

# MACCH Conference: Provenance, restitution and return Maastricht, March 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 2023



In the aftermath of the Second World War several countries have implemented laws to facilitate the restitution and return of looted artwork. From the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century a number of countries have set up restitution committees and implemented new policies to hear restitution demands relating to Nazi looted art. Looting of artwork is of all times. During their colonial rule Western European nations have also looted cultural goods from their former colonies. More and more former colonial powers are seeking to implement policies for the return of looted goods to the former colonies. Many museums are now facing the challenge how to scale up the provenance research needed for the collections of cultural goods from former colonies. It also raises the question if and in how far the policies and principles developed for Nazi looted art can be applied to colonial goods and heritage. Another great challenge is the looting by the Soviet Union (during the revolution of the 1920s and after 1945) for which no restitution rules have been formulated, and the current looting from conflict areas such as Ukraine.

Museums and private collectors face restitution and return claims concerning objects that have been looted, confiscated or sold under duress in the past, specifically during the Holocaust and Colonialism. While discussion and debate of provenance and rightful ownership, as well as legal and ethical claims regarding these objects, are often perceived to create insecurity for museums, art dealers, and private collectors, they also challenge public bodies such as restitution commissions and courts to create trust and offer transparency in their quest for just and fair solutions. These challenges raise important questions concerning provenance research, the development of (new) legal principles and open cooperation and dialogues between relevant stakeholders. With the recent legislative developments in various jurisdictions and the intensification of scrutiny concerning collections acquired by museums in colonial times, the topics of provenance, restitution and return as well as the open dialogues between all relevant stakeholders are of utmost importance.

This year's MACCH conference tackles these and other issues based on accumulated knowledge and expertise built during past MACCH events, including our previous annual conferences in 2014 "Whose Culture is it? On cultures of authenticity and ownership in art and cultural heritage", 2015 "Assembling value: The changing roles of expertise in art and heritage worlds", 2016 "Fair and Just Practices: Art and heritage worlds from the perspectives of markets and law", 2018 "Crossing Borders in Arts and Heritage" and 2019 "Art and Law: Current developments in turbulent times".

We invite you together with the Netherlands Commission for UNESCO to join our tradition of bridging disciplinary boundaries to find solutions to current problems in the fields of art, heritage, law and the market.

## **Programme and Venue**

**Sunday 19 March – Monday 20 March 2023**

**Venue on Sunday: Maastricht, STAYOKAY**

**Venue on Monday: Maastricht, Faculty of Law, Bouillonstraat 3, Statenzaal**

**Sunday, 19 March 2023**

- 15.00 Welcome with coffee and tea
- 15.30 Opening by Lars van Vliet, Maastricht University and  
Charlotte Huygens, Member of the Netherlands Commission for UNESCO
- 15.50 Current developments concerning restitution and return of colonial heritage:  
A comparative perspective  
  
Bert Demarsin, KU Leuven,  
Guido, Gryseels, former Director of Africa Museum Tervuren,
- 16.30 Questions and Discussion
- 16.45 Coffee/Tea Break
- 17.00 Restatement Principles on the Return of Nazi Looted Art,  
Matthias Weller, University of Bonn
- 17.20 Applying principles on Nazi looted art to colonial objects,  
Lars van Vliet, Maastricht University
- 17.40 Discussant: Evelien Campfens, Leiden University
- 17.50 Questions and Discussion
- 18.10 Provenance+ , Paul Kerckhoffs
- 18.30 Questions and Discussion
- 18.45 Launch of the Maastricht Book Series: Studies in Art, Heritage, Law and the  
Market, Christoph Rausch, Maastricht University
- 19.00 Drinks and Dinner

## Monday, 20 March 2023

- 9.00 Welcome with Coffee and Tea
- 9.10 Opening by Hildegard Schneider, Maastricht University and Member of the Netherlands Commission for UNESCO
- 9.20 Current developments concerning the return of colonial objects in the Netherlands,  
Bina Saib, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NL,  
Robert Verhoogt, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, NL
- 9.40 Questions and Discussions
- 10.00 Panel discussion: Experiences and Expectations of Museums and Collections of Universities  
  
Marieke van Bommel, National Museum of World Cultures  
Nanette Snoep, Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Cologne  
Guido, Gryseels, former Director of Africa Museum Tervuren,  
Bert Demarsin Director of the Service of Academic and Historic Patrimonium, KU Leuven
- 11.00 Discussant: Jos van Beurden
- 11.10 Questions and Discussion
- 11.40 Coffee and Tea Break
- 12.00 Policy & Practice: Provenance research in the ‘other’ museums,  
Hanna Pennock
- 12.20 Restitution and collections from colonial contexts: A researcher’s perspective,  
Klaas Stutje, Expertise Centrum Restitutie/NIOD
- 12.40 Questions and Discussion
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.30: Soviet Looting: A Case Study, Hannes Hartung, Attorney, Munich
- 14.45 Protection of cultural heritage in times of war -  
Protection of Ukrainian cultural heritage,  
Hildegard Schneider and Evelien Campfens
- 15.15: Questions and Discussions
- 15.30 Closing
- 15.40 Drinks