

# Mannheimer: an important art collector reappraised

History of ownership from 1920-1952: From Mannheimer to Hitler; recuperation and dispersion in Dutch museums, based on archival documents.<sup>1</sup> Main Collection: Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

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In the years following World War II, more than 1400 art objects formerly belonging to the German-born banker Fritz Mannheimer (1890-1939) came into the possession of Dutch museums, especially the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum. Highlights of this remarkable collection include top-quality paintings by Rembrandt, Crivelli, Frans van Mieris, and Jan van der Heyden; German applied art objects of the highest quality; master drawings by Fragonard, Watteau, and Boucher; sculptures by Houdon and Falconet; best-of-kind furniture by Röntgen and classic French furniture makers; a world-class array of Meissen porcelain; exquisite silver and gold art objects, ornate snuff boxes and much else. Like many collections belonging to Jews who lived in countries occupied by the Nazis, the Mannheimer art objects were coveted by Adolf Hitler, Hermann Göring, and associated figures from the time of the German invasion of the Netherlands in May 1940. The subsequent ownership history of these extraordinary works of art, both during and after the war, sheds light on the conflicts, greed, breaches of the law, and lingering consequences of that dark and troubled era in world

history. The Amsterdam Rijksmuseum had indeed been most enriched in 1952 by receiving the lion's share of the Mannheimer estate.

In this article the following is presented: First, an outline of facts concerning both the legal ownership situation and physical storage of his art objects in three main phases: initial collecting, the enforced Nazi purchase and the post-WW2 recuperation and redistribution.

Second, a breakdown is presented of the 1400 Rijksmuseum Mannheimer objects into seventeen groups.

Last, in order to study reception history, monetary values are listed for thirteen of the most costly objects.

Then four annexes:

Annex 1: Mannheimer art objects distributed to other Dutch museums.

Annex 2: Mannheimer art objects now in museums outside Holland.

Annex 3: Mannheimer art objects as recuperated Jewish property.

Annex 4: Mannheimer objects destroyed in the London Blitz, 1940.

The object of this article is to present the first in-depth archival study of the man and his art collection. Key biographical facts and third-party opinions about Mannheimer are also given.

### **Legal ownership and physical storage**

A native of Stuttgart, Germany, Fritz Mannheimer trained as a lawyer at Heidelberg University and then embarked on a financial career in Paris, where he worked for a Russian-owned banking concern until the outbreak of World War I forced him to return home.<sup>2</sup> About halfway through the war, he relocated to neutral Holland, living and working in Amsterdam, where he traded currencies and precious metals on behalf of the German government.<sup>3</sup> After that world war, a Berlin-based bank called Mendelssohn & Co. asked him to become the managing partner or *'beherend vennoot'* of their Amsterdam branch.<sup>4</sup> Mannheimer did so and eventually held about eight per cent of this Amsterdam branch's stock, becoming a figure of

considerable influence high finance circles in Europe during the course of his career in Amsterdam.

Mannheimer was keen to obtain Dutch citizenship, initially for business reasons, but as the Nazis rose to power in Germany and the situation for German Jews became increasingly untenable, the issue acquired added urgency. After the authorities had denied his first naturalization request in 1923, perhaps to curry favour, he donated one painting to the Rijksmuseum in January 1924, requesting anonymity.<sup>5</sup> Via the Rijksmuseum director he also gave an anonymous donation to the Rembrandt Society, intended for buying works of art for Dutch museums.<sup>6</sup> Mannheimer again tried to further his quest for obtaining Dutch citizenship by using other contacts in the art world; in 1935 he donated f300.000 to the Kröller-Möller Foundation, again requesting anonymity, and he kept courting the director of the Rijksmuseum. There is one indication that by making a large payment, he saved the important Amsterdam zoo 'Artis' from going under financially.<sup>7</sup>

It was in Amsterdam that he was to grow to become Europe's major currency broker, internationally active as a key advisor to many national central banks.<sup>8</sup> Mannheimer actually rose to become the most influential central banker of Europe, able to float or break a central bank at will. He propped up the gold standard of the national Dutch bank and in return, in 1927 he received a Dutch royal honour, that of Officer in the *Order of Oranje-Nassau*.<sup>9</sup> The Dutch WW2 historian Lou de Jong later called him a financier of genius, who worked '...with a mix of genius, talent and bluff...'.<sup>10</sup> Initially he championed German national interests in the field of metals and high-finance banking until a decisive turning moment, probably in 1933, with Hitler's rise to power. After that he became a supporter of Jewish welfare interests in Holland, again often keeping a low profile.

Socially, he preferred to move in high society and high finance circles, not only in Amsterdam, but also in Paris and other major capital cities like Berlin. Mannheimer decided to amass an art collection of international stature, modeled on the best collections he had seen in Paris (the Rothschilds) and Berlin (where he met a number of Meissen collectors and became aware of the Lepke sale of art coming from Russian museums).<sup>11</sup> Culturally he felt at home in Paris but his apart from the French furniture and art objects, the core of his applied

art collection in Amsterdam can be identified as largely ‘Germanic’ in style and taste. As indicated, the scope of his obsessive collecting may have been influenced by particular members Rothschild family members whom he met, especially the Dutchman, Baron van Zuylen van Nyevelt who married H el ene de Rothschild (1863-1947). Mannheimer encountered them in Paris and the noble couple traditionally spent their annual September vacation in Castle *De Haar* in Haarzuilen, near Utrecht, Holland, where the castle hosts invited VIP dinner guests from the cream of Dutch families.<sup>12</sup> Fritz Mannheimer and his elder brother Victor were welcome guests in that castle in 1932, 1934 and 1935.

A highly visible Amsterdam socialite, Mannheimer led an extravagant and ostentatious lifestyle, flaunting local modest rules of conduct, often smoking expensive cigars and being driven around in a chauffeured Rolls Royce limousine. In the city’s main theatre and concert halls he also showed off his latest trophy girlfriend, when attending performances.<sup>13</sup> Refusing until the end to speak fluent Dutch, he divided Amsterdam socialites and bankers in a minor number of sympathisers and a large number of critics.<sup>14</sup> Dutch fascist magazines in the 1930s had a field day and repeated virulent attacks on the Jewish banker Mannheimer.<sup>15</sup> To the Rijksmuseum director he kept writing in German except for one short letter, dating from the time he had just received Dutch citizenship.<sup>16</sup> He often went on business trips to European capitals and also resided in Paris from time to time. Due to his obesity and heart problems he repeatedly needed treatments during his last decade and took therapy in various medical institutions in Europe.<sup>17</sup> One quite nasty anti-semitic story about Mannheimer, about his wealth and his high finance contacts, was printed in the German Army magazine *Signal*, just a month before the Nazi attack on Holland. The [full text](#) is given in this link because it is the only remaining article providing detailed, albeit enemy-inspired information.

While he was an extremely busy banker and often travelled abroad for long periods, collecting Meissen porcelain remained one of his foremost leisure passions. A full list of his art advisors from 1920 to 1939 is unknown, but some art dealers are identified here and also in the article about [Russian art objects](#).<sup>18</sup> Duveen was one of his major art traders.<sup>19</sup> Rijksmuseum curator Den Blaauwen theorized that specialized art dealers could have delivered crated high quality objects to his home, where he could pick and choose items to

his liking.<sup>20</sup> Most of Mannheimer's extensive Meissen porcelain collection was however bought from four sources: first in 1936-1937, a complete collection bought *en bloc* from the Oppenheimer family in Berlin; second, purchases from German royal collections appearing on the art market and third, buying items from collections of various branches of the Rothschild family.<sup>21</sup> The Meissen objects collected by Mannheimer are judged by the Rijksmuseum curator to be of outstanding quality and of exceptional importance. Fourth, he acquired items from the [Hermitage](#) and other Russian collections, bought via the art trade, well over 100 objects, mostly porcelain.<sup>22</sup> From 1927-1933, by order of the Soviet government, state museums including the Hermitage were forced to sell off vast numbers of works of art. Mannheimer bought objects through intermediaries, but he was just a minor player in that field as can be seen in this article link. From 1928 to 1932, during the arterial bleeding of Russian art collections, the most exquisite and costly art objects went to Calouste Gulbenkian (now shown in the Lisbon museum) and later on the very best paintings of the Hermitage went to Andrew Mellon; these were subsequently donated to the new National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.<sup>23</sup>

In purchasing art, financially, Mannheimer had to compete with great rulers and wealthy patrons. Using not his own money - but the Amsterdam branch of Mendelssohn & Co bank's money, Mannheimer began to amass applied art and fine art on an enormous scale until the bank's other owners in Amsterdam suddenly got wind of his spending, got quite upset and tried to put a stop to it. At that moment, acting through an unusual legal deal dating from 1934, the Amsterdam branch of Mendelssohn & Co bank became the owner of the entire art collection in a subsidiary under British law called *Artistic and General Securities Ltd.*, with a total value of f6,684,480.- (hereafter: *Artistic*). Mannheimer lease-backed all of this art for an annual sum equal to the interest rate. He therefore kept treating the bank's art collections as his own, keeping it in his Amsterdam mansion.

Although after 1934 Mannheimer was contractually forbidden by his bank partners to keep spending the bank's money on art, he compulsively continued to do so and amassed countless new art objects (see [Fig. 1 and 2](#)).<sup>24</sup> In 1935-1936 an inventory was made of all 3,000 items with the help of art historian Otto von Falke (1862-1942) who may have temporarily resided in his Amsterdam mansion.<sup>25</sup> When finally in 1936 - against political resistance - especially erupting in 1934 from Dutch fascist circles - Mannheimer was finally

naturalized as a Dutch citizen, he opened his massive art collection to a limited number of visitors.<sup>26</sup> By doing so, he avoided having to pay luxury tax. His villa was located a stone's throw from the Rijksmuseum, at Hobbemastraat 20 and is now used as Rijksmuseum offices.

A common Dutch disparaging description of this treasure trove was '*Villa Protsky*', referring to the Dutch word '*protserig*' which can be translated as gaudy, showy, ostentations.<sup>27</sup> Another *pied-à-terre* villa was opened up by Mannheimer in Vaucresson, near Versailles, France. That real estate was purchased and then lavishly furnished in the classic French style by interior designer Elsie de Wolfe (1856-1950), also known as Lady Mendl, who herself lived in Versailles.

Certainly Mannheimer's stylistic choice of objects in the Louis XV and XVI periods (including *rococo*), as well as the choice of the classicist *empire* style, ran counter to the basic taste of mainstream Dutch society, generally imbued by Calvinism and holding on to austerity, preferring absence of ornament and hiding outer signs of wealth.

Mannheimer had an excellent eye for art and was assisted by the best art dealers. Very rarely he made a mistake; just one time he fell into the Van Meegeren trap by purchasing a faux Vermeer, *Interior with female and male at a clavichord* (see below, annex 3).

In what would have been - with hindsight - his purchase of a lifetime, in June 1936, Mannheimer responding by letter, refused to consider buying a real Vermeer painting offered to him, "*The Art of Painting*", now a key masterwork in the Vienna *Kunsthistorisches Museum*. Unpublished up to now is a letter from Mannheimer, dated 6 June 1936, sent from his Villa in Vaucresson to the art dealer Katz, who worked on behalf of the painting's owner, Count Czernin. Mannheimer agreed with Mr Katz that the painting in the Count Czernin collection was of high artistic value and one of the most beautiful in the world - and he also understood the great interest of Holland to purchase it. He stated however, that he was still ill and because of his illness unable to act on this matter, and he also returned to Katz the initially enclosed letter from Count Czernin.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps another reason for not buying at that time could also have been that his available cash flow did not allow such a great expense. One source however states that around 1935, his capital was estimated as 20 million Pound Sterling, an unheard of amount of money.<sup>29</sup>

When in 1939 he became again gravely ill, he hired a personal physician to travel with him wherever he lived and worked, and also a qualified Brazilian nurse, Marie-Annette Reiss. Soon, Fritz Mannheimer fell in love with Marie-Annette, and they married on 1 June 1939 with a prenuptial agreement. At this wedding party in Vaucresson, Paul Reynaud, the French minister of Finance was present as a witness and friend. Soon, business collapsed. Because of a failed *high finance* investment intended to prop up the French Franc on behalf of the French state, his trade bank Mendelssohn & Co went into *surseance* (deferral of payment, a *Chapter 11* form of bankruptcy) right after the Nazi's closed down the main Mendelssohn & Co bank in Berlin. Mannheimer died soon after in Vaucresson, France, on 9 August 1939, perhaps of heart failure, perhaps by suicide.<sup>30</sup> He left a dream-like treasure of 3000 art objects, then worth about 13 million guilders (*f*).<sup>31</sup> However, he also left even more staggering debts of *f* 14,5 million at his own bank, and *f* 27,4 million - or according to historian De Jong even almost *f* 40 million in other bank-related debts and creditor debts.<sup>32</sup> In the New York Times obituary of 11 August 1939, Mannheimer was described as a '*currency manipulator*' and the '*King of flying capital*'. This newspaper also stated: '*He gave many gifts to charity and recently made a large anonymous donation to the French Government for the national defense fund. He was a grand officer of the Legion of Honor.*'

