



# Gauguin Painting Sells for Near \$300 Million and Embarks on Worldwide Tour

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by Pat Rogers

SWITZERLAND—*Nafea Faa Ipoipo (When Will You Marry?)* by Paul Gauguin has embarked on a whirlwind exhibition tour before being whisked away to its brand new owner. The painting of two Tahitian girls was recently sold privately by a Swiss collection for a reportedly near \$300 million, making the sale one of the highest paid for a work of art, according to the New York Times. With its new status and sky high value, the painting is scheduled to make three exhibition appearances in museums worldwide over the next year. Afterwards, the new owner takes possession of the artwork.

The buyer of the painting remains cloaked but news reports are pointing to a Qatar resident as the new owner. Up until recently, the painting was on view at [Kunstmuseum Basel](#), on long-term loan from the Staechelin Family. The seller, former Sotheby's executive Rudolf Staechelin, would not confirm or deny that the buyer was from the oil-rich Qatar or reveal the buyer's identity, according to the New York Times.

Right now, the artwork is now on view as part of the exhibition "[PAUL GAUGUIN](#)" at the Beyeler Foundation in Switzerland, which opened on February 8, 2015. Afterwards, *Nafea Faa Ipoipo (When Will You Marry?)* will be exhibited in three separate shows before being turned over to its new owner in January 2016, said Mr. Staechelin, according to the New York Times.

The painting will travel in March, as part of the Staechelin Collection, to the Reina Sofía art museum in Madrid as part of the exhibition "Two Case Studies: The Im Obersteg and Rudolf Staechelin Collections" on view from March 18 to September 14, 2015.

*Nafea Faa Ipoipo (When Will You Marry?)* then continues to the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. for a United States presentation. It will be part of the exhibition "Gauguin, Picasso, and Masterworks from Swiss Collections: Staechelin / Im Ober" on view from October 10, 2015 to January 10, 2016.



"Nafea Faa Ipoipo (When Will You Marry?)" by Paul Gauguin, 1892. Image from MercoPress ([en.mercopress.com](http://en.mercopress.com)).

*Nafea Faa Ipoipo (When Will You Marry?)*, 1892, was made during Paul Gauguin's Polynesian period and painted during the first time Gauguin lived there. The painting is one of 20 Impressionist and post-Impressionist masterpieces the Staechelin family collection had on permanent loan to the Kunstmuseum Basel, until recently.

The Staechelin Trust owns over 20 impressionist and post-impressionist works, which had been on loan to Kunstmuseum Basel for almost 50 years, according to news accounts. *Nafea Faa Ipoipo (When Will You Marry?)* was sold and the rest of the artworks withdrawn from the museum by Staechelin after a falling out with the museum, reported [The Telegraph](#).

"We are painfully reminded that permanent loans are still loans," the Basel museum remarked, according to The Telegraph.

Staechelein's collection was put together by Rudolf Staechelin's grandfather, who became friends with artists and made most of his purchases during and after the first world war, according to [The Guardian](#). He later advised the Kunstmuseum Basel, which took his collection as a loan following his death in 1946.

Staechelein confirmed to the [New York Times](#) that the 1892 oil painting of two Tahitian women had been sold, but did not confirm the identity of the buyer, nor the price. It is believed to have been bought by a Qatari buyer. This would exceed a paid a record \$259m in 2011 by a Qatari buyer for *The Card Players* by Paul Cezanne, according to The Baer Faxt, the New York Times reported.

Responding to the sale of the painting, Staechelin was reported as stating, "The real question is why only now? It's mainly because we got a good offer. The market is very high and who knows what it will be in 10 years. I always tried to keep as much together as I could. Over 90% of our assets are paintings hanging for free in the museum."

**BASIC FACTS:** "PAUL GAUGUIN" is exhibited at Fondation Beyeler in Switzerland from February 8 to June 28, 2015. For details, visit [www.fondationbeyeler.ch](http://www.fondationbeyeler.ch).

"Two Case Studies: The Im Obersteg and Rudolf Staechelin Collections" is presented at Reina Sofía Museum (Museo Nacional Centro De Arte Reina Sofía) in Madrid from March 18 to September 14, 2015. For details, visit [www.museoreinasofia.es](http://www.museoreinasofia.es).

"Gauguin, Picasso, and Masterworks from Swiss Collections: Staechelin / Im Ober" is exhibited at the Phillips Collection from October 10, 2015 to January 10, 2016. For details, visit [www.phillipscollection.org](http://www.phillipscollection.org).