



# Newsletter

## Cultural Goods World War II

In this *Newsletter* we present information on Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE) activities regarding cultural goods in the Netherlands that were stolen, confiscated, or sold under duress before or during World War II. We also refer to other information of interest offered by organizations we closely work with, such as the Restitutions Committee and the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies.



### ‘The Future of Restitution’ Symposium

The Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE) is organising an international symposium on 12 September 2024 on the future of the Restitution Policy on Cultural Goods and WWII in the Netherlands and elsewhere. The symposium rounds off a year in which the RCE organised various activities to mark 25 years of the Netherlands’ restitution policy. The symposium language will be English. For further information, the full programme and tickets, [visit website](#). A limited number of tickets are available for students at a discount.

Almost 80 years after the Second World War the restitution of cultural goods which were involuntarily lost during the Nazi regime is by

no means a closed chapter. The Washington Principles, endorsed by 44 countries in 1998, serve as an important foundation for restitution policies in several countries. On 12 September we will be looking ahead to find answers to the question of how, now, 25 years later, we see the future of the restitution policy.

We will be doing that together with Wesley Fisher and Rudi Ekkart, and others, who will consider the question of what can we expect from new research methods, new attitudes towards historical injustice and whether an end date for restitution policy is conceivable? Evelien Campfens will explore with us the desirability of supranational policy. Robert

Edsel and Ankie Petersen will tell us about what countries can do to prevent art seizure during times of war and plundering. The matter of what to do with what is termed ‘orphaned art’ which cannot be restituted because the rightful owners and all their heirs are no longer alive, will be discussed in a panel session. Richard Aronowitz and Christian Fuhrmeister will share their insights about the future of provenance research from the perspectives of the art trade and the academic world. Author Yael van der Wouden will end the day with a lecture that will get everyone thinking. During the breaks and afterwards there will be plenty of time to talk, meet and explore the interesting venue: The Artis Groote Museum in Amsterdam.

### Program ‘The Future of Restitution’ Symposium September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024

- 9.30 Registration, coffee and tea
- 10.00 Opening statement by the Minister of Education, Culture and Science of the Netherlands
- 10.15 Endless restitution: is consensus possible on when justice is done?
- 11.00 Musical intermezzo by The Klezmer Society
- 11.20 ‘Heirless’ art: the restitution of unclaimed objects to the Jewish community
- 12.15 Lunch (vegetarian) and option for a tour around Artis
- 13.45 Loot: can we prevent it?
- 14.30 Borderless restitution: towards a supranational restitution committee?
- 15.15 Musical intermezzo by the Klezmer Society
- 15.35 The future of provenance research: practice meets theory
- 16.20 Closing remarks
- 16.50 Closing by Siebe Weide
- 17.00 Drinks

**Location:** ARTIS, Plantage Middenlaan 41, 1018 CZ Amsterdam

**Tickets:** [visit website](#)

## European subsidy

A consortium of the *Joods Cultureel Kwartier* (Jewish Cultural Quarter) and the Rijksmuseum received a subsidy for the Looted Art & Judaica Project from the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) of the European Union. The Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocides Studies, Arbeitskreis Provinienzforschung (International Professional Association for Provenance Research) and the Association of European Jewish Museums are also associate partners in the consortium. Various activities are taking place as part of the project, including the [exhibition Beroofd \(Looted\)](#) in the Jewish Cultural Quarter and a publication of the same name, a podcast *De verdwenen collectie Heppner* (The lost Heppner Collection), the round table *Cultural Goods WWII - The future of looted art in museums* from the RCE and the symposium *Looted* at the Rijksmuseum.

## Museum acquisitions

It was mentioned in a previous newsletter that RCE would be taking over the results of the two projects of the Dutch Museum Association (Museumvereniging): Museum Acquisitions 1940-1948 and Museum Acquisitions since 1933. The information that until now could be found via [Museum Acquisitions](#) has now been taken over by the RCE. Via the website [herkomstgezocht.nl](#), you will now be directed to the [object portal](#), the [Knowledge Base](#) and [general information](#). For those museums that have taken part in these projects, this means that in the event of future changes in object data, such as a change in its restitution status, the RCE can be contacted at: [restitutie@cultureelerfgoed.nl](mailto:restitutie@cultureelerfgoed.nl). The RCE will then amend the information so it remains up-to-date.

