

secession

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Press release: Today's recommendation by the Art Restitution Advisory Board

The Art Restitution Advisory Board met earlier today and issued a recommendation to reject the proposal to restitute the *Beethoven Frieze* by Gustav Klimt to the heirs of Erich Lederer.

The Association of Visual Artists Vienna Secession and the Society of the Friends of the Secession welcome this decision. Herwig Kempinger, president of the Secession, notes: "We were confident that the Republic of Austria would duly consider the proposal, respecting the applicable legal principles and regulations, and arrive at an appropriate decision." Kempinger goes on to express his "delight that we will continue to be able to present the Frieze to the public in the location for which it was created."

The Republic of Austria purchased the *Beethoven Frieze* from Erich Lederer in 1972. The exceptionally fragile work was then restored at the public expense; in 1985, the Austrian Federal Monuments Office oversaw the permanent installation of the Frieze in a room built specifically for this purpose, where it is presented in conditions that meet all environmental and conservation requirements. Herwig Kempinger adds: "Leaving the Frieze in its current place maintains the art-historical connection between building and work. The Secession is the most appropriate location for the presentation of this important work of Viennese art nouveau."

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