WHY WAS A FRIDA KAHLO PAINTING STOPPED FROM BEING SOLD?



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

A painting by the famous Mexican artist Frida Kahlo was removed from a major auction just hours before people could bid for it. The painting, made in 1952, was expected to sell for between $2.5 million and $3.5 million. However, heritage campaigners argued that it may have disappeared from Casa Azul, Kahlo's former home in Mexico City, under suspicious circumstances. Casa Azul became a museum after Kahlo's death and contains many objects connected with her life and work. The painting had been listed in a 1957 record made by Kahlo's husband, Diego Rivera, for a trust that gave their collection to the Mexican people. Mexican authorities are investigating how the artwork later entered private hands. The case raises an important question: if an object belongs to a nation's cultural history, should it be allowed to become private property or be sold abroad?

WHY IS THIS INTERESTING?

This story shows that paintings are not only valuable objects. They can also be part of a country's history and shared culture. Mexico's argument is that the painting may have been held in trust for the public. Similar arguments have surrounded artworks taken during war, colonial rule or political change.

THINK LIKE A HISTORIAN

"Should this painting belong to private owners or the Mexican public?"

Source: Smithsonian Magazine

https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/hours-before-it-was-expected-to-sell-for-up-to-3-million-this-frida-kahlo-painting-was-whisked-from-the-auction-block-