



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. The newsletter also contains 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.

Various objects from the National Collection returned to legal successors

In the past few months, in a number of cases, the former minister for Education, Culture and Science, Gouke Moes, has decided to reconstitute objects from the National Collection. In each of these cases, the objects were returned on the advice of the Restitutions Committee.

Covered vases and a glass carafe

On 24 November 2025, in accordance with inheritance law, Moes decided to return two covered porcelain vases with blue and white decorations of landscapes and flowers (NK276-A1-2-B1-2), a covered vase with blue and white decorations of flower branches and landscapes

and flowers (NK276-A1-2-B1-2), a covered vase with blue and white decorations of flower branches and landscapes (NK277-A-B) and a glass carafe with stopper (NK481-A-B) to the legal successors of Louis Morpurgo. In its recommendation, the Restitutions Committee concluded that it is highly probable that the art dealership of Louis Morpurgo was the original owner of these covered vases and carafe, and



Covered vases with blue and white decorations of flowers and landscapes, manufactured in China 1700-1719, NK276-B1-2



Glass carafe with stopper, manufactured in Germany between 1800-1899, NK481-A-B

that it is sufficiently plausible that he lost these objects involuntarily as a result of circumstances directly related to the Nazi regime. The Committee based its advice on an investigation of the facts by the Centre of Expertise on Restitution of the NIOD. [Read the advisory report here](#)

Information non-returned and auctioned works online

The online portal wo2.collectienederland.nl has been expanded to include information about [non-returned](#) and [auctioned works](#). Anyone who had lost cultural goods during the German occupation or who had information about cultural goods that had fallen into enemy hands was obliged to report it by filling in a form and submitting it to the Stichting Nederlands Kunstbezit (SNK). These Declaration forms are kept at the National Archives. It is unclear where the vast majority of the objects listed on these forms are or whether they even still exist. After the war they were not returned to the Netherlands. For that reason, they are referred to as 'non-returned works'. The publication of these reportdeclaration forms on the online portal

provides an insight into the objects in question. A proportion of the cultural goods which did return to the Netherlands after the war, but which at the time could not be restituted to an original owner or successor, was auctioned by the SNK between 1950 and 1953. Information about the 'auctioned works' can now [also be found on the portal](#).

World War II restitution data 2025 in the Heritage Monitor

The Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE) publishes facts and figures about heritage, via the Heritage Monitor. This includes details about the restitution of cultural goods with a Second World War background and about information requests received for investigation into the provenance of works of art during the period 1933 to 1945. The figures for 2025 can be consulted online on the Restitutions WWII dashboard of the Heritage Monitor. Under the heading [restitution of cultural goods](#), this page lists the number and type of requests/recommendations per year, whether a request was granted or rejected and the number of objects covered by a restitution request. The number of information requests received and the number of information requests received per type of applicant are listed under the heading information requests.

Laura Molijn wins Dr. Rudi Ekkart Thesis Prize

During this years Platform meeting in the 14th of april we celebrated the award previously known as the Thesis Prize Cultural Goods WWII. [The prize was renamed the Dr. Rudi Ekkart Thesis Prize this year](#), in recognition of Dr Ekkart's huge contribution to the field over a period of many years. Laura Molijn was announced as the winner. Molijn conducted research into the post-war aid campaign 'Amsterdam helps Arnhem', organised in July 1945 by the Amsterdam City Council. Her thesis convincingly describes how solidarity and moral complexity were closely intertwined in the post-war period. The shared second place went to Emma van Benthem and Veronica Simmelink. The award was previously known as the Thesis Prize Cultural Goods WWII.



I. to r.: Rudi Ekkart, Emma van Benthem (finalist), Laura Molijn (winner), Veronica Simmelink (finalist), Iris Looman (RCE)



The future of orphaned looted art

Since 2022, the RCE has been conducting additional provenance research into the Netherlands Art Property Collection (NK Collection), with the aim of returning as many artworks as possible that were looted, confiscated or otherwise lost under duress during the Nazi regime to their rightful owners or heirs. However, not all of these objects can be returned. Works that originally belonged to Jewish owners and remain without identifiable heirs are considered orphaned Jewish looted art. The Central Jewish Consultation (CJO) and the Committee on Orphaned Jewish Looted Art, chaired by Lodewijk Asscher, advised the Minister on [this issue](#). The Minister has adopted a number of the [committee's recommendations](#).

Latest progress report published on research into the NK collection

The progress report contains an overview of the research work conducted into the Netherlands Art Property (NK) Collection between 2022 and 2025. This is the third and final instalment of the report. [In this final report](#), we look back on the past four years.

A gallery attendant in the Portraits Gallery during the Claimed exhibition at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Source: W.L. Stuijbergen / Spaarnestad Photo (05887), file number 13509, Nationaal Archief.

Theme page on lost property at oorlogsbronnen.nl

The website oorlogsbronnen.nl grants access to sources of information about the Second World War via the collections of more than 250 archive institutions, museums, commemorative centres and libraries in the Netherlands and abroad. Since the start of March, the website oorlogsbronnen.nl has featured [a new theme page](#) on the looting, trading and restitution of objects in the period 1933-1945. This in-depth study maps out the NK collection, placing it in a broader historical context, with articles about the art trade and the looting of art during the occupation, and the process of post-war restitution. Personal stories tell the human side of this history, while illustrations and interactive maps provide details of the objects in question and the number of objects still missing. The theme page was developed by WO2Net in close collaboration with the RCE team responsible for conducting research into the provenance of objects.

IN BRIEF

- > During the third Platform Meeting on WWII cultural heritage, 'attic finds' were central: objects that had remained hidden for years were revealed to have wartime histories. The platform is [available to watch online](#).
- > In the summer of 2022, a private collector reported a painting to the RCE that was believed to have been looted or gone missing during the Second World War. The painting had remained crated ever since the war. The process of opening the crate was documented in the [video Unboxing](#).
- > Interns Lynn van Zijl and Luisa Kleiser wrote a [knowledge base article on art dealers and auction houses during the period 1933-1945](#).

Do you have any questions or want to submit a request?

Are you looking for information about restitutions or the NK collection? By serving as the first point of contact for possible rights holders and collection managers who are seeking information about restitution policy, procedures and provenance research, the RCE aims to simplify the restitution request submission process. Information and restitution requests can be found on [our website](#). Stakeholders, museums, researchers, students and other interested parties who have questions can email us at restitutie@cultureelerfgoed.nl.

We are glad to be of service.

Website

Would you like to stay informed about developments in the field of Collections & Museums? You can sign up for [our newsletter here](#).