



## Owner gives up fight to save 'Chagall' painting

*The owner of a painting he believed was by Marc Chagall has given up on his fight to save it from being destroyed.*

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Martin Lang, a businessman from Leeds, sent the painting to be assessed by the Chagall committee in Paris, but they declared it a fake and kept it. Under French law, forgeries can be confiscated and destroyed.

Mr Lang paid £100,000 for the work in 1992. He originally wanted it back but has now said he will "walk away totally disillusioned with the French". The case was featured on BBC One's Fake Or Fortune in February, when experts informed Mr Lang that his work was painted after the 1930s.



Martin Lang paid £100,000 for the painting, which he believed was by Chagall

The painting of a reclining nude was dated 1909-10. Chagall died in 1985. The artist, an early modernist, experimented with various styles including cubism and expressionism.

### 'Lost cause'

Mr Lang said he had been issued with a writ by the Chagall Committee, which controls the artist's estate and wants the painting destroyed.

"They're trying to get a hearing but I've said I don't want to go along that route," Mr Lang said. "I don't see there's a point. It's a lost cause, so I've just said, 'No, it's not worth it.'"

"There's no point contesting [it]. It's in France, it's a French court, they will come back on their side. It's a terrible shame."

A spokeswoman for the committee said the matter was "in the hands of the courts".

"There has never been any doubt that this work is a counterfeit," she said. "It's very evident."

Asked whether the court would now decide if it would be destroyed, she said: "There is a whole procedure going on now but that is part of the procedure, yes."