His widow Marie-Annette Mannheimer - Reiss, then just pregnant, fled successfully first south to Nice, France where their baby Anne France (Annette) was born in 1939, and then emigrated to the USA, where Marie-Annette became married with the wealthy industrialist Charles W. Engelhard, jr. Thereafter she became widely known as Jane Engelhard, the philanthropist (1917-2004); obviously baby Annette was adopted by Charles Engelhard.<sup>33</sup>

In 1939 the *Deutsche Reichsbank* took over the complete assets of the Mendelssohn & Co. Bank, liquidating the latter and therefore becoming the full legal owner of almost all of the art objects Manheimmer had collected. Almost – because just before his death on 9 August 1939, for safe-keeping, Mannheimer had moved key pieces of art to the Chenue firm based both in London and to Paris, and either legally or illegally had put them in his wife's name.<sup>34</sup> These Parisian items were well stored and cared for at the Chenue branch. Prior to that, there were also a group of furniture, some art objects and probably also some paintings

and drawings located in their well-designed second home, their villa in Vaucresson near Versailles. After the attack on France the Nazis started collecting. All of the art works and furniture transported to Paris and Vaucresson were traced and seized by the Nazis, the sum-total of the most coveted items being 27 paintings and 18 drawings.<sup>35</sup>

Sadly, nearly all the London objects, of which a full inventory list exists, were stored in a bank vault and perished by a direct bomb hit in the *Blitzkrieg*.<sup>36</sup> The exception were perhaps three to five unbreakable surviving objects found in the rubble in 1940, including a Boy attributed to Donatello (see below, costly objects) and a gold and enamel ‘*Triptych*’, described below in Annex 4.<sup>37</sup> See this [web link](#).

After Mannheimer’s death in 1939, the Deutsche Reichsbank, then fully the legal owner, intended to sell the bulk of the art collection, but initially goods remained *in situ* in the Amsterdam mansion where only a house servant still lived. Mannheimer’s mother who had also lived there, moved out into a Jewish old-age home. Her immediate future became grim.

In view of selling, a neutral legal expert, E.J. Korthals Altes (1898-1981) was appointed as a trustee administrator (in Dutch: *curator*) to deal with the tangled ownership of the treasures and real estate (Fig. 11).<sup>38</sup> He requested the assistance of the Rijksmuseum director, F. Schmidt Degener to make inventory lists with full descriptions in order to determine the value of each object.<sup>39</sup> During a visit to the villa made right after Korthals Altes’ request, the director noted that since the last time he was inside as Mannheimer’s guest, a number of important paintings and art objects were clearly missing.<sup>40</sup>

The registry of the 3,000 objects was an enormous task for the Rijksmuseum staff, and especially for Miss C.J. Hudig, who carried out the work with the assistance of Miss J.M. Schoonenberg, and many Rijksmuseum staff curators from late 1939 to April 1940.<sup>41</sup> They made use of the existing inventory made by Otto von Falke. From this point on, the expert valuations by Hudig, always indicated as ‘*Miss H.*’ are repeatedly listed in official documents. Together with Korthals Altes, the museum staff calculated that the part of the collection formerly owned by *Artistic* (thus fully owned by the Mendelssohn & Co. bank), was worth f 4,5 million guilders. Since the creation of *Artistic*, Mannheimer had illegally continued to buy objects with the bank’s money for another 1,5 million guilders, thus making



a total sum close to 6 million, although the real figures might have been even higher.<sup>42</sup> Apart from this total value of 6 million, there was the before-mentioned group of extremely costly master paintings and drawings missing, spirited away for storage by the Chenue firm in Paris, and in Vaucresson, France and not included in the Amsterdam list. The expensive art objects stored by the Chenue firm in London were also off-list.<sup>43</sup>

### **Nazi occupation**

Then in May 1940, the Nazis invaded the Netherlands and occupied the country, installing a civic, not a military government. The Austrian-born *Reichskommissar* Seyss-Inquart was appointed head of this Nazi government in Holland. He immediately purchased the contents of Mannheimer's wine cellar and transported the bottles to his own mansion near The Hague. He did not dare touch the art. Hermann Göring's local business contact in Amsterdam, Alois Miedl however, just had taken over the art dealer firm owned by the late Jacques Goudstikker by illegal means. Goudstikker had suddenly died at night in May 1940 from a fatal fall into the hold of the freight ship on which he was fleeing the Netherlands, heading for England. By entering into the official art dealer world, Miedl had a new business cover and could legitimately start trading in confiscated Jewish property.<sup>44</sup> Korthals Altes initiated talks with the now important art trader Miedl in order to sell Mannheimer's art treasures.<sup>45</sup> Miedl received a commission and after WWII fled to Spain, never having been convicted postwar.<sup>46</sup>

Apart from Miedl as a middle man, two powerful German parties were insatiably hungry for art: Göring and his men, and Hitler, aided by branches of his SS. Initially open auctions of Mannheimer's treasures were planned, in which Göring's men offered 3 million guilders for the entire collection. They were thus in direct competition with Hitler's men, including Dr Mühlmann, SS commissioner of the occupied Dutch areas, who was based in The Hague.<sup>47</sup> Mühlmann initially offered a price equal to Miedl's first offer, but in October 1941 he lowered it to f5,500,000, which was only one-third of the insurance value.<sup>48</sup> Another player was the Dutch state leader *Reichskommissar* Seyss-Inquart, was also secretly working on Hitler's behalf, and he received a substantial commission payment for his efforts.

Obviously, much of the monies paid by the Nazis came from the seized assets of deported Jews.

Hitler had been warned by a telegram from Dr H. Posse, that the 3,000 priceless Mannheimer objects threatened to fall into the hands of ‘speculators’.<sup>49</sup> Posse was director of the Dresden Museum, and since 1938 a key official in charge of filling Hitler’s future grand *Führer-museum* in Linz, Austria. At that point Hitler, who always maintained the right of first choice (his *Führervorbehalt*) decided not accept any sale or any division of goods between his competitor in art purchasing *Reichsmarschall* Göring and himself. He made it very clear that in the interest of the German people, all this art had to be collected undivided to adorn Hitler’s planned *Führer-museum* in Linz.<sup>50</sup> As the art objects were legally owned by the Deutsche Reichsbank, Mannheimer’s treasures were not merely stolen, but were purchased in 1941 for the low price of f5,5 million by Hitler’s men, with a legal contract signed under duress by Korthals Altes. The treasure already packed up in the villa in 1940 by the Rijksmuseum staff was subsequently crated and moved to Nazi territory. Due to dangers from allied air raids, these crates and baskets were again moved into cellars, and in 1944-1945 even stored in the safety of deep salt mines in Bohemia and in Altaussee.<sup>51</sup>

In addition, the Mannheimer art initially sent to France, formally owned by Mannheimer’s widow, consisting of key paintings and drawings, and stored safely in the Chenue firm in Paris, was moved to the Vichy region. This part was then bought by the Nazis for the relatively low price of 15 million French Francs.<sup>52</sup>

The legal facts were as follows. After the closure of the Mendelssohn & Co bank branches in Berlin and Amsterdam, the *Deutsche Reichsbank* had become 100% owner of the assets, including all of the Mannheimer art objects later owned by Hitler. This bank then had to pay out all outstanding debts in Holland, as many neutral Dutch financial institutions had enormous claims. The *Reichsbank* could have paid off these debts and kept the art objects. Mannheimer had bought art illegally with the bank’s money, and after the 1934 transfer to ‘*Artistic*’ the collection was no longer ‘Jewish’ property but neutral bank property. In 1945, German lawyers could have made the case that the Jewish origins of the collections were void, given the purchase history and the bank debts.

Thus Hitler had been forced to *buy* the treasure, for although the initial collector Mannheimer was Jewish, the bank creditors were not, so seizing the art would not have been

legally correct.<sup>53</sup> Hitler's men selected the best parts, and the remaining less valuable Mannheimer assets were sold off in Holland: non-antique jewellery was sold in Amsterdam at the Frederik Muller auction house. Less important furniture were auctioned off by De Zwaan auctioneers, and books were sold in Utrecht at Beyer's auction house.<sup>54</sup>

The library of the Rijksmuseum now owns a large book with a swastika on its front cover, testifying to the successful Nazi seizing of Mannheimer objects and their description: '*Sichergestellte Kunstwerke*'; this slippery term is translatable as seized / saved / secured art objects (Fig. 3).<sup>55</sup> The book had been compiled on the order of SS *Sturmbannführer* Mühlmann and was intended for Hitler and his inner circle. It was printed in Vienna in a large size and an extra large typeface. In a letter from Korthals Altes to Mühlmann, dated 21 October 1941 Mühlmann was even addressed as Under-Secretary of State (*Staatssekretär*). Korthals Altes protested against Mühlmann's low offer of f5,5 million for the treasure. The latter stood his ground and threatened to seize the entire lot by force.<sup>56</sup> So the sale took place. In 1944, Seyss-Inquart notified Korthals Altes that the collection had been acquired for '*a very elevated place*' indicating Hitler.<sup>57</sup> After Mühlmann was taken captive by the allied forces, he testified that Mannheimer had owned '*the most valuable collection of ancient objets d'art in private hands*'.<sup>58</sup>

Venema, in his book on the wartime art trade in Holland, also reports that early on in 1939, Mannheimer, then already feeling ill, had transferred legal ownership of all paintings to his wife Marie-Annette Mannheimer - Reiss. After Fritz Mannheimer's sudden death on 9 August 1939, his widow had however not quite become the legal owner, for *Artistic* had been the actual owner since 1934, and in addition, many 1939 creditors had valid legal claims after the bankruptcy. As described, both Mannheimer and Marie-Annette had succeeded, just in time, in crating and shipping valuable paintings and drawings for storage to Chenue, the Parisian art dealer. The crates included a '*... Crivelli, Fragonard, van Mierevelt, Wouwerman, Chardin and two by Canaletto...*'<sup>59</sup> One of the now hard-to-believe financial decisions of the Nazis is that they actually paid Marie-Annette Reiss Mannheimer, *aka* Jane Engelhard the sum of f565,000 as an indemnity when the Nazis moved the paintings and drawings from France to Germany in May 1944.<sup>60</sup> See the diagram at the end of this article (Fig.10).

At the very end of WWII, the virtually complete Mannheimer treasure was traced and found by teams of the allied *Monuments men* in Bohemia, in a deep salt mine located within an area that was soon to become part of the Russian occupation zone. Using U.S. military trucks, the goods were quickly spirited to the American occupation zone.<sup>61</sup> This action later proved to be a lucky stroke for the Dutch authorities and museums. Other parts of the Mannheimer treasure were stored and found in the Altaussee mines in Austria and likewise recuperated.

After WWII, following the 1945 Potsdam agreements, the German authorities started reparation schemes, and thus talks were opened with the Dutch authorities to repatriate seized collections. Interested parties were Mannheimer's widow and daughter (born after Mannheimer's death), both living abroad, and many major creditors from the 1939 *Chapter 11* bankruptcy. Heavy bank debts to be paid included that of the Netherlands Trading Society (*Nederlandsche Handels Maatschappij*) with a 15-million guilder claim. On the other side was the German state bank, the legal successor to Mannheimer's former failed bank, Mendelssohn & Co.

