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# THE ART NEWSPAPER

Letter to the Editor: from Sharon Flescher, IFAR

Re: Former director of scandal-beset Knoedler Gallery breaks her silence,  
The Art Newspaper, April 2016

by THE ART NEWSPAPER READERS | 14 April 2016



A purported Jackson Pollock sold by the Knoedler Gallery to Jack Levy  
I would like to correct certain statements concerning the International  
Foundation for Art Research (IFAR) published in your April 2016 issue.

As is now known, in October 2003, IFAR issued a report concerning its

review of a purported Jackson Pollock sold by the Knoedler Gallery to Mr Jack Levy. The statement that IFAR could not “determine whether the work was authentic or not,” implying that we did not come to an opinion, is not correct.

As the report makes clear, IFAR had serious concerns about the painting’s style, material properties, signature, lack of documentation, and reported provenance, which we concluded was “inconceivable”. We wrote three times within the report, and again in the cover letter, that we could not accept the work as a Pollock. And we were right. If we were writing a catalogue raisonné, it would not have been included.

Also incorrect is the assertion that a “recent history of bad feelings” between IFAR and Knoedler might have affected our report. There were no bad feelings during my tenure that I know of, nor would any have affected our report. To imply otherwise is offensive. We are a 47-year-old non-profit dedicated to integrity in the visual arts.

Finally, it was disclosed at the outset that the specialists would be anonymous. Only Ms. Freedman knows why she didn’t heed the warnings in IFAR’s report. In any event, the report was not written for her, but for Mr. Levy, who certainly understood its conclusion when he demanded, and received, a full refund.

Sincerely,

**Dr Sharon Flescher**

*Executive Director*

*International Foundation for Art Research (IFAR)*