monuments, was visiting the Metropolitan’s Lila Acheson Wallace Galleries for Egyptian Art when he noticed the relief on loan to the Met. He remembered having seen it previously when he studied the relief-decorated chapel of Sety I at Memphis. After his return to the Netherlands, Dr. van Dijk confirmed this impression by referring to the papers that had been read at a 1986 Paris conference, edited by Alain-Pierre Zivie and published in 1988 under the title *Memphis et ses Nécropoles au Nouvel Empire: Nouvelles données, nouvelles questions*.

Plate three of this publication illustrates a photograph of the remains of the Sety I chapel taken soon after 1948, the date of their excavation by the Egyptian Antiquities Service. Close scrutiny of this photograph—especially an enlargement—shows the relief with the goddess’ head in an oblique position at the back of two of the statues in the chapel.

Dr. van Dijk subsequently shared his findings with Dorothea Arnold, the Lila

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Acheson Wallace Curator in Charge of the Department of Egyptian Art at the Metropolitan Museum. Dr. Arnold discussed the research with the lender, and took steps to notify Egyptian authorities of this discovery. The Met also arranged to purchase the piece from its current owner in order to take official possession of the portrait and return it promptly and unencumbered to Egypt.

Dr. Arnold traveled to Cairo earlier this year to officially inform the Secretary General of Egypt's Supreme Council for Antiquities, Dr. Gaballah Ali Gaballah, of the discovery and to initiate plans for the return of the relief. At Dr. Gaballah's suggestion, the piece was delivered today to Ambassador Mahmoud Allam, Consul General of the Arab Republic of Egypt in New York. On accepting the relief, Ambassador Allam stated: "On behalf of the Government of Egypt, the Consul General of Egypt in New York extends his sincere appreciation to The Metropolitan Museum of Art for the great efforts which will set a model of exemplary cooperation in preserving the cultural heritage of Egypt."

Commented Philippe de Montebello, Director of The Metropolitan Museum of Art: "In a very tangible way, the Metropolitan Museum functions as a laboratory for unceasing study—its works of art, publicly displayed and frequently published, are constantly subject to new research and exploration. Here is a case in which a visiting scholar unearthed provenance information about a work on loan, of which thousands of earlier viewers, and previous owners, were hitherto unaware. Once in possession of this information, the right course for the Met was restitution of the work to Egypt. We are proud of both our well-informed visiting public and our professional staff for their roles in bringing this matter to the attention of the institution."

Dr. Arnold added: "The Metropolitan Museum, particularly its Department of Egyptian Art, has long enjoyed an invaluable professional relationship with our colleagues and fellow scholars in Egypt. It is an honor and a pleasure for me to re-affirm our appreciation for their longtime collegiality and generosity."

The limestone relief, which is 21-1/2 inches high and 19-3/8 inches wide, was originally part of a larger representation that included, beside the goddess, a smaller figure of King Sety I, of which only the top of the head is preserved in the lower left-hand corner of the relief slab that is to be returned. The goddess bends her head and shoulders forward; and more completely preserved parallel works show that she was offering her breast to the king, who was thus receiving divine nourishment. Hieroglyphs in front of the goddess' face provide the name of the Pharaoh.

The relief slab was owned for many years by Mrs. Richard Rogers, the wife of the American composer. It was sold to another private collector on May 22, 1981, at (more)
the Sotheby's sale of "Fine Classical, Near Eastern and Egyptian Antiquities." The current owner, who inherited the piece from the Sotheby's purchaser, loaned it to the Metropolitan in June 1996. It was on public view from 1996 until April 2000.

Dr. Jacobus Van Dijk, who recognized the relief at the Met, serves in the Department of Languages and Cultures of the Middle East at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. He himself has participated in several digs in Egypt, and is the author of a book on ancient Memphis.

Twenty-three years ago, in 1978, the Metropolitan Museum returned to Egypt an important piece of ancient art—one of the so-called "Talatat of Thebes"—after the Museum learned that it had been taken from a storeroom in Karnak three years earlier. The Minister of Antiquities at that time, according to the September 13, 1978, issue of *Al Ahram*, praised "the good will, trust, spirit of friendship, and the respect of the cultural and historical values which was demonstrated by the officials" of the Metropolitan.

