

Businessman with fake paintings in front of the court in Ostrava

7th June, 2013

Jaroslav Perdoch

Ostrava - paintings and historical objects dealer Leonard Adamec (43 years), who is also accused of selling forged paintings, stood before the Regional Court in Ostrava this week. Adamec refused to plead guilty. He said he was convinced that he had original paintings of well-known artists. According to the prosecutor, Adamec sold to the art lovers, mostly from the Moravian-Silesian Region, thirteen counterfeit paintings for twenty-five million crowns. There were works of Jan Zrzavý, Vaclav Radimský, Otakar Kubin, Josef Sima, Anthony Slavíček and Ľudovít Fulla among them.

Examinations

Police became interested in the suspect merchant in April 2011, when they received an information about a possible sale of counterfeit goods.

Local police forces started working on this case after they requested expert opinion on the paintings, which were given to them. Several months later it became clear, that the paintings really were fake.

Suspicion

News of a person which could be selling fakes became publicly known in 2010 .

On one of the internet forums related specifically to this man it has been openly said, that he could have been selling fakes. "He sells fakes and there are many victims like us already. If you purchased a painting from him, have it checked. And if you know of anyone who communicates with him in any way, warn that person, " wrote one of the forum members.

Arrest

The detectives have arrested Adamec in the beginning of 2012. It was suggested to take him into custody, but the court rejected it. Adamec wrote a testimony which was accepted by the judge. In connection with the sale of paintings Adamec has been accused of fraud. He faces five to ten years in prison. The prosecutor also accused him of illegal enterprise. Starting from 2001 and to 2007 he sold historical objects from his personal collection for almost a hundred million of crowns. The trial was adjourned until the end of the holiday season. Adamec asked for sufficient time for thorough preparation of his defense.

Another case

The Regional Court in Ostrava is currently discussing other cases of alleged sale of counterfeit paintings. Two men who tried to sell six paintings to collectors from Ostrava are currently subject to prosecution. They claimed that paintings are the creations of world renowned painters. One of the defendants is a former candidate for the post of President of Czechoslovakia Jiří Včelař Kotas, who is hiding in an unknown location. They offered the images to the Ostrava collectors, for witch they asked forty million crowns. The art connoisseur had however, invited an expert, who suspected that paintings are fake. This suspicion was subsequently confirmed by professional expertise. According to the police and prosecutor, the seller knew it was a fake.

Source: <http://moravskoslezsky.denik.cz/zlociny-a-soudy/obchodnik-udajne-prodal-padelane-obrazy-20130607.html>