



**International conference  
Looted – Recovered  
Cultural Goods – the Case of Poland**

The International Cultural Centre, Krakow

November 12–14, 2014

The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and the International Cultural Centre are organising a conference that will address the topic of the restitution of artworks in Poland. The conference at the ICC, “Looted – Recovered. Cultural Goods – the Case of Poland” will constitute an important voice in the discussion on the war histories of cultural goods, the documentation of losses, the research in the matter, as well as the experience of restitution.

In the keynote lecture, taking place on November 13, the **internationally renowned American researcher Lynn Nicholas**, the author of the bestselling “The Rape of Europa,” will discuss the looting of artworks in Europe, including the special case of plundering of cultural goods in Poland. **Dr. Uwe Hartmann from the German Bureau for Provenance Research**, on the other hand, will address the issue of documentation of the war losses and the research on the provenance of artworks. Next to the papers given by Polish and foreign researchers and practitioners, the programme will also include workshops on provenance.

The tragedy of World War II brought the “relocation” of a vast number of artworks. The advent of Communism in Poland prevented open discussion about the looting of artworks both by the Third Reich and by the Soviet Union. After the political watershed in 1989 the question of restitution of artworks returned to the arena.

The primary **aim of this conference** is to showcase Polish experiences in the field of restitution in the context of other countries’ policy and legal solutions in the matter. Another objective is to promote knowledge on this lost portion of cultural heritage and to raise awareness of the scale of war losses in Poland.

Within the framework of the conference three main topics will be addressed during **three panels**. During the first one, concerned with Poland’s war losses, the speakers will discuss issues related to the looting of artworks in Poland by the Nazis and the Red Army. Experts

will present the history of cultural artefacts in the East of Poland, the scale of loss of private collectors on the example of Warsaw citizens, as well as the losses of the Polish Jews, so crucial from the point of view of the lost multiculturalism of the prewar Polish Republic.

During the second panel, devoted to the documentation of war losses and the research on the provenance of artworks, specialists from Europe and the United States will discuss their experience in the matter.

The closing panel will address the process of restitution. Broad legal aspects of restitution will be explained. At the same time, experts will attempt to define main challenges and problems of restitution in Poland and abroad.

The participants of the conference will have an opportunity to take part in workshops on provenance and in a field session at the Wawel Royal Castle. The guided tour will include the presentation of the painting “Palace Stairs” by Francesco Guardi. The masterpiece was reclaimed by the Polish government from Germany in April 2014 and brought to Krakow from the National Museum in Warsaw especially for the occasion.

#### **How to participate:**

The booking for museum specialists, archivists, librarians, and all those either involved or interested in the issue of restitution will commence on September 3. Admission is free. Due to the limited number of seats, the booking process will follow the order of applications. For detailed information and registration form visit the ICC website:  
<http://www.mck.krakow.pl/conference/zrabowane-odzyskane-dobra-kultury-przypadek-polski>

Conference venue: The International Cultural Centre in Krakow.

Co-organised by the Department of War Losses working within the framework of the Department of Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage  
[www.lootedart.gov.pl](http://www.lootedart.gov.pl)

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The ICC media coverage: TVP Kraków, Radio Kraków Małopolska, Gazeta Wyborcza, Herito, Karnet, Polski Portal Kultury O.pl, Telewizja M