An absolute key sentence in the wartime Mannheimer sales contract between the Dutch legal expert Korthals Altes and the German *Reich*, was that the sale was '*not entirely voluntary*'. This proved to be the key legal phrase allowing post-war recuperation of nearly all works of art (Fig. 11).<sup>62</sup> This article also celebrates Korthals Altes's intelligent and effective handling of affairs.<sup>63</sup>

In 1945-1946 the allied parties agreed the following: all of Mannheimer's works of art were to be transferred back to the Dutch State. The missing works of art, mainly paintings and drawings, that had first been stored at Chenu in Paris and then in Vichy-France, was subsequently transported back to Paris under the terms of French law, but in the end that group was also released and transported to Holland.<sup>64</sup> In the final wrangling between the interested parties, the widow had to yield up all of the drawings, plus the most valuable paintings by Crivelli, Guardi, Wouwerman, two Canaletto's and two by Chardin; they all went to the Dutch authorities. She was left with relatively little, a Fragonard and a Van Mierevelt. The outcome was that Mannheimer's art objects were initially (in the summer of

1945) partly stored in a building of the Ministry of Finance, in The Hague, and also partly stored and partly exhibited by the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.<sup>65</sup>

**The key works of art: a breakdown of 1400 Mannheimer art objects now in the Rijksmuseum into seventeen groups**

The complete group of the remaining 1400 objects, now in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam was legally deposited there in 1952.<sup>66</sup> By far the largest group is formed by dishes, platters, vases and figurines in Meissen porcelain; a staggering 876 items.<sup>67</sup> The Rijksmuseum web site states in this respect: *‘Thanks to Fritz Mannheimer, an Amsterdam banker, the Rijksmuseum holds one of the most important collections of Meissen porcelain outside of Germany’*.<sup>68</sup>

To be added over and above this Rijksmuseum list below is a complete tea set, a complete tableware set and a cutlery sets for use during travel. These three sets are unspecified and its single parts not counted in this museum inventory; one full tea set bought from the Hermitage sales is currently exhibited.<sup>69</sup> They are all exemplary of Mannheimer’s taste for collecting highly decorative German and French art objects (Fig. 4).<sup>70</sup>


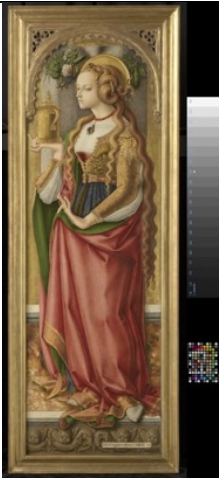
The following categories are present in the inventory and here categorized as follows:<sup>71</sup>


|  | <b>Applied art</b>  | <b>Number of items</b> |
|--|---|------------------------|
|  |   |                        |
|  | Porcelain objects (dishes, platters, vases and figurines), mostly 18 <sup>th</sup> century Meissen.                               | 876                    |
|  | Metal art and design objects including jewels and <i>aquamaniles</i> , (see below). Some other objects are in <i>empire</i> style | 93                     |

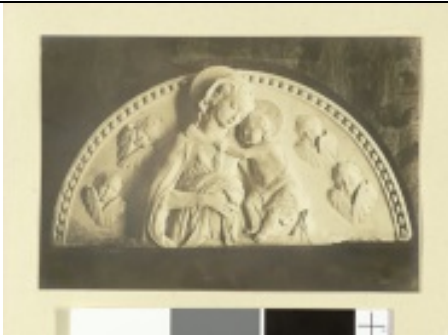
|  |      |
|--|------|
| Light fixtures for walls and ceilings  | 25   |
| <i>Naturalia</i> , objects (including the <i>Elk's antler</i> mentioned below)                                 | 4    |
| Small ornamented household objects and decorative containers   | 84   |
| Snuff boxes  | 20   |
| Clocks   | 6    |
| Enamel, silver and gold objects  | 5    |
| Sculpture in metal, wood, natural stone, majolica  | 26   |
|  |      |
| <b>Furniture, design objects, drawings, paintings</b>  |      |
|  |      |
| Chairs and couches, mostly in the styles of Louis XV and XVI<br>( <i>rococo</i> )                              | 78   |
| Tables and writing desks   | 25   |
| Other room furniture such as <i>cassones</i> (low chests) and standing chests                                  | 17   |
|  |      |
| Wall textiles, tapestries and screens for dividing rooms   | 91   |
|  |      |
| Architectural elements such as chimney-pieces and ceilings   | 33   |
|  |      |
| Documentation photographs of the villa's exterior and interior made by photographer Hanna Elkan. <sup>72</sup> | 52   |
|  |      |
| Drawings by Watteau, Boucher, Fragonard and others   | 15   |
|  |      |
| Paintings by Rembrandt, Carlo Crivelli and Nicolas Bernard Lépicié   | 3    |
| Total excluding porcelain  | 577  |
| Total including porcelain  | 1453 |
| Total subtracting the photographs  | 1401 |


## A discussion of thirteen very expensive key objects

In order to study reception history in the Rijksmuseum, monetary value is given throughout this part of article for thirteen of the highest valued objects. This list starts with the most valuable, and thus considered the most important items.<sup>73</sup> Online, any object image can easily be found on the Rijksmuseum web site; in Google, type Rijksmuseum + the stated BK number. Below are small illustrations outside the main Figure list.





|    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | Etienne-Maurice Falconet ‘ <i>Amour Menaçant</i> ’ sculpture, 1757, inv. nr. BK-1963-101. Bought by Mannheimer in 1933 via an intermediary from the Hermitage Museum for French Franc 1,225,000. <sup>74</sup> (Fig. 2). In 1939 this sculpture was valued probably way too low at f 40,000. See annex 1.  |  <p>Larger image: Fig. 2.</p>  |
| 2. | Carlo Crivelli, oil painting of ‘ <i>Mary Magdalen</i> ’ c. 1480, inv. nr. SK-A-3989 (Fig. 5). Until the final moment of dividing up the Mannheimer estate, this was considered the most important painting. It was yielded by widow Marie-Annette Mannheimer-Reiss to the Dutch State in 1945, and was valued at f 300,000 in 1951. <sup>75</sup> |  <p>Larger image: Fig. 5.</p> |



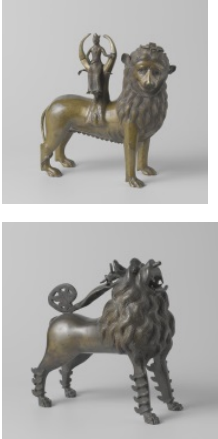

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 3. | Rembrandt, (Probable) <i>Portrait of Dr Bueno</i> , inv. nr. SK-A-3982, valued 1934 by <i>Artistic</i> at f150.000. See also photo, Fig. 1. |  |
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| 4. | <p>School of Francesco di Simone Ferruci da Fiesole, marble lunette relief, half-figure <i>Mary with Child</i>, inv. nr. BK-16975. Valued in 1948 at the amount of f150,000.<sup>76</sup> This object seems to have made the largest fall in appreciation, as it is presently in storage, and has no online image.<sup>77</sup> Photo by Hanna Elkan, B-F-1963-426-23</p> |  |
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|    |   |  |
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| 5. | <p>Anonymous, initially attributed to Donatello, <i>Boy, right hand on chest</i>, nude sculpture, bronze, on a green marble base, originally from the Hermitage, inv. nr. BK-16946, was valued in 1948 at f100,000 and acquired as late as 1960. It was picked up from the rubble after the Blitz bomb in London, on the night of 23-24 September 1940, see annex 4. See also Fig. 1.</p> |  |
|----|---|--|




|    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 6. | J.B.C. Odier, <i>Mustard container</i> with kneeling sculpture of a female in antique dress, silver gilt, Empire style, inv. nr. BK-17039, valued in 1948 at f100,000.  |    |
| 7. | J.B.C. Odier, <i>Mustard container</i> , silver gilt, with Potemkin coat of arms, inv. nr. BK-17035-A, also valued in 1948 at f100,000.   |    |
| 8. | <p>Wenzel Jamnitzer, <i>Merkelsche Tafelaufsatz</i>, 1549, inv. nr. BK-17040-A, an exquisite, highly ornamented silver table-top art object with its fitted leather container. Considered one of the world's high points in silver-smithing, it was valued in 1939/40 at f100,000.<sup>78</sup></p> <p>In the museum it is now housed in the most expensive case of all, with an inner technical system able to lift the glass cube while the object stays put.</p> |   |
| 9. | J.A. Houdon, <i>Voltaire Seated at Age 84</i> , bronze gilt sculpture, from the Hermitage, inv. nr. BK-16932, valued in 1948 at f45,000. It was stolen from the Rijksmuseum in 2000, is still missing, and is no longer presented online.   |  |

|     |   |  |
|-----|---|--|
| 10. | <p>Anonymous, <i>St. Thekla</i>, silver bust reliquary, inv. nr. BK-16997.<sup>79</sup></p> <p>Valued in 1939-40 at f 30,000. See also Annex 2.</p>   |    |
| 11. | <p>Abraham Röntgen, <i>Writing Desk</i>, c 1758-1760, inv. nr. BK-16676. It was valued in 1939/40 at f 30,000. At present, Rijksmuseum curator Baarsen stresses its key importance to the museum.<sup>80</sup> See <a href="#">this link</a>.</p>   |    |
| 12. | <p>Anonymous, <i>Aquamaniles</i>, a group of bronze water-pouring vessels for washing hands at grand mediaeval tables, including inv. nrs. BK-16910 (top) and BK-16912 (below). ‘<i>The best in this field</i>’.<sup>81</sup> They were valued in 1939-40 at between f 7,000 and f 16,200.<sup>82</sup></p>   |   |
| 13. | <p>Anonymous, <i>Travelling altar / triptych, Christ as the ‘Man of Sorrows’</i>, ca. 1400, gold and enamel, inv. nr. BK-17045, weight 378 grams (Fig. 6). Valued in 1936 as f 13,500. The Mary Queen of Scots provenance mentioned in some inventories fits another triptych also once owned by Mannheimer, which survived the London Blitz. It is presently known as the ‘<i>Campion triptych</i>’ now in the</p> |  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Jesuit centre <i>Campion Hall</i> , Oxford.<br>See annex 4. |  |
|---|--|

A much less costly object was recently re-valued as historically important:

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|--|--|
| Anonymous, <i>Elk's antler</i> . Antler dating from around the year 1000, carvings added ca. 1100, inv. nr. BK-16990. Valued in 1948 at just f650. <sup>83</sup> |  |
|  |  |

Treasures go on and on. In his book about '*200 years Rijksmuseum*' author Van der Ham concludes that as a paradoxical effect of World War II, the Rijksmuseum won rich collections in the areas of painting, applied art and furniture that can hardly be overstated.<sup>84</sup> In the Rijksmuseum Print room, the collection of French 18<sup>th</sup> C drawings has also been enriched thanks to Mannheimer. All in all, when walking through the mediaeval and the eighteenth and nineteenth century departments of the Rijksmuseum, the extravagant spirit and exquisite taste of Dr Fritz Mannheimer is happily alive.<sup>85</sup> (Figs. 7 and 8). In 2014 family members in a direct line visited the Rijksmuseum and were guided by Baarsen and Kaldenbach (Fig. 12).

With hindsight, the lawyer Everhardus Korthals Altes did a particularly good job in looking after the interests of all the Dutch parties involved and until now he has been an unsung hero in the Rijksmuseum (Fig. 11).

## Conclusion

The Mannheimer's 3000 *objets d'art* was probably the finest private art collection available in Europe in the war years of 1939-1940. This rich treasure trove was started from about 1918 onwards. Mannheimer had become an obsessive-compulsive buyer of beautiful, ornate, expensive, shiny art: not only Germanic art objects, but also French furniture and

snuff boxes, a huge amounts of fine Meissen porcelain, and fine Russian 19<sup>th</sup> C gold and gilded art objects, successfully emulating the Rothschild collections. Although he was rich, he could only go to those lengths by buying using his banks' money; thus Mannheimer's buying spree was more or less illegal. When his bank folded in 1939, the collection's ownership issues were unclear. With the help of lawyer Korthals Altes and the Rijksmuseum director the objects and their value were catalogued. Later, ownership issues became even more complicated when Hitler bought the collection. The Dutch lawyer had sold under duress, having to give in, but succeeding in noting this duress in the sales contract. The work of the 'Monuments Men', stealthily moving art from the Russian sector to the Allied sector was again not quite legal, but effectively saved the collection for the West. A full restitution of all objects from Germany to The Netherlands took place - and a Dutch minister agreed in talks with Dutch museums to allot 80% to the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum, and thus 20% to other Dutch museums. However, through secret steps taken that are no longer traceable in the archives, the Rijksmuseum ended up with about 98%. The troubled history of this collection indeed illuminates this dark era.

The one and only glorious up-side of this chain of events is that the Rijksmuseum gained an immense treasure, enriching the museum and bringing it to a world class level outside the field of Dutch 17<sup>th</sup> century art. One could even make the case that by this concentration of Mannheimer's fine art in only the Rijksmuseum, leverage was created later on to further shape and extend those excellent and diverse collections, added thanks to the shrewd Dutch lawyer E.J. Korthals Altes.

To visualize the way Mannheimer's collection grew and was dispersed see the scheme shown in (Fig. 9). Recognizing his works in the present day Rijksmuseum is easy. The text signs by the works of art normally show a very short provenance on the left-hand bottom. All Mannheimer pieces however, have a provenance tag line which is much longer, two-three lines in length, and thus visible from quite a distance. This text always begins with the word 'Recuperated', '*Gerecupereerd*'. These longer taglines have been placed on the advice of the '*Commissie Ekkart*' (see below, annex 3, on Jewish art objects in WWII).

