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Degas Sculpture Spat With Charity Settled

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(CN) - After a raffle of rare editions of Edgar Degas sculptures caused a two-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee to face a bitter personal attack, the dispute settled with kind words this week.

The fight stems from a claim by The Degas Sculpture Project, a New Jersey art dealer, that it discovered and purchased the rights to a set of 75 previously unknown plaster casts made from Degas' original wax sculptures, including a plaster of his famous work "La Petite Danseuse de Quatorze Ans."

In a July [complaint](#), the project claimed that Yank Barry, founder of the hunger charity Global Village Champions Foundation (GVCF), contracted to buy at least two sets of the bronzes and to fund the purchase through a charity raffle.

It said Barry instead "absconded [with] these works, abandoned the raffle or any other purpose related to GVCF's stated charitable purposes and has even resold or offered these items for resale and/or for services performed by others for his personal financial gain."

The complaint savaged Global Village and its officers.

"Defendant GVCF is, ostensibly, a nonprofit charitable foundation with the stated admirable purpose of eradicating world hunger," the complaint stated. "In the circumstances described herein, however, GVCF is in actuality an instrumentality of fraud utilized for the personal benefit of its founder, directors and officers."

The art dealer retracted its bitter statements about Global Village and Barry on Monday in a statement from both parties announcing a settlement.

"Simple misunderstanding regrettable escalated unnecessarily into litigation," the parties said.

The press release gives no details about the terms of the settlement, and attorneys for both sides did not return requests for comment.

"To set the record straight, Global Village Champions Foundation, Inc. is not an instrumentality of fraud, but rather a very worth charitable organization that works to eradicate hunger around the world," the press release states. "The Degas Sculpture Project Ltd. has the utmost respect for Mr. Barry, a two-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee, in that goal, and we fully commend Global Village Champions Foundation Inc. for its international humanitarian efforts."

Art experts are divided over the authenticity of the discovered plasters, as reported by Art News, and the settlement ensures that a court will not reach this issue.