

Thieves of Emil Filla's paintings will serve up to 12 years sentence in jail

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An organized group of six people has been sentenced to 4 up to 12 years of imprisonment by the Regional court in Ústí nad Labem for stealing antiques, works of art and painting of Emil Filla from the exhibition hall of chateau in Peruc, Lounsko district. The sentences are not yet final, all accused have kept a term for revocation.

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Two years ago, on November 18th , Marián Lázlo and Vojtěch Hloušek were supposed to have broken into the exhibition hall and steal four oil paintings. Both have judged criminal records for similar activity.

„After 4 p.m., Marian Lázlo and Vojtěch Hloušek have, after unscrewing the metal grid covering the left part of the entrance door, breached the glass in the door and broke into Emil Filla memorial hall, located in the southern wing of chateau Peruc,“ claimed the prosecutor, with which the court completely agreed.

Lázlo was involved in the case as a criminal defendant cooperating with authorities in the investigation. He admitted his crime in both preliminary court hearing and trial. According to the Chamber President Kamila Elsnicová, this also helped to accuse Hlouška. The court had sentenced him to four years in jail. On the contrary, Hloušek was given the heaviest 12-year sentence. During the trial he admitted only thefts he has committed before the Peruc robbery case, which were also known to the court.

Hloušek with Lázlo broke into the Železnice village museum, into the Memorial to the fallen patriots in Paseky nad Jizerou, twice into the Maloskalská gallery in the village of Malá skála and gallery of paintings and sculptures in Slatina nad Zdobnicí. They stole paintings, historical violin , weapons and a clock from there.

Secret agent pretended to be interested in paintings

Other accused were given four year sentences as accomplices. They have been selling stolen goods further. Marian Lázlo father, Ondřej, who had twice drove other accused to the crime scene, waited for them in the car and participated in selling, got seven years. Marián Lázlo and Vojtěch Hloušek will remain in custody, where they have been brought by a court escort. The collector of antiques Ján Mitro, who have bought several stolen guns, in addition to a four-year sentence will have to pay a fine of one million crowns. In case he will not pay, he will be given another year in jail.

Police arrested the criminal about a month later after the theft in Peruc; intact images were returned to the gallery. And two days after the theft in Peruc removed picture frames have been found. Paintings of incalculable historical value were not stolen on a request, so thieves were just looking for a buyer. Police managed to find them after they started to monitor the suspected group of people and after they deployed a secret agent who faked interest in buying those stolen paintings.

Source: <http://www.novinky.cz/krimi/321546-zlodeji-obrazu-emila-filly-si-odsedi-az-12-let-za-mrizemi.html>