## **Annex 1: Mannheimer art objects distributed to other Dutch Museums** (Also [online](#))

After the recuperation of about 3000 items from Mannheimer's treasure from salt mines by the Allied Monuments Men in 1945, talks took place in 1946-1947 in a small committee between Ministries and Dutch museum directors over which museum would receive which recuperated art objects.<sup>86</sup> Several directors may have visited the Rijksmuseum cellars and museum rooms, where the Mannheimer treasure was stored and exhibited. Perhaps they also went through many boxes and baskets kept in The Hague in the buildings of the Ministry of Finance, which were stored there up to 1948. They certainly used the inventory made in 1939-1940 (Fig. 10).

Initially the Rijksmuseum claimed 4/5 of the value of the treasure; consequently other Dutch museums should have received the remaining 1/5. A letter dated 18 December 1947 by committee member Dr van Gelder to the Netherlands Art Property Foundation authority (SNK) in charge of distribution, lists this key for the redistribution of drawings, art objects and furniture. Another document lists and values the paintings.<sup>87</sup> However, looking over the post-war division, the value in fact received by the other Dutch museums does not reach the intended 1/5 part at all. With hindsight another decision was made, not traceable in the archives; the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum received nearly everything.<sup>88</sup>

In 1947-1948, the group of 27 paintings from Mannheimer's collection was also distributed to various Dutch museums. This subdivision (also in terms of monetary value) was arranged by the Dutch State service for dispersed works of art '*Dienst voor 's Rijks Verspreide Kunstvoorwerpen*', presently renamed the '*Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed*' (Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands).<sup>89</sup> The list is kept in the Dutch national archives and is visible online on the author's web site.<sup>90</sup>

On request, the **Mauritshuis** has provided a Mannheimer inventory list. In 1960, it had received the following items from the State:

- Falconet's '*L'Amour Menaçant*'; this important sculpture went back to the Rijksmuseum in 1963 as long-term loan.

- Nicolas Bernard Lepicié, *Portrait of a Boy with a Sketchbook*, valued at f 800; also loaned back to the Rijksmuseum.

The Mauritshuis kept the following paintings:

- J. van der Heyden, *View of the Oudezijds Voorburgwal* in Amsterdam at f 21,000.<sup>91</sup>

- F. van Mieris the Elder, *Brothel Scene*, although then valued low at only f 4,000, this now seems to be one of the museum's key paintings.<sup>92</sup>

- L. G. Moreau the Elder, *Fashionably Dressed Company in a Garden*. Valued at f 1,250.

- E. van der Neer, *Woman Washing her Hands*, at f 5,000.

- I. van Ostade, *Winter Landscape*, at f 40,000.

- J. Verkolje, *The Messenger*, also named: *Times Change*, at f 9,000.<sup>93</sup>

However: F.H. Drouais, *Playing Savoyard boys*, and his *Richly Dresses Boys Outside*, valued at f 100,000 and f 24,000 respectively have both been de-accessioned by the Mauritshuis.<sup>94</sup> In the annual report 1948, the museum director A.B. de Vries presented a listing of 20 recuperated and selected items but did not mention the name Mannheimer at all; in 1948 he reports that he was also arrested relating to suspicions about his work as director of the Netherlands Art Property Foundation authority, SNK.<sup>95</sup> Under his management, the SNK bookkeeping was a jumble and some works of art were given away. See also annex 3.

A third Dutch art museum of national importance, **Boijmans Van Beuningen** in Rotterdam received this group: two *Faun* sculptures; a Fragonard drawing showing an *Open air Auction*, and one Jan Steen painting, *Village Wedding*, valued at f 120,000.<sup>96</sup> Surprisingly, the Rubens oil sketch *Perseus and Medusa*, reported "missing" in 1940, was acquired much later, in a 1991 sale. It was listed in the 1941-1942 inventory of Mannheimer's collection.<sup>97</sup>

The **Frans Hals museum** received a J.M. Molenaer, *Group portrait in an Interior*, possible being a *Self Portrait with Family Members*.<sup>98</sup>

The **Dordrechts** Museum now holds a painting by N. Maes of a *Maid with Fish and Bucket*.<sup>99</sup> Other minor Dutch museums have also received some less important Mannheimer art objects.<sup>100</sup>

The Dutch **Royal Library** (KB) received two costly mediaeval illuminated manuscripts formerly in Mannheimer's library, They were given by the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands as a permanent loan to the Royal Library KB: *Valerius Maximus*, initially valued at f60.000, later reduced in pencil to f15.000 (NHA 476-2142-9; the book presently kept in the KB (KB 66 B 13) and *Scipio Africanus / Plutarch's Lives*, valued at f13.500 (KB 134 C 19).<sup>101</sup>

Present whereabouts is unknown for one painting in the SNK list: W. van de Velde the Younger, *Calm Sea, Thee Fishing Boats and in the Background a War Ship* valued at f9,000; a photograph is present in the Noord-Hollands Archief (NHA 476-2142-17).<sup>102</sup>

With hindsight the Dutch museums - other than the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum - did not receive their allotted 20% part of the remaining Mannheimer treasure. No archival document has yet surfaced to explain why the Rijksmuseum in the end was to keep about 98% instead of the intended 80%. One may consider that the body of the entire Dutch museum collections put together (called *Collectie Nederland*) may in the end have been optimally furthered by the concentration in one place, the Rijksmuseum. Having received this outstanding applied art collection, it gained leverage to acquire more related high quality objects.<sup>103</sup>

After the recuperation in 1945, the Dutch State had already ordered the auctioning off of the less valuable remainder in 1952. The first Mannheimer auction had already taken place during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands; secondary quality items were then sold off.

In 1952, the remaining parts of the Mannheimer treasure not allocated to Dutch museums were also auctioned off in Amsterdam. The proceeds went to the remaining creditors from the 1939 *surseance* of the bank, and perhaps also to the Dutch state for taxes. The sale was comprised of 476 numbered items.<sup>104</sup> Objects ranged from a large terracotta

wall object by Della Robbia that went for *f*6,000 to much lower prices for minor items. In the furniture section the highest prize was for a set of matched furniture for *f*24,500. One tapestry reached a high of *f*6,200, and one bronze lustre object fetched *f*45,000. The highest runaway price was for a set of 24 '*vermeil orfevri*' plates, 25 cm in diameter that went for a stunning *f*340,000. However, most of the prices for the 476 sold items lay much lower, in the range of a few hundred guilders.<sup>105</sup>



## **Annex 2: Mannheimer art objects in museums outside Holland** (see [web site](#))

One of the post-war gains of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York was Chardin's painting *Boy blowing bubbles*. The museum provides a highly detailed account of provenance in the Nazi years, see note.<sup>106</sup>

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, holds a wooden *Putto*.<sup>107</sup>

A Memling painting, *Madonna and Child with Angels* was bought by Hugo Perls on Mannheimer's behalf and soon after was sold by Mannheimer, ending up in the National Gallery, Washington, DC.<sup>108</sup>

The *St. Ursula bust* is the counterpart of the Rijksmuseum silver St. Thekla bust, inv. nr. BK-16997. *St. Ursula* was de-accessioned by the Rijksmuseum and purchased for f200.000 for the Historic Museum in Basle, because of its early provenance from the Basle Cathedral Treasury.<sup>109</sup>

This list is not exhaustive. Objects in museums abroad may stem from the initial Mannheimer sales during the Nazi occupation, or the second official sales held in 1952, for buyers worldwide.

## **Annex 3: Mannheimer art objects as recuperated Jewish property** (see [web site](#))

In general, only a fraction of all items bought or seized by the Nazi's for Hitler's *Führermuseum* in Linz have been recuperated after WW2. By Dutch law, any art sale to anyone in Nazi Germany, whether legal or not, was nullified in 1945. In the Netherlands, 4700 objects with Jewish WW2 roots are presently listed online in the official Dutch website '*Searching for provenance*'.<sup>110</sup> In 2014, an online search for Mannheimer objects on this site yielded 246 items, each with an NK number (Netherlands Art Property Foundation, in Dutch: *Stichting Nederlands Kunstbezit*).

A book and CD-rom was published in 2006 also listing these 4700 works of art bought or looted by the Nazis, stating their known provenance, and where they have landed –

or whether they are still missing.<sup>111</sup> This free, open website is entirely separate from the Art Loss Register, which requires search fees based on sending in photographs.<sup>112</sup>

From 1945 on, Dutch museums were harsh in considering restitution requests by relatives of former Jewish owners, often remaining deaf to claims, as they preferred to retain the fine art in their collections. “*We did not fight for wealthy Jews, we fought for The Netherlands*” was the common Dutch wisdom around 1945-55. Probably the most shameful Rijksmuseum case gone wrong of all is the *Isaac collection* of wall tiles, entered voluntarily by the Isaac family for safekeeping during the war in an official Rijksmuseum buying-for-safe-keeping program. The collection was however not returned to the family despite their repeated and legally sound requests in 1955.<sup>113</sup>

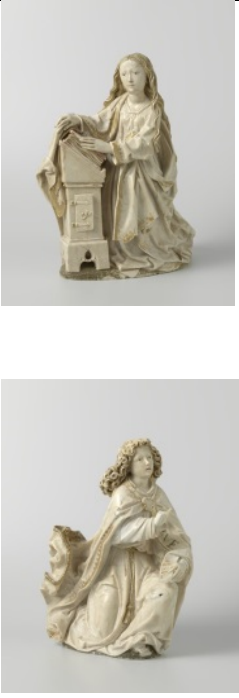
After 1998, prodded by a wave of lawsuits in Austria and responding to pressure groups, there has been a remarkable change of heart in Dutch state policy (see also note 4). This restitution turnaround resulted in founding a new institution, the ‘Commission Ekkart’, consisting of a group of cognoscenti and lawyers, authorized to making final decisions and to publish its rulings on the ‘*Searching for provenance*’ website. They rule on claims on an individual basis. Results can be seen in the artworks recently returned to descendants of former Jewish owners, such as, for example, the Jacques Goudstikker heirs. The tables have slowly turned and Dutch museums now have teams of researchers sifting out ownership issues relating to the Nazi era. In art captions in museums the former Jewish provenance, including that of Mannheimer and Goudstikker, is now often clearly indicated. Virtually all of the objects once owned by Mannheimer and the items later bought by Hitler have been returned post-war to the Dutch state, and are accounted for; they have been found to be ‘clean’ in terms of Jewish provenance.

Five objects out of the 246 Mannheimer items listed online are presented here with additional information, shedding some light on some of Mannheimer’s art traders.

|  |                   |  |                                   |
|--|-------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
|  | S.J. van Ruysdael | <i>View of a river and a boat</i> ; oil, 52 x 80 cm. | Sold 1930 by the Hermitage to Van |
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|--|-----------------|--|--|
|  |                 | (NK3047).  | Diemen; from there in 1933 to Mannheimer. <sup>114</sup><br>Present whereabouts unknown. |
|  | Ph. Wouwerman   | <i>Italian folklore: pulling a cat tied to a rope</i> ; oil, 76 x 96 cm. (NK3065).<br>Exceptionally, this image is cruel in nature. <sup>115</sup> | Sold 1932 by the Hermitage via an art trader to Mannheimer. Present whereabouts unknown. |
|  | J.A. Berckheyde | <i>Market scene</i> , drawing (NK3059).  | Transferred in 1959 to the Leiden University Printroom                                   |

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|--|--|--|---|
|  | H.A. van Meegeren ( <b>listed as a Vermeer</b> ) | <i>Interior with female and male at a clavichord</i> ; oil. (NK3255). Valued at f 15,000. <sup>116</sup> Later valued as “ <i>waardeloos</i> ”, worthless. <sup>117</sup>              | Sold by Tersteeg to Goupil, Paris; from there to Mannheimer. <sup>118</sup> Deaccessioned before 1992 by the Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed. <sup>119</sup> |
|  | T. Riemenschneider                               | Mannheimer also owned a set of two alabaster <i>Annunciation</i> sculptures,<br><br><i>Mary and the Angel</i> (NK124-125) Rijksmuseum inv. nrs. BK-16986-A and B. In 1939 this set was | Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, BK-16986-A (the Angel) and B (Mary)   |

|  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
|  |  | <p>valued at f25,000.</p> <p>Former owners recently contested ownership, but in 2013 the Dutch Restitution Committee, linked to the ‘<i>Commissie Ekkart</i>’ decided against returning the object to the family who had sold it to Mannheimer in 1938.<sup>120</sup></p> |  |
|--|--|---|---|

#### **Annex 4: Mannheimer objects destroyed in the London Blitz, 1940** (see [web site](#))

In the Dutch National Archive, The Hague there is a three-page inventory list of Mannheimer objects destroyed in the London Blitz.<sup>121</sup> It does not contain the Rijksmuseum triptych discussed above inv. nr. BK-17045 (Fig. 6). But the existence of two triptychs gave rise to a mix-up before WWII.

