



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.

Call to join the Network of Museum Provenance Researchers for WWII Cultural Goods

Are you a provenance researcher at a Dutch museum and keen to play an active part in knowledge exchange in the field of provenance research, exchanging your ideas and experiences with other provenance researchers? Why not send an email to restitutie@cultureelerfgoed.nl stating your name, position and the name of the museum you work for? The Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE) organizes a network meeting once or twice a year and, as a provenance researcher, you are very welcome to join. This network focuses on cultural goods that may have been looted or forcibly handed over or sold during the period 1933-1945, rather than cultural goods from a colonial context.

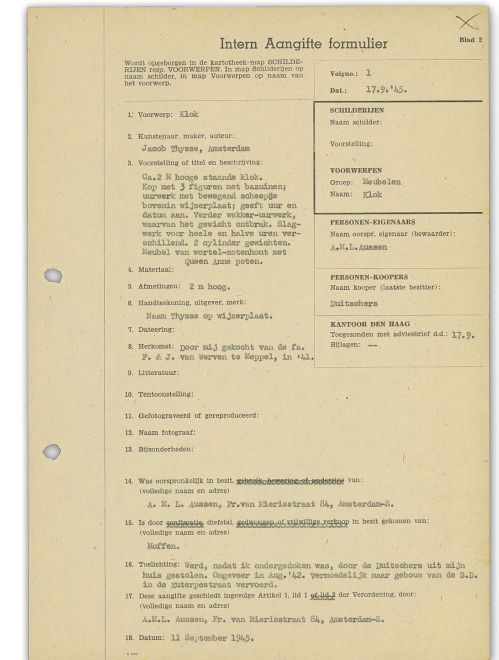
Renewed WWII portal

The website wo2.collectienederland.nl brings together information about the cultural goods in the NK Collection on a single platform. The data compiled includes photographs, descriptions, provenance history and restitution status. The ambition is to further expand and upgrade the information available on the portal in the coming years. In recent months, this process has begun by making and keeping the information as up to date as possible through the addition of new research data. High-resolution photos of all NK objects (including the reverse side) can also be found on the site. The results of the Museum Association's Museum Acquisitions project have also recently been added, along with the details of objects reported after the war which have yet to be recovered or returned.

Declaration forms for unreturned artworks now fully searchable

Anyone who lost works of art during the occupation or had information about artworks which had ended up in the hands of the occupying forces was obliged to report their loss to the Netherlands Art Property Foundation (SNK) soon after the war. This led people to complete thousands of declaration forms that provide information on artworks that had changed hands voluntarily or involuntarily during the war. Many of these objects were brought back to the Netherlands and are currently in the NK Collection. But a far larger proportion of these artworks was not returned to the Netherlands after World War II and, as such, is still regarded as missing.

These forms, approximately 15,000 in total, can be found at the National Archives, along with just under 2,000 photographs of the objects declared. The paper on which these important forms were printed is extremely fragile and sifting through them is a time-consuming task. Between 2015 and 2017, the former Origins Unknown Agency (Bureau Herkomst Gezocht) addressed this issue by digitising the forms and making them available through its database. This year, the final ten per cent of these declarations were entered in the system by provenance researchers at the Cultural Heritage



Report of missing painting, National Archives collection, Netherlands Art Property Foundation, access 2.08.q2, inv. no. 749

Agency. Thanks to the renewed WWII portal (see item in this newsletter), this information is now searchable by name or provenance, for example, and serves as an important starting point for provenance research. The information on these declaration forms is useful because it relates to the registration of works that have never been found in the Netherlands or abroad, but may still be circulating in the commercial art world. Making this information accessible has already resulted in a number of works being returned to their rightful owners.

WWII data in the Heritage Monitor

The Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE) publishes facts and figures on heritage in the Netherlands on the Erfgoedmonitor (Heritage Monitor). From now on, figures and charts relating to requests for restitution can also be found at this source. The [Restitution of WWII Cultural Goods](#) page shows the number and type of applications/recommendations per year, whether an application was granted or rejected and the number of objects covered by a restitution application. The RCE publishes the figures from 2018 onwards.

Blogs: In Pursuit of Provenance, June to August

In [Pursuit of Provenance](#) is a monthly blog focusing on provenance research into an object from the Netherlands Art Property Collection (NK Collection). The collection consists of artworks that were returned to the Netherlands after World War II, including paintings, works on paper and applied arts such as furniture and ceramics. By giving a significant boost to this research, we

hope to uncover new provenance information. The June blog describes two Dutch scenes, in July the focus was on a bronze mortar and in August an ikat cloth from West Sumba.

*Ikat cloth made of cotton, Kodi region, West Sumba, Indonesia, 1850-1940.
Inv. no. NK1113, 137 x 260 cm.*



Avraham Roet, Chanan Hertzberger, Dave Heilbron

A look back at the kick-off meeting for 25 years of restitution policy

The restitution policy for cultural goods in the context of WWII celebrates its 25th anniversary this autumn. The Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE) is marking this milestone with a series of activities. On Wednesday, 6 September the celebrations kicked off with a meeting in the Glass Room of the Portuguese Synagogue in The Hague. In the illustrious company of 150 guests who have been involved in restitution policy over the past 25 years, the RCE reflected on the past and looked to the future. The packed programme featured a wide range of guests, and musical accompaniment from the [Leo Smit Foundation](#). Go to [our website](#) for a description of the event.

Thesis award for WWII Cultural Heritage

Are you graduating with a Master's thesis in the field of Cultural Goods and World War II? If so, you may be eligible for [the WWII Cultural Heritage thesis award](#).

NEW PUBLICATIONS

WWII magazine now online

The Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE) has launched one of its progress reports as a magazine-style publication. The report contains stories about the NK Collection and an overview of the work done during research into the Netherlands Art Property (NK) Collection between 2022 and 2025. This magazine covers [the first section of the report](#). An English-language edition will follow shortly.

Video on junior provenance researchers

Since 2022, a re-examination of provenance research on cultural goods looted, confiscated, handed over or sold from the Netherlands in the period 1933-1945 has been taking place. In [this video](#), provenance researchers talk about what their research means to them.

Herkomstgezocht.nl becomes a clear landing page

The website [herkomstgezocht.nl](#) has been transformed into a clear landing page, featuring up-to-date information from the Netherlands on cultural goods from the period 1933-1945 and how they are being handled. It includes links to the objects themselves, the organizations involved, and sources for doing provenance research. There is also information on restitution policy and what you can do to request the return of objects.

Reissue of major book on restitution

Roof & Restitutie (Looted Art & Restitution) tells the story of the trading, looting and restitution of artworks from the Netherlands before, during and after World War II. The publication provides an expansive overview of the history of restitution policy in the Netherlands. Originally, this work took the form of a catalogue accompanying an exhibition of the same name. In 2023, Dutch publishing house Waanders published it in book form with an additional chapter by the original authors. [The book](#) is available in Dutch and English.

SHORT NEWS

> Rijksmuseum Muiderslot created a video about NK-objects in their collection. [Watch the video](#).

Questions or submit a request?

Are you looking for information on restitution or the NK collection? To facilitate restitution requests, the RCE is the primary contact for potential interested parties, collection managers and curators as regards restitution policies, procedures, and provenance research. The RCE itself publishes information on its [website](#), where you can also find information on how to submit a restitution request. Interested parties, museums, researchers, students and others can email their questions to: restitutie@cultureelerfgoed.nl.

We are glad to be of service.

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](#).