

**Great Expansion in Records Available on Nazi-Era Cultural Property Portal**

**Press Release 9 May 2013**

**London 9 May 2013**: Two years after the signing of a global agreement in Washington D.C. to widen public access to all records related to looted cultural artefacts from the Nazi era, the **International Research Portal for Records Related to Nazi-Era Cultural Property** has gained momentum with an additional nine organisations joining, an improved online web portal and access to a larger number and range of newly digitised documents.

Existing and new members of the Portal met yesterday at The UK National Archives to report on progress of the online Portal at [http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/index.html](at%20http%3A/www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/index.html) which was created to fulfil the 1998 Washington Conference Principle on Nazi-Confiscated Art that ‘Relevant records and archives be open and accessible’. The project helps families, researchers and historians by identifying, cataloguing and digitising the archival materials and making them available through a single [International Research Portal](http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/index.html) hosted by the US National Archives and Records Administration in Washington DC.

**New Members Broaden Reach of Project**

The Board and the eleven existing members of the Nazi-Era Cultural Property project welcomed new and potential members at the meeting which was opened by Oliver Morley, Chief Executive and Keeper of The National Archives, and by the US Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues, Douglas Davidson.

New members are the General Settlement Fund and National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism - [*Findbuch for Victims of National Socialism*;](https://www.findbuch.at/de/home.html) Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg - [*Galerie Heinemann online*;](http://heinemann.gnm.de/de/willkommen.html) The Getty Research Institute - [German Sales Catalogs, 1930-1945;](http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/provenance/german_sales.html) Heidelberg University Library - [German Sales 1930-1945. Art Works, Art Markets, and Cultural Policy](http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/en/sammlungen/artsales.html?browse=subjects#browse-tree), and [*Art – Auctions – Provenances. The German Art Trade as Reflected in Auction Catalogues from 1901 to 1929*](http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/en/sammlungen/artsales.html?browse=subjects#browse-tree); Italian Directorate General of Archives - Italian Government Records on the Expropriation and Restitution of Jewish Property; Landesarchiv Berlin - [*WGA Database of the Berlin Restitution Office Case Files*;](http://www.wga-datenbank.de/de/startseite.html) National Archives of Luxembourg - Luxembourg Government Records on Looted Jewish Assets; NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, The Netherlands – [*ERR records*](http://www.archieven.nl/nl/result-modonly?miview=inv2&mivast=298&mizig=210&miadt=298&micode=093a&milang=nl); and Yad Vashem - Records Related to Looted Jewish Assets. Also attending the meeting was the Centre de Documentation et de Recherche sur la Résistance in Luxembourg and the National Archives of The Netherlands.

Anne Webber, Portal Executive Board member and Co-Chair of the Commission for Looted Art in Europe said: 'This new collaboration of 22 institutions across Europe and the USA in this global international project demonstrates an appreciation of the huge role of the Portal can play for claimants and researchers all over the world. The extended range of participants means that the scope of materials has expanded exponentially, now including government records, auction and dealer records, and post-war claims. These new developments will be of immense help for claimants in identifying and recovering their missing property.'

**Access to New Material**

The Portal is being redesigned to provide an improved, user-friendly bilingual guide to the available records and to contain links to three new categories of records: government records, art and dealer records and post-war claims records.

Of the new records, Heidelberg University Library and The Getty Research Institute have digitised 3,000 auction catalogues from 1930-1945 covering nine countries and every type of cultural property from paintings to sculpture to decorative objects. The sales records can be searched either by individual auction or by keyword at the item level, even where the researcher has very little information about the work. Galerie Heinemann provides digitised records of one of the most important German dealers and access to detailed information on over 45,000 important paintings from 1890-1939.

Also available for the first time will be 9,000 claims made to the US government from individuals in a range of countries post-war, 800,000 newly digitised restitution case files from the Berlin Restitution Office and Austrian claims records dating from 1945 onwards.

These two new categories of records complement the documentation from government and institutional archives in the US and across Europe that include Nazi records of the looting, Allied intelligence reports on the looters and looted items, and post-war efforts at restitution.

The National Archives in the UK has completed its own description and digitisation project of over 4,350 searchable items on Nazi-era cultural property in partnership with the Commission for Looted Art in Europe. These include records from a number of government departments including the Foreign Office and the Treasury. These records have been fully described, indexed, digitised and tagged by keyword improving online [search and download](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/looted-art.htm) capability for historians, researchers and families trying to trace looted cultural artefacts.