According to some pre-war sources, the triptych now in Amsterdam was identified as the private travelling altar of Mary, Queen of Scots. It was initially exhibited in 1906 and 1913, then catalogued by Otto von Falke.<sup>122</sup> After its purchase by Mannheimer, this triptych was initially inventoried in 1934 by *Artistic*, valued at f13,500. In 1936 it was again catalogued by Von Falke in Amsterdam with its correct size, but incorrectly as stemming from Mary Queen of Scots. The object was again entered in the Rijksmuseum list of 1939/40 (Fig. 10 below), and also correctly catalogued in handwriting in the 1952 Rijksmuseum inventory book.<sup>123</sup> Knowledge about the early provenance of this triptych was expanded in a Louvre exhibition catalogue of 2004.<sup>124</sup>

The Mary, Queen of Scots information fitted another triptych also owned by Mannheimer, presently known as the '*Campion triptych*' now in the Jesuit Centre Campion Hall, Oxford. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy, London in 1987.<sup>125</sup> This triptych is a small object for focusing devotional prayer. In 1939 it had been stored in a London bank safe together with 35 other Mannheimer treasures.<sup>126</sup> Miraculously this small object survived the Blitz, when the bank safe on Chancery Lane was directly hit by German bombs on the night of 23-24 September 1940. The safe disintegrated, destroying about 35 art objects. Among these lost works were two drawings then attributed to Jan van Eyck, showing '*royal persons*'. Two similar drawings in the Boijmans museum originating from the same sale are now attributed not to Van Eijck but to a follower of Van der Weijden.<sup>127</sup>

The gold triptych however survived and had been picked up from between the rubble and pocketed by either a workman or sailor, together with the so called '*Donatello*' *Boy*. Korthals Altes mentions the fate of the three, perhaps five art objects thus found by chance in the rubble. All of these objects, except for the triptych were sold at a public auction to offset the cost of storage by the British authorities (Fig. 11).<sup>128</sup> Korthals Altes also describes how this triptych changed hands, first being sold for five pounds to a second-hand store, and then in 1965, after much wrangling it changed hands for 2,500 pounds.<sup>129</sup> O'Connell described its full history and provenance in 2013.<sup>130</sup>

Kaldenbach on Mannheimer.

FIGURES:



1. Hanna Elkan, Photograph of Mannheimer interior, picture nr 26 in an album, given to Paul Jaffe in 1930; this album was later donated to the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum Print room, inv. nr. B-F-1963-426-26.

Here, the *Buena* portrait by Rembrandt, inv. no. SK-A-3982, is shown just above the bronze sculpture of a 'Donatello' *Boy*, inv. no. BK-16946.



2. Etienne-Maurice Falconet, *Amour Menaçant*, 1757, marble, height 181 cm., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. BK-1963-101.



3. Book cover of '*Sichergestellte Kunstwerke*' (seized/saved art objects intended for Hitler) by the SS-commissioner of the occupied Dutch areas, *Dr Mühlmann*. Published in Vienna, 1941/42. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Library, inv. no. 98 F 26. Photograph by the author.





4. A group of Mannheimer objects, now exhibited in the Rijksmuseum. Foreground: snuffboxes. Background: the fold-out [writing desk](#) by A. Röntgen. Reflected above in the glass case is the Falconet's sculpture. Photograph by the author.





5. Carlo Crivelli, *Mary Magdalen*, c. 1480, tempera on panel, 152 × 49 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-3989. This was the most coveted painting of all of Mannheimer's treasures.



6. Anonymous goldsmith, *Triptych, travelling altar*, ca.1400, gold and enamel, weight 378 grams,  $12.5 \times 12.7 \times 7 \times 2.6$  cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. BK-17045.

In the back is a door to a small space that could hold a saint's relic.



7. A. Roland Holst-de Meester, *Portrait of Dr F. Mannheimer*, pencil and black chalk drawing, present whereabouts unknown.



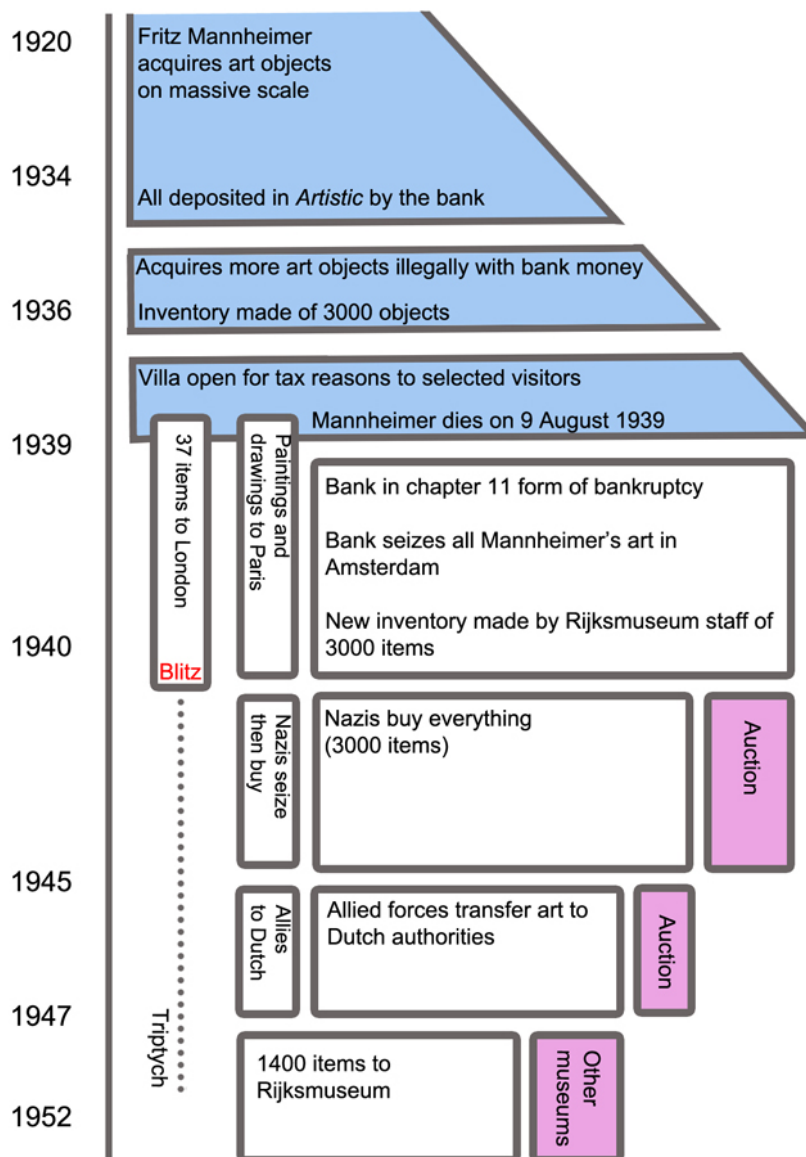
8. J.W. Merkelbach (photographer), Fritz Mannheimer (1890-1939), wearing glasses, with his brother Victor Mannheimer (1887-1928), his wife Alice Fraenkel (1894-19??) and their baby son Max Eugen Manfred Israel Mannheimer (1918-??).

Fritz and Victor were welcome guests in Castle *De Haar* in Haarzuilens, in 1932, 1934 and 1935 where the noble castle owners received VIP guests every year in September. The castle hostess was a member of the Rothschild family.

Victor was a book collector and he owned a Stradivarius violin. Max Mannheimer (the son) worked in Paris on behalf of Fritz Mannheimer until 1939, and was sent to Nazi camp Theresienstadt but survived and emigrated to the USA, where the Stradivarius violin was sold off. Photograph dated 1919, and recently identified. Amsterdam, City Archive, inv. no. 010164019371.

<http://redeenportret.nl/portret/3189b34a-60b7-11e2-b256-003048976c14>

See also Mannheimer swimming on a Youtube film, note 17.

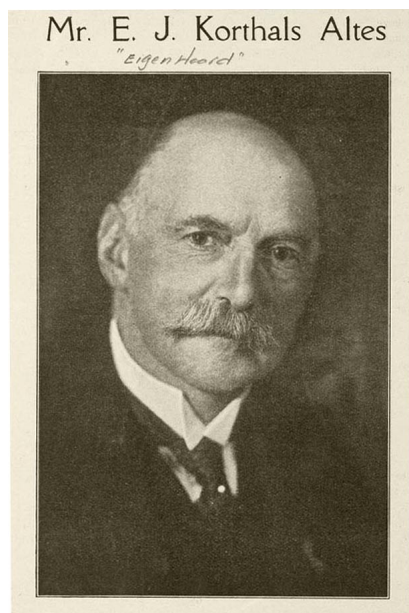


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9. Diagram by the author, showing how Mannheimer's collections grew and were dispersed. The Rijksmuseum actually ended up owning about 98% instead of the agreed 4/5 th part.

| Nieuw<br>Number | Number<br>Artistic | Taxatie<br>Artistic<br>assurantie | II. Preciosa<br>Omschrijving  | Number<br>Ot Falke | Taxatie<br>Moj. H. | Hand<br>Sleutel | For             |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| WA. Pr 1        | 14/19              | 13.500                            | Halsketen, triptiek, goud en<br>emalle.   | K 2                |                    | R 48            | 17 <sup>a</sup> |
| Pr 2            | 17/77              | 24.000                            | Goud gesmalleerde doos met dekset,<br>waarop Cloopatra, 15e eeuw.   | K 3                |                    | R 46            | 17 <sup>b</sup> |
| Pr 3            | 15/29              | 1.350                             | Hanger; eivormig, blauw transl. email<br>waarop veerkleurig em. ranken en il-<br>manten; 3 hangende barokparels en<br>zwevende decor. | K 4                | 5.000              | R 46            | 17 <sup>c</sup> |
| Pr 4            | 14/16              | 1.980                             | Hanger; Minerva buste van barokpa<br>en em. 4 hangparels  | K 5                |                    | S 312           | 17 <sup>c</sup> |
| Pr 5            |                    |                                   | Hanger, ruiter in klassieke draac t<br>of postuum; goud en em.; 4 han-<br>parels, 18 eeuw.  | K 7                |                    | S 312           | 17 <sup>c</sup> |
| Pr 6            |                    |                                   | Ambrois email, als oorbet.<br>monogram F.S. 16de eeuw   | K 8                | 150                | S 312           | 17 <sup>c</sup> |

10. The 1939-1940 registry sheet: a key Mannheimer document now in The Hague, *Nationaal Archief*, inv. no. SNK 2.08.42, 24. From left to right we read the following: Before the first column, two paraph-signatures / New inventory number / Number in *Artistic* / Insurance valuation in Artistic / Description (here in handwriting: *Precious objects*) / Inventory by Otto von Falke 1936 / Valuation Miss Hudig 1939/40 / Basket and key number / Red line = for sale / Blue line = not in Rijksmuseum.



11. Unknown photographer, *Portrait in an obituary of lawyer Everhardus Korthals Altes* (1898-1981), The Hague, Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie.<sup>131</sup> This lawyer became member of the Supreme Council (Hoge Raad). He described the entire Mannheimer affair in a typed report now in the Rijksmuseum library, see note 38.





12. Mannheimer's family members visiting the Rijksmuseum in 2014, standing by one of the Mannheimer art objects, BK-17007. To the left curator Reinier Baarsen explains the rock crystal map of Spain + Portugal to one of the sons. Their father Alex Bolen stands to the right. (See note 33. Photo by the author).

About the author:

Drs. Kees Kaldenbach (1953) studied art history at the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam and graduated in the class of 1978. He now lives and works in Amsterdam as an independent art historian; he is director of his firm Private Art Tours.



Over the years he has published extensively online and in print, on various artists and themes including Vermeer, Van Gogh and Rembrandt. He has pioneered ground breaking 3D visual art history projects with the Delft University of Technology and has worked with the Rijksmuseum on creating the Digital Vermeer House and the Clickable map of Delft Seventeenth-Century artists, fully presented on his own web site,

<http://kalden.home.xs4all.nl>

Responses by email at [kalden@xs4all.nl](mailto:kalden@xs4all.nl)

Notes: Kaldenbach on Mannheimer

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<sup>1</sup> Author's note. In 2014 the present author has collected and grouped as much information as possible on the life and work of Mannheimer, doing research in numerous archives and libraries, an effort here presented in some 130 footnotes. The James Bond-like story shown here is an account of what actually happened. This article does not emanate from a 'scientific research question', which seems to be *de rigueur* for serious articles these days.