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April 17, 2001
News Release

The Metropolitan Museum of Art
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For Immediate Release

Contact:
Elyse Topalian

Metropolitan Museum and Egyptian Government Announce Initiative to Recognize Egypt’s Title to 19 Objects Originally from Tutankhamun’s Tomb

(New York, November 10, 2010)—Thomas P. Campbell, Director of The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and Zahi Hawass, Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities of Egypt, announced jointly today that, effective immediately, the Museum will acknowledge Egypt’s title to 19 ancient Egyptian objects in its collection since early in the 20th century. All of these small-scale objects, which range from study samples to a three-quarter-inch-high bronze dog and a sphinx bracelet-element, can be attributed with certainty to Tutankhamun’s tomb, which was discovered by Howard Carter in 1922 in the Valley of the Kings. The Museum initiated this formal acknowledgment after renewed, in-depth research by two of its curators substantiated the history of the objects.

Mr. Campbell stated: “Research conducted by the Museum’s Department of Egyptian Art has produced detailed evidence leading us to conclude without doubt that 19 objects, which entered the Met’s collection over the period of the 1920s to 1940s, originated in Tutankhamun’s tomb. Because of precise legislation relating to that excavation, these objects were never meant to have left Egypt, and therefore should rightfully belong to the Government of Egypt. I am therefore pleased to announce—in concert with our long-time colleague Zahi Hawass, who has contributed so greatly over many years to the recognition and preservation of the historic treasures of Egypt—this formal acknowledgment that title to the objects belongs to Egypt.”

“This is a wonderful gesture on the part of the Metropolitan Museum of Art,” said Zahi Hawass. “For many years the museum, and especially the Egyptian art department, has been a strong partner in our ongoing efforts to repatriate illegally exported antiquities. Through their research, they have provided us with information that has helped us to recover a number of important objects, and last year, they even purchased and then gave to Egypt a granite fragment that joins
with a shrine on display in Luxor, so that this object could be restored. Thanks to
the generosity and ethical behavior of the Met, these 19 objects from the tomb of
Tutankhamun can now be reunited with the other treasures of the boy king.”

Dr. Hawass also announced that the objects will now go on display in the
exhibition *Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs* at Discovery Times
Square Exposition, where they will stay until January 2011. They will then travel
back to The Metropolitan Museum of Art, where they will be shown for six
months in the context of the Metropolitan Museum’s renowned Egyptian
collection. Upon their return to Egypt in June 2011, they will be given a special
place in the Tutankhamun galleries at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, and then will
move, with the rest of the Tut collection, to the Grand Egyptian Museum at Giza,
scheduled to open in 2012.

At the time that Howard Carter and his sponsor, the Earl of Carnarvon,
discovered the tomb of pharaoh Tutankhamun (reigned ca. 1336-1327 B.C.), the
Egyptian government generally allowed excavators to keep a substantial portion of
the finds from excavations undertaken and financed by them. However, during
the decade that it took Carter and his team to recover the thousands of precious
objects from this king’s tomb, it became increasingly clear that no such partition of
finds would take place in the case of the Tutankamun tomb.

Owing to the splendor of the treasures discovered in the tomb, conjectures soon
started nevertheless, suggesting that certain objects of high quality, dating roughly
to the time of Tutankhamun and residing in various collections outside Egypt,
actually originated from the king’s tomb. Such conjectures intensified after the
death of Howard Carter in 1939, when a number of fine objects were found to be
part of his estate. When the Metropolitan Museum acquired some of these objects,
however, the whole group had been subjected to careful scrutiny by experts and
representatives of the Egyptian government; and subsequent research has found no
evidence of such a provenance in the overwhelming majority of cases. Likewise,
though study of objects that entered the Metropolitan Museum from the private
collection of Lord Carnarvon in 1926 has not produced any evidence of the kind.

The 19 objects now identified as indeed originating from the tomb of King
Tutankhamun can be divided into two groups. Fifteen of the 19 pieces have the
status of bits or samples. The remaining four are of more significant art-historical
interest and include a small bronze dog less than three-quarters of an inch in height
and a small sphinx bracelet-element, acquired from Howard Carter’s niece, after
they had been probated with his estate; they were later recognized to have been
noted in the tomb records although they do not appear in any excavation
photographs. Two other pieces—part of a handle and a broad collar accompanied
by additional beads—entered the collection because they were found in 1939
among the contents of Carter’s house at Luxor; all of the contents of that house
were bequeathed by Carter to the Metropolitan Museum. Although there was discussion between Harry Burton (a Museum photographer based in Egypt, the Museum’s last representative in Egypt before World War II broke out, and one of Carter’s two executors) and Herbert Winlock about the origins of these works and about making arrangements for Burton to discuss with a representative of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo whether these works should be handed over to Egypt, that discussion was not resolved before Burton’s death in 1940. When the Metropolitan Museum’s expedition house in Egypt was closed in 1948, the pieces were sent to New York.

