### Methods in Provenance Research

A brief guide to books and online resources to assist with your provenance research.

#### The following books describe methods of provenance research for objects of various kinds, especially fine art objects and books.


#### The following books can be used to find out about how works of art were looted, stolen, and dispersed during and after World War II.

**General Information for WWII Provenance Research**


The resources listed below provide photographs and other documentation on works of art reported missing or stolen from public and private collections during World War II.

Finding lost works from particular countries or collections

Austria

Belgium


France

Schloss Collection, Non-Restituted Works Looted 1943–1998. Published by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this website lists over one hundred works still missing from the collection of Adolphe Schloss as of July 1, 1997. Includes images, descriptive information, and cross-references to Répertoire de Biens Spoliés.

Germany

Hungary
Mravik, László, and Loránd Bereczky. 1998. *The “Sacco di Budapest” and depredation of Hungary, 1938-1949: works of art missing from Hungary as a result of the Second World War: looted, smuggled, captured, lost and destroyed art works, books and archival documents: preliminary and provisional catalogue*. Budapest: Published by the Hungarian National Gallery for the Joint Restitution Committee at the Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Education.

Italy


Netherlands

Collectors’ marks, like stamps and inscriptions, can help determine ownership over time. The following resources may be helpful in identifying such marks.

**Materials**


Ris-Paquot. 1893. *Dictionnaire encyclopédique des marques & monogrammes, chiffres, lettres initiales, signes figuratifs, etc., etc.; contenant 12,156 marques* Paris: Henri Laurens.

**Domestic Databases**
*The Getty Provenance Index* — This is comprised of several different databases. These art inventories include Archival Inventories, Sales Catalogs, Goupil & Cie Stock Books, Payments to Authors, and Public Collections. German Sales Catalogs 1930–1945 is a work-in-progress, focusing on the period of Nazi looting of art during WWII.

*Catalogues Raisonne* — Established by IFAR (International Foundation for Art Research) as etwo databases of catalogue raisonne-scholarly compilations of artists work—both published and in preparation, for research by artists name or to browse alphabetically.

*Frick Research Library Online* — During World War II, the Frick Art Reference Library assisted the armed forces in identifying and protecting cultural monuments and art works. Now, this searchable collection of photographs, catalogs, and monographs assist researchers in WWII provenance research.

*Nazi-Era Provenance Portal* — Searchable registry of objects in US museum collections that changed hands in Continental Europe during the Nazi Era (1933–1945)

**International Databases**
*Art Database of the National Fund* — Provides information on art and cultural objects located in the Republic of Austria or city of Vienne museums and collections that may have been seized under the National Socialist Regime.

*Database of Art Objects at The Jeu de Paume* — The Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg(ERR) was a Hitler-designed “Special Task Force” formed to appropriate cultural property during WWII. One operation was the plundering of art objects from French and Belgian collections that were were brought to The Jeu de Paume building in the Tuileries Gardens in Paris for processing before shipment to Germany. This database is a searchable illustrated index of remaining registration cards and photographs of more than 20000 objects taken from Fench and Belgian households. One can search by object or name of owner from whom object was taken.

*LootedArt.com* — The central registry of information on cultural property looted 1933–45. In addition to many useful links and breaking news of cases involving looted art, LootedArt contains two databases: — The Information Database contains information and documentation from forty-nine countries, including laws and policies, reports and publications, archival records and resources, current cases and relevant websites. — The Object Database contains details of over 25,000 objects of all kinds — paintings, drawings, antiquities, Judaica, etc— looted, missing and/or identified from over fifteen countries.

**Internet Resources**
*Art Loss Register*
*The Central Registry of Information on Looted Cultural Property, 1933–1945*
*Commission for Looted Art in Europe (CLAE)*
*The Lost Art Internet Database*
Musées Nationaux Recupération
New York State Holocaust Claims Office
National Archives Holocaust Era Assets — A finding aid to the records at the National Archives, College Park, Maryland.
Researching Holocaust Era assets at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)
IFAR’s Online Provenance Guide

Search Tips
Locate other titles in the Met libraries by doing a KEYWORD search in the library catalog for any of the following terms. Enclose phrases in quotation marks. (Example: “art thefts”)
— Art thefts
— War and art
— Art treasures in war
— World War, 1939–1945 — Art and the war

Have a question?
Reach a reference librarian at watson.library@metmuseum.org or use our virtual chat service, Ask a Librarian, Monday-Friday, 10am-5pm.

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