My query started from a sense of wonder and amazement after the Rijksmuseum reopened in April, 2013 and hundreds of important exhibited items were for the first time labelled as coming from Mannheimer's treasure. I would like to thank the keepers of many museum collections and librarians who provided factual information. And I am also grateful to Jonathan Lopez who edited the opening paragraph; my wife Brenda Kaldenbach, edited the remainder. As author, I remain responsible for all errors and welcome responses by email at [kalden@xs4all.nl](mailto:kalden@xs4all.nl)

The moral right of the author has been asserted.

<sup>2</sup> R.J. Baarsen, *Paris 1650-1900. Decorative Arts in the Rijksmuseum*, Amsterdam 2013, pp. 15 contains a short introduction to Mannheimer.

<sup>3</sup> R. te Slaa, 'Een fascistische jonkheer en de bijna val van premier Colijn, deel 1: agitatie tegen Mannheimer en Colijn', P. Pierik (ed.) *Zesde bulletin van de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, Soesterberg, 2004, p. 204. Zie ook *Deutsche Zeitung in den Niederlanden*, 10 June 1941. Collection Royal Library, KB, The Hague, see <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011119608:mpeg21:a0088>

<sup>4</sup> His bank was located in the 1920-1930s at Herengracht 412. In the 1980s or 1990s financial documents of former Jewish clients were found in the attic of this building. On 15 June 2000, an overall agreement was

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reached by all Dutch banks and stock firms to compensate relatives of all former Jewish bank account holders in the Netherlands relating to seized assets. The amount settled was 314 million Guilders. Sources:

[http://www.financieelerfgoedopdekaart.nl/#/amsterdam/grachtengordel-zuid/mendelsohn-en-co-\(1939\)/](http://www.financieelerfgoedopdekaart.nl/#/amsterdam/grachtengordel-zuid/mendelsohn-en-co-(1939)/)

(consulted 23 March 2014). <http://retro.nrc.nl/W2/Nieuws/2000/06/16/Vp/01.html> (consulted 24 March 2014).

Images of the façade in Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Print Room, inv. nr. RP-P-1903-A-24111-3 and in Amsterdam City Archives, presented in

<http://beeldbank.amsterdam.nl/beeldbank/weergave/record/?id=012000006180> (consulted 23 March 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Mannheimer donated one painting, once attributed to Benedetto Diana, now listed as anonymous, inv. nr. SK-A 3014.

M. Gross, *Rogues' Gallery: The Secret Story of the Lust, Lies, Greed, and Betrayals That Made the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 2010 erroneously states on pp. 382-383 that in 1936 Mannheimer gave some paintings to the Rijksmuseum.

<sup>6</sup> Noord-Hollands Archief (NHA, 476-1420), letter 16 January 1934 from Mannheimer to Prof. Schmidt-DeGener, director of the Rijksmuseum requesting to enter this gift anonymously.

<sup>7</sup> E. Rovers, *De eeuwigheid verzameld, Helene Kröller-Müller 1869-1939*, Amsterdam 2010, p. 421, 432. The gift was again made hush-hush but has been traced in the archive.

The story about Mannheimer saving Artis was mentioned to Jan Boomgaard by former Artis director Maarten Frankenhuis, "...heeft hij ook Artis voor een financiële ondergang behoed." Source: Private email, July 21, 2014 by Jan Boomgaard to this author. The Artis archive, now in the Amsterdam City Archives seem not to contain a document to this effect. Mannheimer liked things hushed up.

<sup>8</sup> Biography in *Biografisch portaal van Nederland*, <http://resources.huylens.knaw.nl/bwn1880-2000/lemmata/bwn5/mannheimer> (consulted 15 February 2014)

<sup>9</sup> J. Houwink Ten Cate, *De mannen van de daad en Duitsland, 1919-1939*, dissertation, The Hague, 1995, p. 157. Mannheimer supported the Dutch Guilder; in turn the Minister of Finance helped to make him *salonfähig* (socially acceptable).

<sup>10</sup> L. de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog*. Vol. 4, first tome. The Hague, 1972, pp. 372-373. Ordered by the Dutch government, this 26-volume book series about the WW2 in the Netherlands is considered a key WW2 history series.

<sup>11</sup> Baarsen (note 2) p. 15.

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<sup>12</sup> Observation made by curator Reinier Baarsen during a private tour with the Mannheimer family in the Rijksmuseum, August 21, 2014, together with the present author. Baarsen also mentioned the almost total lack of archival documents. He once came across a lady who turned out to be a unique oral source during table talk at a dinner table (in the 1970s?) at De Haar Castle, an estate once owned by baron Etienne van Zuylen van Nyevelt (1860-1934) who had married Helene de Rothschild.

In 2014 the castle's historical research team provided the precise data by email to the author. Most curious: this team also found a lead to a „cheque worth f6.967.50 for interest relating to bankruptcy, left by dr. F. Mannheimer”.

<sup>13</sup> Several sources mention his behaviour in an un-Dutch manner, as often smoking expensive Havana cigars, and going out in Amsterdam with consecutive bejewelled girlfriends who lived as concubines at his villa. One of these was reported to have received a gold (or gold-plated?) bathtub. No proofs or sources were given. The New York Times obituary even called him ‘obnoxious’.

<sup>14</sup> In Amsterdam city archive (Stadsarchief) press clippings show arguments pro and con: see Persdocumentatie, 15008, box 242, Mannheimer. This Stadsarchief also owns the photograph shown in Fig. 8.

<sup>15</sup> Dutch Fascist magazines have not been quoted in this article as they probably form untrustworthy sources. See note 3 and 24.

<sup>16</sup> NHA, 476-1420 (see note 5).

<sup>17</sup> A. L. den Blaauwen, *Meissen Porcelain in the Rijksmuseum / Catalogues of the Decorative Arts in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, Vol. 4; Series Editor R.J. Baarsen, Editor of vol. 4: J.D. van Dam.*

Zwolle / Amsterdam, 2000, p. 7. Den Blaauwen writes that Mannheimer was treated for his ill health in 1936-1937 in the *Cottage Sanatorium*, Vienna.

The web site mentioned below states: ‘*In addition to the heart attack suffered on his wedding day, he reportedly nearly died after suffering another, while travelling in Egypt, in 1937. Shortly before his death, Mannheimer, who stood 172 centimetres (5 ft 8 in) tall, was described as being ‘half his normal weight’ of 90 kg (200 lb).*’ quoted here from <http://theinfounderground.com/smf/index.php?topic=12812.0> (consulted 20 March 2014).

This can be understood as Mannheimer having had a normal weight of 180 kg.

The only actual film footage known of Mannheimer is on youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qw0sonDDcF4>

Where one can see him swim at exactly 3 minutes and 7 seconds. It was during an Italian vacation captured by the Katz family; the movies were donated to the Historisch Centrum Overijssel by a daughter of the chamber maid of the Katz family (email to the author, 26 September, 2014).

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<sup>18</sup> Baarsen (note 2), presents an introduction to Mannheimer, on p. 14-17.

<sup>19</sup> J. Lopez, *The Man Who Made Vermeers, Unvarnishing the Legend of Master Forger Han van Meegeren*, Harcourtbooks, 2008, 115.

<sup>20</sup> Den Blaauwen 2000 (note 17) p. 7.

<sup>21</sup> Den Blaauwen 2000 (note 17) pp. 8-9: His expert dealers in Berlin were Saemy Rosenberg, Arthur Wittekind and Hermann Ball; Rosenberg later fled to Amsterdam and there he opened up the 'Rosenbaum' art firm.

<sup>22</sup> The present author is presenting a second article on the subject of [Russian provenances](#) in Mannheimer's collection.

<sup>23</sup> Website on the Hermitage selling off fine art in the 1930s:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet\\_sale\\_of\\_Hermitage\\_paintings](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_sale_of_Hermitage_paintings) (consulted 15 February, 2014). From 1927 on the government already started selling objects like the Fabergé easter eggs. A recent source book: *Selling Russia's treasures: the Soviet trade in nationalized art, 1917-1938*. Ed. N. Semyonova and N. V. Il'in. Paris and New York, 2013.

<sup>24</sup> The Dutch Royal Library (KB) has scanned millions of Dutch newspapers and put these online in the website: <http://kranten.delpher.nl> (consulted 20 February 2014). A query shows that Mannheimer was successful in keeping his name out of the newspapers between 1920 and 1938, except for some positive fundraising activities in Jewish circles and except for a series of smear attacks starting in 1934 by Dutch fascist newspapers. However, in 1939 he became notorious and widely discussed. The present author researched KB newspapers with the key word *Mannheimer, Dr. F.*

A particularly lively and villainous description appeared in the Nazi army weekly just before the Nazi attack on Holland: A. Gerigk, '[Zwischen den Fronten, Berichte aus dem neutralen Ausland](#)' in *Signal*, 1 April 1940. This is now fully published on the author's website.

<sup>25</sup> The first inventory of the whole Mannheimer collection was made by Otto von Falke, staying in Mannheimer's villa from November 1935 to March 1936; pp. 1-400, with an index. One full copy is in the Rijksmuseum library, 47 G 46-47. Another copy is in the Nationaal Archief, (*ISIL-code NL-HaNA*), Stichting Nederlands Kunstbezit (hereafter indicated as SNK) 2.08.42, 964.

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<sup>26</sup> See Te Slaa 2004 (note 3) pp. 183-237. The first naturalization request is mentioned on p. 206, followed by an extensive discussion on Mannheimer's international financial dealings and its political consequences, and also agitation by Dutch fascist circles. See p. 209 for their *Zwart Front* newspaper smear campaign. *Zwart Front* repeated the initial campaign by *Nederlandsch Volks-Fascisme*, another minuscule but noisy group.

Biography with more Jewish background is presented in:

<http://www.joodsamsterdam.nl/persfritsmannheimer.htm> (consulted 15 February 2014).

<sup>27</sup> M.D. Haga, 'Mannheimer, de onbekende verzamelaar' in: *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 22 (1974) p. 88. A short sequel article: J.F. Heijbroek 'Een onbekend portret van Fritz Mannheimer door Kees van Dongen' in *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 35 (1987), pp. 329-333. This Dutch artist is cited saying that Mannheimer had no knowledge of art. This should be understood as: "modern art". Mannheimer refused to buy the portrait.

<sup>28</sup> NHA 476-1420, Letter by Mannheimer, 6 June 1936, sent from Villa Monte-Cristo, Rue de la Feullaume, Vaucresson, to Mr Katz; this NHA archival copy letter is without signature. Returns to Katz the letter by Count Czernin [*"PS: Den Brief des Grafen Czernin sende ich Ihnen anbei zurück"*].

<sup>29</sup> [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fritz\\_Mannheimer](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fritz_Mannheimer) Proof of this wealth is not given.

<sup>30</sup> Heart failure is mentioned by a number of sources, including Jonker, *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland*, Vol. 5 (2001) pp. 323-325. During the last year Mannheimer's personal physician, specialized in heart failure, lived in his villas. Other biographical sources however maintain that his death was suicide: see M. H. Gans, *Memorboek*, Baarn, 1971, p 792: '*Kort nadat minister-president Colijn in het parlement een lofrede had gehouden op dr. F. Mannheimer, een bankier van Duits-Joodse afkomst, maakte deze een eind aan zijn leven vanwege een financiële debacle, die veroorzaakt was doordat hij tegen Duitsland de Franse Franc had willen redden en daarbij tenslotte door de Franse regering in de steek was gelaten.*' In short: The value of the French Franc had first been upheld by Mannheimer, but the French government let his project down; he then took his own life.

Quite another suicide cause is mentioned by the newspaper *Het Volksdagblad*, 12 August 1939, p. 1: a Nazi plot in which other Dutch financiers failed to underwrite a loan arranged by Mannheimer, caused him to panic.

<sup>31</sup> This amount is just one of the many estimates. Valuations of the treasure's total real value vary widely, as can be seen in this article. A full page article in newspaper *Telegraaf*, 1 December 1939:

<http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:110579699:mpeg21:a0082>

<sup>32</sup> Dutch newspaper *de Telegraaf*, 20 September 1940, Nationaal Archief, a copy in archive 'De Jonge', 2.21.095, 116. Different debt figures are given by historian De Jong 1972 (note 6) p. 372: the debt to his own

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bank was f14 million and external debts almost 40 million, see also A. Venema, *Kunsthandel in Nederland, 1940-1945*, Amsterdam 1986, who gives yet other figures in annex 8 with a total debt of f42 million.

<sup>33</sup> Her daughter Anne France Mannheimer, was then adopted by Charles W. Engelhardt Jr. and after growing up, and her 1989 second marriage she became known as Annette de la Renta, the American philanthropist and socialite. Her daughter Eliza Reed married Alexander Lytton Bolen; they and their three sons visited the Mannheimer treasures in the Rijksmuseum in the summer of 2014, and were guided by the present author and by Rijksmuseum curator Baarsen. See Fig 12.