# # #

November 10, 2010
News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Metropolitan Museum of Art Returns a Granite Fragment to Egypt

Fragment had been on loan and was recently identified as belonging to a larger work in Karnak

(New York, October 28, 2009)--The Metropolitan Museum of Art will return to Egypt tomorrow, October 29, an ancient Egyptian granite relief fragment inscribed with the name of Amenemhat I, ruler of Egypt from 1991 BC to 1962 BC. Curators in the Museum’s Department of Egyptian Art recently recognized that the fragment was part of the larger work and confirmed this by matching the inscription on the fragment with the inscription on the larger work. The work had been on loan to The Metropolitan Museum of Art from a private owner, though the Museum had never displayed it publicly.

The work is the corner of the base of a red granite “naos,” which is a shrine used to house a statue of a deity. The shrine was dedicated to the god Amun, the chief deity of Karnak, so it most likely had an Amun statue inside at one point. The naos was moved to its present location in the Ptah Temple of the Karnak complex during the New Kingdom.

Once the Museum’s staff identified the larger work from which the fragment came, the Museum reached out to the owner of the work and took steps to notify the Egyptian authorities of the discovery. The Museum also arranged to purchase the work from its owner in order to take official possession of the work and return it promptly and unencumbered to Egypt.

Dorothea Arnold, the Lila Acheson Wallace Chairman of the Museum’s Egyptian Art Department commented: “For a long time, I puzzled about the object to which this fragment belonged. I finally pieced it together when I came across a photograph showing a naos in Karnak which is missing a corner in an article by Luc Gabolde in the journal Égypte Afrique et Orient. The fragment on loan to us looked like it might fit this larger work. With my colleague, Adela Oppenheim, we found a publication which set out the inscription on the naos in Karnak and we compared that inscription with the inscription on the fragment - the pieces fit together perfectly. We decided that, in these circumstances, the appropriate thing to do was to alert the Egyptian authorities and to make arrangements with the owner so that we could return the fragment to Egypt. We are so pleased to be giving the missing piece of the puzzle back.”

The work is to be delivered by Museum staff to representatives of the Supreme Council of Antiquities in Egypt, which is headed by Dr. Zahi Hawass, Secretary General.

(more)
Thomas P. Campbell, Director of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, commented: “The Metropolitan Museum is delighted to be able to assist in returning this granite fragment to its original home. Though the fragment is small, its return is a larger symbol of the Museum’s deep respect for the importance of protecting Egypt’s cultural heritage and the long history of warm relations the Museum enjoys with Egypt and the Supreme Council of Antiquities.”

Dr. Arnold added: “The Department of Egyptian Art and the Arab Republic of Egypt have a long and important history of collaboration and collegiality. In returning the fragment, we are pleased to be able to show our appreciation for the generosity they have shown us over the years.”

The return of the granite relief fragment comes eight years after the Museum returned a 19th Dynasty relief showing the head of a goddess to Egypt. In that case, the work had been on loan to the Museum from a private owner since 1996. A visiting Dutch Egyptologist saw the work on display and remembered that he had seen it previously when he studied the relief-decorated chapel of Sety I at Memphis. He shared his findings and research with the Museum, which purchased the work from the owner and returned it to Ambassador Mahmoud Allam, former Consul General of the Arab Republic of Egypt in New York.

# # #
New York—Calcutta

Stolen pages leave Met for Calcutta: another inside job
Eminent professor to blame

NEW YORK. In a voluntary gesture, the Metropolitan Museum of Art has handed back two illuminated palm-leaf manuscript folios, which had been missing from the Asiatic Society in Calcutta since 1950.

No lawsuit had been filed for the return of the missing leaves from a Nepalese illuminated work of the eleventh century. In fact, the Asiatic Society was unaware that the pages had been removed. The return was initiated after Met curators determined that the folios were part of the Calcutta collection.