## Twelve objects from the NK Collection returned to heirs of Mozes Mogrobi and Zilia Mogrobi-Jacobi

The State Secretary for Culture and Media, Fleur Gräper-van Koolwijk, decided on 24 June that 12 objects from the NK Collection (Netherlands Art Property Collection) should be restituted. In so doing she adopted the recommendation of the Restitutions Committee. On the basis of research by the Cultural Heritage Agency (RCE), the committee concluded that Mozes Mogrobi, owner of the Amsterdam-based 'Kunsthandel Mozes Mogrobi' (Mozes Mogrobi Art Gallery), sold the artworks in 1941 and 1942 and that this sale was related to the measures taken by the occupying forces against Jewish citizens and stemmed from the need to survive. Therefore it is sufficiently likely that Mozes Mogrobi and his wife Zilia Mogrobi-Jacobi lost ownership of the objects involuntarily due to circumstances directly related to the Nazi regime. [Here you can read the press release](#) (in Dutch only) of the Restitutions Committee.

## Binding recommendation on *Odalisque* in the collection of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam

The Restitutions Committee has advised Amsterdam Municipality to return the painting *Odalisque* (by Henri Matisse) to the legal successors of Albert Stern. The painting has been part of the collection of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam since 1941 and is currently owned by Amsterdam Municipality. The Stern family was subjected to persecution in Germany due to its Jewish background and gradually stripped of its property and livelihood. The family fled to the Netherlands in 1937 and thereafter made several attempts to leave Europe. The circumstances for the family had deteriorated to such an extent that it was forced to sell its possessions. The committee considers it sufficiently likely that the sale of the painting was related to measures taken by the occupying forces against Jewish civilians and stemmed from the need to survive. You can read [the recommendations](#) and [the press release](#) of the Restitutions Committee or [the press release of the Stedelijk Museum here](#).

## In Pursuit of Provenance

Every month in the In Pursuit of Provenance blog we discuss an object from the NK Collection on which in-depth provenance research is being carried out. Hopefully, this will enable more restitution requests to be honoured and allow property to be returned to its rightful owners and their heirs. This month: the painting *Johannes de Doper* (John de Baptist) (NK1627) by the Venetian artist Girolamo da Santacroce. What can we discover about this painting if we look not just at the front, but also examine the back? [Read more about this painting and its journey](#) from Vienna to The Hague.



Johannes de Doper, NK1627.

## Podcast series *De verdwenen collectie Heppner* (The lost Heppner collection)

The four-part podcast *De verdwenen collectie Heppner* is about a quest for justice and follows the story of Max Amichai Heppner (1933) and the fate of his family's collection. This podcast is part of the *Beroofd (Looted)* exhibition which can be seen in the Joods Museum (Jewish Museum) and the Nationaal Holocaustmuseum (National Holocaust Museum) until 27 October. The podcast is the result of a joint venture between the Joods Cultureel Kwartier and Eelke Muller, senior researcher at the Expertise Centre for the Restitution of Cultural Goods and World War II (ECR) at the NIOD Institute. Podcast creator Marieke de Veer visits the National Archive, where Perry Schrier and Annelies Kool, both advisors at the RCE on Cultural Goods WWII, make an interesting discovery. Using art historical research and the sources available to them, they eventually manage to uncover important new information about the missing artworks of Max Amichai Heppner. You can listen to how this continues further in the podcast on your favourite podcast platform, or listen here: [De verdwenen collectie Heppner | Podcast | Joods Cultureel Kwartier \(jck.nl\)](#) (in Dutch only).



## Subscriptions

Would you like to stay informed of developments in the area of cultural heritage objects and restitutions in relation to the Second World War? You can [subscribe to the newsletter here](#).