<sup>34</sup> Venema 1986 (note 32) p. 177.

<sup>35</sup> A. Heuß 2000, *Kunst- und Kulturgutraub: ein vergleichende Studie zur Besatzungspolitik der Nationalsozialisten in Frankreich und der Sowjetunion*, Heidelberg 2000, p. 61.

<sup>36</sup> The full London inventory is in the Nationaal Archief, The Hague SNK 2.08.42, 430, in a letter of 8 August 1939 by I. Rosenbaum NV to Mrs. Jane [= Marie-Annette] Mannheimer. See also Korthals Altes, note 38 below, pp. 46, 49. The drawings are listed in F. Kieslinger's second list (Kieslinger II), made for Mühlmann, of secondary goods still important to the Reich, *Verzeichnis der Restbestände*, June 1941, Rijksmuseum Library inv. nr. 74 G 45, pp. 143-145.

<sup>37</sup> See H.J.A. Sire, note 125, in the triptych discussion below. See Gross 2010 (note 4) pp. 385, 390, 392.

<sup>38</sup> E.J. Korthals Altes, *Lotgevallen van de verzameling Mannheimer in oorlogstijd. Persoonlijke herinneringen van Mr E.J. Korthals Altes*, unpublished typescript, 49 pages, 1974, Rijksmuseum library. This memoire was confidential, not intended as public information, but he expressed having no objection to its use for scientific purposes (in the attached presentation letter to the Rijksmuseum director, 28 November 1974),

<sup>39</sup> Venema 1986 (note 34) p 175.

<sup>40</sup> Korthals Altes 1974 (note 38) p. 7. See also Venema 1986 (note 32) p. 176.

<sup>41</sup> More on Nelly (C.J.) Hudig is presented in Y. Marcus - de Groot, *Kunsthistorische vrouwen van weleer: de eerste generatie voor 1921*, p. 148. More on Hudigs work of registration and packing in NHA, 476-2209.

<sup>42</sup> These figures have been estimated higher post-war. Nationaal Archief, SNK, 2.08.42, 549, a letter headed 'Overzicht kunstvoorwerpen'. The left column is most likely the *Artistic* holding at f4.4 million and the right-

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hand column are the later purchases, at f2,472,175 totalling some f6.9 million, of which the most costly items are under 'Precious objects' at f613,100 and then 'porcelain' at f317,255. This copy of the official letter has been rubber-stamped twice.

See also Venema 1986 (note 34) p. 178.

<sup>43</sup> Heuß 2000 p. 60 is erroneous in stating that the greater part of Mannheimer's collection came from [Russia](#). On p. 61 she is also erroneous in stating that the sum of 5.5 million included the Parisian pictures. It may however have included the Vaucresson inventory. See also

A. Heuß 2001, 'Russisches Kulturgut in (westeuropäischen) jüdischen Sammlungen: Von den Berliner 'Russenauktionen' bis zur 'Arisierung' ', *Verkaufte Kultur: die sowjetischen Kunst- und Antiquitätenexporte, 1919-1938*, Ed. W. Bayer. Frankfurt, 2001, pp. 205-206.

A detailed account is in P. den Hollander, *Roofkunst. De zaak Goudstikker*. Meulenhoff, Amsterdam, 2007. Chapter 7 is about Miedl. Pp. 186-193 is about Korthals Altes championing the rights of the Dutch state to the detriment of heirs such as Goudstikker.

<sup>44</sup> Lopez (note 19) p. 16, 176, 180, 227.

<sup>45</sup> L. H. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War*, NYC, 2009, p. 114. In the end Miedl received a commission of f 400.000.

<sup>46</sup> See Den Hollander (note 43) p 129 and chapter 7.

<sup>47</sup> Gross 2010 (note 4) p. 390. For his pro-Hitler intervention, Seyss-Inquart received a pay-off of f400,000.

<sup>48</sup> Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 531a = 1177, a letter by Dr Kiesslinger and Staatssekretär Dr F. Mühlmann, *Sonderbeauftragte für die Sicherung der Kunstschatze in den besetzten Gebieten*, as reported in the official *Nota, Voorstel minnelijke schikking rechtsherstel*, of June 10, 1948, page 3, with insurance values given on page 6.

<sup>49</sup> Posse as art historian, see <http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/posseh.htm> (consulted 15 February 2014). Quote of line 13: 'After the invasion of Holland, Posse moved to the The Hague as Referent für Sonderfragen' = Adviser on 'Special Questions'.

<sup>50</sup> Karl Haberstock was one of the chiefs of Linz purchase and had a network of agents active across Europe. See also 'An orgy of looting and corruption', <http://schikelgruber.net/rapebis.html> (consulted 15 February 2014).



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<sup>51</sup> Den Blaauwen 2000 (note 17) p. 8 erroneously claims that his art was only stored in Bohemia.

<sup>52</sup> This art was stored in Paris by the Chenue firm, but not (as is sometimes erroneously stated) in the Vaucresson villa. See also P. Harclerode and B. Pittway, *The lost masters of WWII and the looting of Europe's treasurehouses*, NYC 1999, chapter 1.

<sup>53</sup> Nicholas 2009 (note 45) pp. 111-114.

<sup>54</sup> Venema 1986 (note 34) p. 181.

<sup>55</sup> Page size is 40 x 30.5 cm, when opened up 40 x 61 cm. This is the main inventory that was made for Mühlmann, *Der Reichskommissar für die besetzten niederländischen gebiete, Dienststelle Dr Mühlmann* Rijksmuseum library, inv. nr. 98 F 26, undated, estimated as ca. 1940-1941. In the present article this big book is indicated as Kieslinger I. It was produced with assistance of Miss Begeer as stated in the small part II annex, here indicated as Kieslinger II, Rijksmuseum library inv. nr. 74 G 45.

Begeer was erroneously listed as 'Begees' in H.G. Schuit, *Authentiek of fake?: een onderzoek naar de Italiaanse renaissancemeubelen afkomstig uit de collecties Lanz, Mannheimer, Vom Rath aanwezig in het Rijksmuseum Amsterdam*, dissertation, Amsterdam, 2006, p. 31.

Making an inventory during the war of the 3000 objects was difficult, as they were stored in various basements in Germany because of air raids; it had cost Mühlmann some f200,000, as he reported. This cost figure may have been an exaggeration. See Nicholas 2009 (note 45) p. 113. Kieslinger used the 1936 Otto von Falke inventory, but does not mention the 1939-1940 inventory made by the Rijksmuseum at all. In either case not much additional research was needed. The result was the large Kieslinger I catalogue Rijksmuseum library (98 F 26) 1940-1941 and the small Kieslinger II booklet (74 G 45). This booklet published in June 1941 contains the lesser objects and a list of drawings.

<sup>56</sup> Nationaal Archief, archive SNK, 2.08.42 531a = 1177.

<sup>57</sup> Korthals Altes 1974 (note 38) pp. 30-31.

<sup>58</sup> Gross 2010 (note 5) p. 391.

<sup>59</sup> Venema 1986 (note 32) p. 177. The complete Paris list of paintings is in Kieslinger part II (note 34) and also in Bundesarchiv, Koblenz, B. 323/86, *Anhang zum Inventar des Führermuseums Linz*.

In Koblenz, one may obtain exact archival numbers: P. Franz, in an email to author, 12 March 2014:

<http://www.argus.bundesarchiv.de/B323-52029/index.htm>. , *Unterlagen zum 'Sonderauftrag Linz' sind unter dem Klassifikationspunkt 1.1.4.1 zusammengefasst. (...) B 323/194 (Alphabetisches Verzeichnis der im Rahmen*

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des 'Sonderauftrag Linz' erworbenen Kunstwerke) sowie die Bandfolge B 323/89, 90, 535 (Inventar der Sammlung Mannheimer).'

<sup>60</sup> Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 430: a letter from Korthals Altes to the Dutch Minister of Finance, 26 April 1951. The purchase sum had been deposited in Korthals Altes' 'Treuhand' care for transfer to the widow. The Nazis may have paid in cash or promissory notes.

<sup>61</sup> Korthals Altes 1974 (note 38) p. 33. A very heavy baptismal font stayed behind near the salt mines as a gift to local monks who had been helpful. Its original position was in Mannheimer's Amsterdam garden.

<sup>62</sup> Venema 1986 (note 34) p. 181. In Dutch: '...niet geheel vrijwillig..'. Translatable as: '... not entirely voluntary'.

<sup>63</sup> Den Hollander (note 43), describing the Goudstikker affair, notes that postwar, the Dutch state was keen to fill its coffers and its state museums, to the detriment of former private owners. Korthals Altes worked on the side of the authorities in this respect.

<sup>64</sup> Korthals Altes 1974 (note 38) pp. 33, 41.

<sup>65</sup> Korthals Altes p. 45. Also: Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 430. Letter of Ministry of Finances to SNK, dated 20 October 1948, stating that the parts of the collection Mannheimer still in our buildings, will be transported to the Rijksmuseum.

<sup>66</sup> Part of the objects had already been deposited in the Rijksmuseum since 1945. The Rijksmuseum *Annual report* 1953, p. 12 describes the formal ownership transfer of 48 paintings by the Dutch *Dienst voor 's Rijks Verspreide Kunstvoorwerpen*, (in 2014 renamed the *Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed* or Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands).

<sup>67</sup> The Rijksmuseum registry department kindly provided an electronic inventory file. Roughly, Mannheimer items are registered under inv. nr. BK-16886 to 17222 and BK 17249 to 17527 (Rijksmuseum registrar, e-mail to author, February, 2014.)

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/explore-the-collection/works-of-art/ceramics> (consulted 15 February, 2014).

<sup>69</sup> Exhibited in the Rijksmuseum basement in February 2014, inv. nr. BK 17017 and BK 17020.

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<sup>70</sup> Gans 1971 (note 30) p. 379 states: ‘...verzamelzucht, gecombineerd met superieure smaak’, or addictive buying, combined with superior taste.

<sup>71</sup> Categorizing and counting is not entirely straightforward. Theoretically, any single art object might be logically put in two or three categories. However, the present author has counted each object only once, based on the full electronic list provided by the museum. The Rijksmuseum list sometimes consists of more than one item per inventory number.

<sup>72</sup> Photo album: Rijksmuseum print room, Inv. B-F-1963-426-1.

<sup>73</sup> A complete top-price list would contain more gold objects.

<sup>74</sup> Price mentioned in F. Scholten and J. de Hond, ‘The elk antler from the funerary chapel of Louis the Pious in Metz’, *Burlington Magazine*, vol. CLV, no. 1323, June 2013, pp. 372-380.

<sup>75</sup> Venema 1986 (note 34) p. 489.

<sup>76</sup> Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 430. List of Mannheimer items prepared for administrators (*bewindvoerders*), March 1948, 14 pages, listing hundreds of items.

<sup>77</sup> Online situation in February, 2014. Sculpture also in cat. *Beeldhouwkunst in het Rijksmuseum*, 1973, cat.nr. 592.

<sup>78</sup> Heuß 2001 (note 43) p. 205. The exquisite object was once owned by a Rothschild. Hitler was gleeful in his table talks about snatching this famous object away from a Jew under the nose of the Nuremberg mayor who also coveted this object.

<sup>79</sup> Rijksmuseum *Annual report* 1953, p. 47, and in the handwritten 1952 museum inventory, p. 459. See also H. Reinhardt, ‘Het borstbeeld van de Heilige Thekla’, in *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 6 (1958) pp.10-16.

<sup>80</sup> R.J. Baarsen, Cat. *German furniture*, Amsterdam 1998 p. 13-73. See pp. 56 and 68. His massive new Rijksmuseum catalogue is *Paris 1650-1900. Decorative art in the Rijksmuseum*, Amsterdam, 2013. Normally

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and sadly the decorated desk is only shown entirely closed, hiding its exquisite nature from the public. It was purchased by Mannheimer from the Rothschild family in Frankfurt.

<sup>81</sup> Rijksmuseum annual report (in Dutch: *Jaarverslag*) 1953, p. 50.

<sup>82</sup> Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 549, *Artistic* list 16, p 131. Heuß 2001 (note 43) p. 206: the *aquamanile* with rider was bought from the Basilevski coll., Hermitage, St. Petersburg, also discussed in my [Russian article](#).

<sup>83</sup> Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42 24, p. 98. This document was the 1939/40 inventory.

<sup>84</sup> G. Van der Ham, *200 jaar Rijksmuseum. Geschiedenis van een nationaal symbool*, Waanders, Zwolle [2000] p. 322.

<sup>85</sup> In the literature one finds varied opinions of Mannheimer's taste as being *eclectic and superb*. According to Haga, nearly all objects are high quality originals and hardly any have been found to be fakes. In the present article we can identify the only interesting slip-up as the Van Meegeren / Vermeer (see annex 3 on Jewish collections).