Last year, the Metropolitan had acquired the pages with illuminations of a Tara and a Preaching Buddha from a private dealer in London. The dealer had informed the museum that the folios had been part of a private collection, for which he was acting as an agent. Steve Kossak, the Met curator who had made the purchase, would not reveal the dealer’s identity.

When the pages were brought to New York and put on display, however, Dr. Pratapaditya Pal, retired senior curator of Indian and Southeast Asian art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, informed Met officials that the pages belonged to the manuscript Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita A. 15 of the Asiatic Society.

An investigation has determined that the works were removed in 1950 by the art historian S.K. Sarawat, then an official of the society. His publications, Professor Sarawat sought to alter information on the pages’ provenance. At the time of the theft, the pages would have had little market value. Specialists in Indian art maintain that this case points to serious gaps in security at Indian museums and libraries, where the sheer number of objects and manuscripts makes systematic cataloguing impossible.

The Met’s return of the pages focuses attention on manuscript theft as a frequent crime threatening libraries and manuscript collections. Only close monitoring can prevent a determined thief from slicing pages out of manuscripts, curators say. To complicate matters, recent cases such as the theft from the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, (see The Art Newspaper, 1992, No. 17, p. 2) show that these crimes are frequently inside jobs.

The Met requested no compensation for the return of the pages, which have a market value of some $20,000 each.

David D’Arcy
A sculpture returned by the Met reflects an international problem.

drawn from a sale last summer at Sotheby's in New York after it, too, was spotted in the council's booklet.

Tracing how works of art are smuggled out of places like Cambodia and end up in museums, private collections, auction houses and galleries is a difficult, often frustrating process. Such smuggling is on the rise and is causing increasing concern among art experts and reputable dealers. A large exhibition of Khmer art that opened in February at the Grand Palais in Paris and will travel to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, the Metropolitan Museum of Tokyo and the Municipal Museum of Arts in Osaka, Japan, is sure to raise the public's awareness.

Recent allegations that Sotheby's had been selling smuggled antiquities from ancient Indian temples — allegations made in a British television series timed to a book, "Sotheby's: The Inside Story," written by Peter Watson, a London-based reporter — have prompted both Sotheby's and Christie's to review their practices. (Five of the 100 missing objects are known to have passed through Sotheby's offices in New York or in London. Some were actually sold at auction; others were withdrawn from sales when it was discovered that their provenances were uncertain.) Sotheby's said in a statement that it was aware of governmental investigations in Italy and India arising from "certain allegations in the book" and added that it was working with those authorities.

Add to this the fact that the market for Asian art has never been stronger, with record sales reported last month at both the auctions and at the International Asian Art Fair at the Seventh Regiment Armory in New York.

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Tracing Path Of Artworks Smuggled Out of Asia

By CAROL VOGEL

Of the hundreds of thousands of people who visit the Southeast Asian galleries at the Metropolitan Museum each year, no one ever questioned the origins of a 10th-century head of Shiva that was displayed among the bronzas, bodhisattvas and other deities. Neither the scores of world-renowned experts familiar with the galleries nor the Asian dignitaries who made special visits to tour them expressed concern or curiosity about how the head, or any of the other rare objects on display, got to the museum.

Alarm bells first sounded in 1993 when Martin Lerner, the Met's curator of South and Southeast Asian art, saw what appeared to be the same head in a publication called "100 Missing Objects: Looting in Angkor." Published in September of that year by the International Council of Museums, a Unesco agency based in Paris, the report was distributed to curators and dealers, collectors, customs officials and the police.

"I started to peruse it, and to my horror there was what appeared to be the head," Mr. Lerner said.

Last month, after years of delay and discussion, Mr. Lerner returned the head to the Cambodian Government at the museum's expense.

It was not the only missing object Mr. Lerner shepherded back to Cambodia. He also took with him another head, this one from the 11th century, that had been with-
Continued From First Arts Page

sure how the object, which has been valued at $150,000, left the conserva-
tion depot in the town of Siem Reap, about four miles from Angkor.

"We know only that the piece was stored in the Angkor conservation
reserves up until the outbreak of war in the early 1970's," said a spokes-
man for the Minister of State for Culture and Fine Arts in Cambodia.

"Like a number of other valuable statues, it was surrounded by re-
inforced concrete and covered in sandbags before the conservation
was definitively abandoned in 1973. As the country was virtually closed
to the outside world during the Khmer Rouge from 1975 to 1979, we
know of no art traffic during that period. It was not until the Vietnam-
ese occupation in 1979 that the international traffic of Khmer objects
took hold."