These records date from 1939 to 1961 and include seizure orders, inventories and images of looted works of art, as well as field reports and claim forms for seized property. They also include interrogation reports of art dealers and reports of the transfer of looted artworks to neutral countries. All the original UK government files have been newly scanned in colour and are searchable by name, place, subject and date

Oliver Morley, Chief Executive and Keeper of The National Archives said: “We are delighted to have completed the digitisation and linking of all our archival looted art records online. Along with the contribution from the new member organisations, the resources being put into the portal will greatly improve access to important documentation, allowing people to uncover the rightful origins of many more looted artefacts, bringing justice ever closer.”

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**Notes to Editors:**

**International Research Portal for Records Related to Nazi-Era Cultural Property**

The project was established to fulfil the [1998 Washington Conference Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art](http://www.lootedartcommission.com/Washington-principles), the [2000 Vilnius Forum Declaration](http://www.lootedartcommission.com/vilnius-forum) and the [2009 Terezin Declaration](http://www.lootedartcommission.com/NPNMG484641), in particular on the importance of making all such records publicly accessible.

**Founding Organisations**:

[The National Archives of the United States](http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/nara.html)

[Bundesarchiv (The Federal Archives of Germany)](http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/bundesarchiv.html)

[The National Archives of the United Kingdom](http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/archives-uk.html)

[France Diplomatie: Diplomatic Archive Centre of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs](http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/france.html)

[Central State Archive of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine (TsDAVO)](http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/tsdavo.html)

[State Archives in Belgium](http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/belgium.html)

[Claims Conference](http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/claims-con-ushmm.html)

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[United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/claims-con-ushmm.html)

[Deutsches Historiches Museum (German Historical Museum)](http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/dhm.html)

[Mémorial de la Shoah](http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/international-resources/memorial-shoah.html)

**New Members**

General Settlement Fund and National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism - [*Findbuch for Victims of National Socialism*;](https://www.findbuch.at/de/home.html)

Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg - [*Galerie Heinemann online*;](http://heinemann.gnm.de/de/willkommen.html)

The Getty Research Institute - [German Sales Catalogs, 1930-1945;](http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/provenance/german_sales.html)

Heidelberg University Library - [German Sales 1930-1945. Art Works, Art Markets, and Cultural Policy](http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/en/sammlungen/artsales.html?browse=subjects#browse-tree), and [*Art – Auctions – Provenances. The German Art Trade as Reflected in Auction Catalogues from 1901 to 1929*](http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/en/sammlungen/artsales.html?browse=subjects#browse-tree);

Italian Directorate General of Archives - Italian Government Records on the Expropriation and Restitution of Jewish Property;

Landesarchiv Berlin - [*WGA Database of the Berlin Restitution Office Case Files*;](http://www.wga-datenbank.de/de/startseite.html)

National Archives of Luxembourg - Luxembourg Government Records on Looted Jewish Assets;

NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, The Netherlands – [*ERR records*](http://www.archieven.nl/nl/result-modonly?miview=inv2&mivast=298&mizig=210&miadt=298&micode=093a&milang=nl);

Yad Vashem - Records Related to Looted Jewish Assets.

**About the Commission for Looted Art in Europe**

The Commission for Looted Art in Europe, [www.lootedartcommission.com](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Canne.webber%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5CIK8EPKED%5Cwww.lootedartcommission.com), is an international, expert, non-profit representative body based in London. It negotiates restitution policies and procedures, works to ensure the widest access to records and information of the period, and promotes the identification of looted cultural property and the tracing of its rightful owners. It represents families, museums and governments worldwide on whose behalf it researches, identifies and recovers cultural property looted during the Nazi era, and has recovered over 3,500 items since it was founded in 1999.

**The Central Registry of Information on Looted Cultural Property 1933-1945,** <www.lootedart.com>, is the Commission’s research arm. An international research centre and online repository of information on Nazi art looting and restitution, it was set up to fulfil Washington Principle V1 on the creation of a central registry of information in this subject. It provides detailed online research, up-to-date news and information from 49 countries and an online database of over 25,000 objects looted, missing and of uncertain provenance from 12 countries. The Registry is a charitable body, operating under the auspices of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, an independent unit of Oxford University.