

NBC Philadelphia

"Greatest Theft of Art Since WWII"

Friends of the Barnes Foundation ask the DRPA to reconsider supporting the move into the city.

by Karen Araiza
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The anti-movers had the megaphone Wednesday in the passionate fight over moving the Barnes Collection from the suburbs to the city.

Friends of the Barnes Foundation went before the Delaware River Port Authority, asking them to reconsider the organization's support of the move and to take back its \$500,000 donation and find a better way to use the money.

The move would amount to "nothing less than the greatest art theft since World War II," one of the supporters argued.

The Barnes houses one of the world's largest collections of Impressionist, Post-Impressionist and early Modern paintings. It's open to the public and people come from all over the world to see the extensive works by Picasso, Matisse, Cézanne, Renoir and Modigliani. All that amazing art is inside the estate of the late Albert C. Barnes, who very much intended for it to stay right there in Lower Merion.

The collection will be moved, by a judge's order, five miles away to a location at 21st and the Ben Franklin Parkway, which is considered ground zero for Philly art and culture. The move is scheduled to happen by the end of 2011.

The DRPA told Friends of the Barnes protesters that the board would consider the request to withdraw support.