What exists is an inventory, along with photographs, made before the
war by members of the Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient, an organiza-
tion based in Hanoi and Paris that, among other things, has conducted
research throughout the former French Indochina on pieces kept in
national repositories like the conservation depot in Siem Reap and the
National Museum in Phnom Penh. The head was recorded along with a
body that officials in Cambodia say belongs to it.

Being sure it was the same piece posed problems. What is pictured in
the council publication is a head with a partly battered nose. The head
that was in the Met had a nose that is perfectly formed. Before it came to
the museum, the piece underwent some cosmetic restoration, hence the
new nose. Experts say the restora-
tion was done in London, probably
for the dealer trying to sell it.

To verify that it was the same
piece, Mr. Lerner immediately con-
tacted the international council
(which works with Interpol.) And in
1995 he visited the Siem Reap depot
and talked to officials there. "They
had slightly better photographs than
the ones that appear in the publica-
Continued on Page C14
Tracing the Path of Art Smuggled Out of Asia

The head of Shiva returned last month to Cambodia by the Met. "There was really no doubt in my mind it was the same piece. Despite the chipping, the nose is formed the same way, and the surface decoration was the same too." But Mr. Lerner warned that there was really no way to tell if the piece was actually stolen. "We don't know whether high officials, members of the royal family or ruling generals had gone to the conservation and simply taken things," he said. "It's my understanding that in some cases these kinds of objects were intended for gifts to important people. We know that things have been taken out, and I was told that in one instance there were two sculptures removed from the depot with the intention of giving one to a visiting President - it could have been either Eisenhower or Nixon."

Both Mr. Lerner and Ms. des Portes also said that in some cases there was desecration of temples. There are places where one sees bullet holes or graffiti attributed to troops stationed in Angkor. There are also instances where vandals hacked off a head or any portable body part that appeared to be salable. Smuggling is still going on. Smuggled objects take a fairly predictable route: some could have been accidentally dug up by farmers, then passed to middlemen who would enlist someone in the military to transport the objects m to the border of either Thailand or Vietnam. "At the border there are often agents that know in advance when the material is coming in," Mr. Lerner said. "Once it is picked up at the Thai border, it is normally brought to Bangkok, which is the center of international trade."

Ms. des Portes said that even today "smuggling routes through Thailand still exist run by organized rings who supply the international market."

Which is how these pieces end up in places like the Met. Before the museum accepted the gift in 1985, Mr. Lerner said, he reviewed all the available literature. "As a matter of course, we carefully review everything to make sure we're not putting either the donor or the museum in an embarrassing situation," he said. "At the time, everything appeared to be all right."

The Met refuses to disclose who the donor was, saying he wishes to remain anonymous. Officials at the museum are also vague about where the donor bought the head, saying only that it was from a "reputable dealer in Europe." But in Europe during those years there were not many dealers selling Khmer art. The biggest of them was Spink & Sons, in London. Anthony Gardner, who was the head of its Southeast Asian department in the 1970's and mid-1980's, is dead. Michael Spink, who worked for the gallery then and is still there, is not sure if the piece was sold through the firm. "I wasn't in that department at the time," he said. "And our records are scanty."

Information is also scant about the five pieces that passed through Sotheby's offices in New York or London. A torso of a female deity sold at Sotheby's in New York in 1992 for $63,250 was bought by a collector living in Switzerland. When it was discovered to be one of the missing objects, the previous owner, Doris Weiner, a New York dealer, bought it back and has made arrangements to have it returned to Cambodia. Another piece, a three-faced sandstone head of Brahma sold at Sotheby's in London four years ago, has been returned to Cambodia by art dealers living in West London after one of their clients died and bequeathed the object to them. And Sotheby's withdrew two architectural fragments from its London sales in October after it was told by Asian experts how inappropiate it was to accept for sale elements taken from Cambodian temples.

"We have had some problems in London," said Diana D. Brooks, Sotheby's chief executive worldwide. "It's a very difficult issue. We're looking seriously into any departments where these problems have occurred."

The head that Mr. Lerner returned to Cambodia came from Sotheby's in New York. Carlton Rochell, who heads Sotheby's Asian department here, said that the piece was withdrawn from the sale when it was spotted in the council publication. It had been taken from a Cambodian temple, was sold in Hong Kong in the 1980's and was brought to the United States last year. It was bought by a collector from the Middle West and then put it up for sale at Sotheby's. When the auction house realized it was one of the 100 missing objects, Mr. Lerner stepped in and negotiated its return.