<sup>86</sup> F.J. Duparc, *Een eeuw strijd voor Nederlands cultureel erfgoed*, The Hague, 1975, pp. 253-4. Government Under-Secretary Cals adopted a Lunsingh Scheurleer's idea for a special commission to make division proposals; Dr. J.G. van Gelder was member of this committee.

<sup>87</sup> Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 905, Letter by Dr van Gelder, 18 December 1947, to the Netherlands Art Property Foundation authority (SNK).

<sup>88</sup> Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 905, Listing by SNK about the dispersal of Mannheimer art treasures, 1 dec. 1947: *'To the Rijksmuseum is assigned 4/5 or f 4,362,524 plus or minus f 700,000 [last words in pencil] and to other museums 1/5 or f 1,090,631 plus or minus f 100,000 [last words in pencil]'*.

Original text in Dutch: *'Aan het Rijksmuseum komt toe 4/5 of f 4.362.524 plus of minus f 700.000 [laatste woorden in potlood]. En aan andere musea 1/5 of f 1.090.631. plus of minus f 100.000 [laatste woorden in potlood].'*

<sup>89</sup> Rijksmuseum *Annual Report* 1953, published 1954, p. 12.

<sup>90</sup> Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 549. Undated list 1939-40 with valuations by Artistic and Hudig.

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<sup>91</sup> Information kindly provided by the Mauritshuis, January, 2014. Subsequently: inv. nr. 906, 870 transferred to the Rijksmuseum in 1963; inv.nr. 868; 860; 861; 862; 864; 865. Prices mentioned in the Nationaal Archief, NA SNK, 2.08.42, 549, pp. 148-149.

<sup>92</sup> Hudig list 1939-40. The paintings listed here immediately below also have prices stated in this source. Q, Buvelot, *Frans van Mieris de Oude*, Zwolle 2005 shows this painting on the front cover. Online RKD files state: It was bought by Mannheimer from Kunsthandel Duits & Co., Dordrecht / Amsterdam / London, 1935.

<sup>93</sup> Sale London, Sotheby's April 19-22 1937, no. 19, for £ 1,800, provenance from the Rothschild collection to Rosenberg, from there to Mannheimer.

<sup>94</sup> Email from the Mauritshuis, February 2014.

<sup>95</sup> A.B. de Vries, *Verlagen van 's Rijks verzamelingen van geschiedenis en kunst*, 1948, p 60. On page 48 he writes he had been arrested on 9 July 1948, on suspicion of punishable facts relating to his work as director of Stichting Nederlands Kunstbezit (SNK). He was then also director of the Mauritshuis. During the whole of 1949 he was on sick leave at the Mauritshuis, and back in function in 1950. It was found that the office and bookkeeping was disorganized.

See also <https://dictionaryofarthistorians.org/vriesa.htm>

More details on De Vries in Den Hollander (note 43), chapter 11.

<sup>96</sup> Email from Boijmans library, January 2014, with these consecutive inventory numbers: BEK 1097 a (OK); BEK 1097 b (OK); MB 1953/T 21 (PK); 3199 (OK); 2314 (OK). Perseus was listed in the catalogue II 1941 (note 33) p. 139, nr 808. Also: Hudig list 1939-40.

<sup>97</sup> Kieslinger catalogue II (note 34) p. 139.

<sup>98</sup> Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, inv./cat.nr OS 75-332

<sup>99</sup> Dordrechts Museum, Dordrecht, inv. cat. nr DM/948/113. See also RKD files.

<sup>100</sup> One example is in Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht, inv./ cat.nr 3413, in 1987 - NK 3239. The Gemeentemuseum in The Hague initially received a number of Meissen objects but these were returned to the

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Rijksmuseum. Other distributed art items, see: Hudig list 1939-40 and Nationaal Archief, SNK, 2.08.42, 549, pp. 148-149.

<sup>101</sup> Email, 11 March 2014 to the author, from KB, E. van der Vlist, curator of medieval manuscripts. Mühlmann / Kieslinger I 1940-1941 (note 55) describes both books full page on page 11. Values in Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 549. p. 148 List of ‘*Schilderstukken*’.

<sup>102</sup> Value in Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 549. p. 148 List of ‘*Schilderstukken*’.

<sup>103</sup> Email to the author, 29 August, 2014 by former Rijksmuseum curator Wouter Kloek: “*De collectie heeft bovendien voor tal van topstukken op kunstnijverheid-gebied gefunctioneerd als hefboom om kwalitatief hoogwaardige stukken buiten het Nederlandse gebied te verwerven. Het Rijksmuseum is daarbij zonder meer hebberig geweest, maar terecht, lijkt ons.*”

<sup>104</sup> Sale Amsterdam (F. Muller) 14-21 October 1952. A copy of the catalogue with handwritten prices is in the Rijksmuseum library.

<sup>105</sup> In the 1952 sale the Centraal Museum in Utrecht bought a silver *Sugar pot* (1780) by Cornelis Johannes van Straatsburg, inv. nr.11048 a/b.

<sup>106</sup> MMA: Accession Number: 49.24. Online, the full text of the provenance states: ‘*Fritz Mannheimer, Amsterdam (until d. 1939); his widow, Jane Mannheimer, Amsterdam, and later New York (1939–49; held in Paris for Mrs. Mannheimer at Chenue; seized by the Nazis and ‘bought’ May 12, 1944 through Posse and Mühlmann for Fr 800,000 for the Führer Museum, Linz; held at Alt Aussee [1387] and at Munich collecting point [1588]; returned to France, January 30, 1946, by the Service Français de la Récupération and restituted following agreement with SNK [Netherlands Art Property Foundation] in or after 1948; sold to Wildenstein); [Wildenstein, New York, 1949; sold to MMA]*’.

Three other Mannheimer items in the Metropolitan Museum of Art are: inv. 53.207, Bellows with the Flight into Egypt, inv. 54.147.74, Meissen teapot, ca. 1735 and inv. 59.31.1, Meissen eagle, ca. 1731.

<sup>107</sup> Boston, MFA, inv. 60.953. <http://educators.mfa.org/european/putto-34374>

<sup>108</sup> Email to the author, from Mrs. A. Halpern, National Gallery, Washington, DC, 20 February 2014: accession number 1937.1.41, bought by (Hugo?) Perls on Mannheimer’s behalf, and sold to Mannheimer. It was only

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Mannheimer's briefly before going to the Duveen branch in London. In November 1927 Andrew Mellon bought it from Duveen.

According to online RKD files bought 1927 at Kaethe Perls Gallerie, Berlin/Paris.

<sup>109</sup> See Kieslinger I 1940-1941 (note 55) pp. 29-30. It was recovered from the Altaussee depot. Email to the present author from the Basel Historisches Museum, 14 March 2014: 'The Reliquary Bust of Saint Ursula (Inv. HMB Inv. 1955.207; gilt silver) was [...] purchased by The Historical Museum Basel in 1955 for the sum of 230.400 Swiss Francs (with contributions from the People of Basel, the Verein des Historisches museums Basel and a subvention from the Swiss Confederation) from the Rijksmuseum.' See also *Telegraaf* newspaper, 17 October 1956, in the KB: <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:110586731:mpeg21:a0263>

<sup>110</sup> See <http://www.herkomstgezocht.nl/eng/index.html> (consulted 15 January, 2014). Perry Schrier alerted me to its existence.

<sup>111</sup> Commissie Ekkart, *Herkomst Gezocht / Origins Unknown*, Zwolle, 2006. One of the key suggestions in this book is that in their exhibition sign near the artwork museums should mention the former Jewish provenance with the family name. The Rijksmuseum complies to a large extent.

<sup>112</sup> See <http://www.artloss.com> (consulted 15 February, 2014).

<sup>113</sup> G. Van der Ham, '200 jaar Rijksmuseum, *Geschiedenis van een nationaal symbool, Amsterdam*', no year (2000), p 316.

<sup>114</sup> Heuß 2001 (note 43) p. 205.

<sup>115</sup> This is deliberate '*Katzenziehen*', stringing a wire up high, then hanging of a cat from its hind legs on it; horse riders who try to grab the cat will be scratched. It is a rare instance of a lowbrow, cruel subject matter in Mannheimer's otherwise entirely highbrow collection. In sociology the torturing of pet animals and other animals was a way of the lower class to needle and upset the sensitive middle and upper classes.

<sup>116</sup> Hudig list 1939-40. This odd valuation would have been way too low for a Vermeer. In the NHA archive the document adds: 'waardeloos' = 'worthless'.

<sup>117</sup> NHA 476-2142-9 in pencil. Details about the Van Meegeren forgery using Bakelite in Lopez, p 107-110.

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<sup>118</sup> Described by Jonathan Janson in [http://www.essentialvermeer.com/fakes\\_thefts\\_school\\_of\\_delft\\_lost\\_sp/erroneously\\_attributed\\_vermeers\\_two.html#UyroJlz6rck](http://www.essentialvermeer.com/fakes_thefts_school_of_delft_lost_sp/erroneously_attributed_vermeers_two.html#UyroJlz6rck) (consulted 20 March 2014).

<sup>119</sup> RKD files, <http://www.rkd.nl/nl/explore/images/record?query=mannheimer&start=5> (consulted 21 March 2014).

<sup>120</sup> Rijksmuseum BK-16986-A, with transfer of ownership 1960. [http://www.lostart.de/Content/02\\_Aktuelles/2013/Riemenschneider%20sculptures.pdf?\\_blob=publicationFile](http://www.lostart.de/Content/02_Aktuelles/2013/Riemenschneider%20sculptures.pdf?_blob=publicationFile) (consulted 15 February 2014).

See also <http://www.restitutiecommissie.nl/en/search/node/mannheimer> (consulted 21 March 2014).

<sup>121</sup> Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 430. Copy of a three-page letter dated 8 August 1939 from Chenue, London to Mrs. Mannheimer.

<sup>122</sup> The earliest exhibition catalogues, Berlin 1906 (as nr. 345) and Paris 1913 (nr. 230) do not mention the provenance Mary, Queen of Scots, but in the 1936 and 1940 catalogues state her name as 'fact'.

<sup>123</sup> Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 430. *Lijst van voorwerpen uit de verzameling Mannheimer uitgezocht voor bewindvoerders*, March 1948, 14 pages long, hundreds of items. It does however, not mention this *Traveling altar triptych*.

<sup>124</sup> Louvre exh. cat. *Paris 1400: Les arts sous Charles VI*, p. 170-171, cat nr 90. It came from the region of Arras, France in 1896, then (perhaps) went to Th. Carmichael, and then certainly to the Eugen Gutmann collection in Berlin. To Mannheimer perhaps through intermediaries; Mannheimer bought extensively from the Gutmann collection as can be seen in Kieslinger part I and II (notes 52 and 34).

<sup>125</sup> J. Alexander and P. Binki (eds.), Royal Academy, London, exh. cat. *Age of Chivalry*, item 585. See also: H.J.A. Sire, *Father Martin D'Arcy: Philosopher of Christian Love*, 1997 p. 147-148. See also Gross 2010 (note 4) p. 392.

<sup>126</sup> Nationaal Archief, SNK 2.08.42, 430, with the inventory sent to London in 1939. In German the text on page 3 states: '*Das Reise-Altarchen der Maria Stuart. Translucides Email. Religiöse Darstellungen. Französisch 14 Jhd. Aus der Reichen Kapelle, München.*' [= now: Residenzmuseum]. See also Sire 1997 (note 125) pp. 127-128.



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<sup>127</sup> Korthals Altes 1974 (note 38) p. 13 incorrectly states the ‘Van Eyck’ drawings provenance from the Hermitage. E-mail from the Hermitage to the present author, 20 February 2014.

Recent Boijmans attribution to a follower of Van der Weijden in:

[http://collectie2008.boijmans.nl/nl/work/MB%201958/T%2020%20\(PK\)?research=1](http://collectie2008.boijmans.nl/nl/work/MB%201958/T%2020%20(PK)?research=1) (consulted 20 March 2014).

<sup>128</sup> Korthals Altes 1974 (note 38) p. 46.

<sup>129</sup> Korthals Altes 1974 (note 38) p. 49.

<sup>130</sup> Brian O’Connell, *John Hunt, The Man, The Medievalist, The Connoisseur* 2013. Chapter 5, pp. 117-143 is entirely about this triptych.

<sup>131</sup> Clipping from Collection Veenhuijzen, Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie. Source: Eigen Haard.  
<http://www.geheugenvannederland.nl/?/nl/items/CBG01:26237/&p=1&i=5&t=8&st=e.j.%20korthals%20altes&sc=%28cql.serverChoice%20all%20e.j.%20%20AND%20korthals%20%20AND%20altes%29/&wst=e.j.%20korthals%20altes>