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Secret fire sale held of 250 works confiscated from dealer in Knoedler gallery scandal

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by DAN DURAY | 17 December 2015

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Art seized by the US government from the Long Island dealer Glafira Rosales, who pleaded guilty in 2013 to selling forged paintings through the now defunct Knoedler gallery, was quietly sold off this spring at the Gaston & Sheehan auction house in Texas.



Ad Reinhardt's 1947 Abstract Painting was seized by the US government from Rosales's collection. It had previously sold at Phillips in 2008 for \$314,500

More than 250 works were offered in three online auctions in March and April, and made a total of \$4.9m. Rosales's name was not mentioned in connection with the sales, which included pieces by Sean Scully, Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, Louise Lawler and Andy Warhol; a painting by Ad Reinhardt went for \$300,000. Noticeably absent from the auctions were works by Mark Rothko, Jackson Pollock and Robert Motherwell, forgeries of whose paintings Rosales has admitted to selling.

“All the works of art in this sale were appraised by a certified appraiser,” says a spokeswoman for the US Marshals Service. “During the appraisal, no issues arose that indicated the need for detailed authentication. If any

work of art had been found to be counterfeit, [we] would... have destroyed it.”

Money raised by the sales will help compensate the victims of Rosales’s fraud. Meanwhile, one lawsuit against the Knoedler gallery is due to go to trial in January, while another was recently settled out of court.