Mr. Rochell said: "There's a legitimate market here, but we have to be awfully careful. I now send catalogues to I.C.O.M. and to the International Foundation for Art Research."

The drive to warn both professionals and the public about missing objects continues. The museum council is selling its publication at the Khmer show in Paris, and it will also be on sale at in Washington at the National Gallery of Art. (Proceeds from the sales are going to the National Museum in Phnom Penh.)

Meanwhile, both the Khmer head from the Met and the one Mr. Lerner returned from Sotheby's were presented to Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the co-Prime Minister, and Vann Molyvann, the Minister of State for Culture and Fine Arts, in a ceremony in Phnom Penh. Officials there said the heads would go on view in Phnom Penh at the National Museum, along with the other objects recently returned to Cambodia.
The Art Market

Looting from Angkor

Pillaged Cambodian art sold at Sotheby’s and displayed in the Met

Despite being published last year by the International Council of Museums, severed stone heads are circulating in London and New York

LONDON. An eleventh-century statue of the four-headed Brahma, sold by Sotheby’s in London on 21 October 1993 for £2,070 has been proven to be looted from Angkor.

A photo of the head is included on page 92 of the book One hundred missing objects: looting in Angkor, published by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in September 1993. The sculpture sold at Sotheby’s has been formally identified as the same object by Elisabeth Despordes, ICOM’s secretary general, and Bruno Dagens, professor at the University of Paris III and expert at the Ecole Francaise d’Extreme-Orient, co-producers of the Angkor book.

Following a visit by Mr Despordes to Sotheby’s on 14 November, Mrs Despordes has written to the auction house to express her hope that it will be returned. According to Mrs Despordes the Cambodian ambassador in London will be bringing a complaint in the near future.

This is not the first such discovery made by ICOM. In a sale of Indian and south-east Asian art held by Sotheby’s New York on 2 June 1992 Lot 96, a torso of the goddess Khmer in the Baphum style of the eleventh century, was sold for $63,250 against an estimate of $30,000-50,000 to a Swiss gallery. ICOM has lost trace of it, but according to Elisabeth Despordes Interpol are pursuing their own investigations.

Responding to The Art Newspaper, Sotheby’s issued a statement which reads: “At Sotheby’s we make every effort to discover the origins of the objects which are offered for sale. We do not hesitate to act in these sorts of cases. Our expert received the ICOM book after the sale of the 21 October 1993. He acted immediately and at his insistence the sale of the head was cancelled. We made contact with ICOM and invited them to inspect the object. Following the visit of their experts on 14 November we have been waiting for official confirmation.”

Perhaps even more surprising is the presence of another object illustrated in the book (page 80) which is now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. This is a head of Siva from the early tenth century. It had been removed from a sculpture of the god in the temple of Phnom Krom at
December 1992 and before that by him in 1989. Before the first sale the vendor had produced an export license which has now been declared to be false by the Ivory Coast authorities. They have now embarked on a procedure to reclaim the object, which is illustrated on page 30 of ICOM's book *One Hundred Lost Objects: Looting in Africa*.

Speaking to the Art Newspaper sister paper, *Le Journal des Arts*, Mr. Loudmer said: "We had no reason in 1989 to doubt the authenticity of the export license. How were we to know that a document which was fine in 1989 would no longer be three years later? It is up to governments to take better care of these things".

In December 1993 the Parisian dealer Jean Michel Beurdeley gave back a Khmer sculpture of a goddess to UNESCO's Cambodian delegation. Mr. Beurdeley had bought the sculpture in Bangkok in 1980. Realising as early as 1982 that the sculpture was looted, he says that he preferred to wait until the end of the Vietnamese occupation before handing it back.

Elisabeth Desportes has summed up the situation: "Most Khmer pieces currently on the market are of doubtful origins. Our aim is to give back all such objects unless their good provenance can be proved beyond doubt. We are absolutely not against the market but we would prefer that it be based on surer moral foundations, as well as better observing professional codes of ethics and extreme vigilance. This applies to auctioneers, dealers and collectors".

Nicholas Powell

Angkor. The Met informed ICOM that they have it. Another ICOM publication has provided damning information about an African statue sold by Paris auctioneer Loudmer on 5