



NAZI-ERA LOOTED ART RESTITUTION CASES PROJECT

2024-2025 Annual Report

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Image: *The Girl from the Sabine Mountains* by Franz Xaver Winterhalter (Nazi-Looted art piece restituted in 2008 to the Max & Iris Stern Foundation (Max Stern Art Restitution Project)).

MISSION OF THE PROJECT

In 2024, in line with its educational mission, **Center for Art Law** adopted one of the U.S. government's recommendations in the *Best Practices under the Washington Conference Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art*: to provide comprehensive information on Nazi-looted art claims, restitution processes, and other fair and just solutions.

Through the **Nazi-Era Looted Art Restitution Cases Project** (the "Project"), the Center is creating a comprehensive data set (the "Database") for all cases related to the restitution of artworks looted by the Nazi regime and displaced during the Holocaust. The Database includes key data points for each known dispute, regardless of its location, such as provenance of artworks in dispute, relevant documents, and the history of the Holocaust victim: who they were, when they acquired the artwork in question, and how their artworks or other cultural objects were handled during and after the Holocaust. Additional information about each case include summaries of each restitution claim or request, the rationale behind decisions to either retribute the artwork, reach an alternative solution, or not retribute it at all.

Looking ahead, this data will be brought to life through interactive visualizations. The Center's aim is to make this resource accessible not only to those directly involved in restitution proceedings but also to the members of the general public, who are seeking to expand their knowledge and understanding of the topic.

The digital, visual presentation of the Project will feature timelines, graphs and charts, advanced search functions, maps, and more. By centralizing this information and presenting it visually, the Project seeks to reveal meaningful patterns and provide an educational and research tool that enhances understanding of the past while establishing precedents for the future.

MEET THE LEAD RESEARCHER



Amanda Buonaiuto is a licensed Brazilian lawyer with a specialization in Nazi-looted art restitution, gained through her LL.M. at the University of Bonn, Germany. With focus on provenance research, she leads the Nazi-Era Looted Art Restitution Project at the Center for Art Law.

MEET THE VOLUNTEERS

The advancement of the Project is only possible through the support of carefully selected volunteers. Candidates undergo an interview to ensure they possess the necessary qualifications and interests to assist with the Project. These may include prior expertise or understanding of areas such as genealogy, art history, legal training, history and archival research.

- Total volunteers who have already assisted the project: **65**

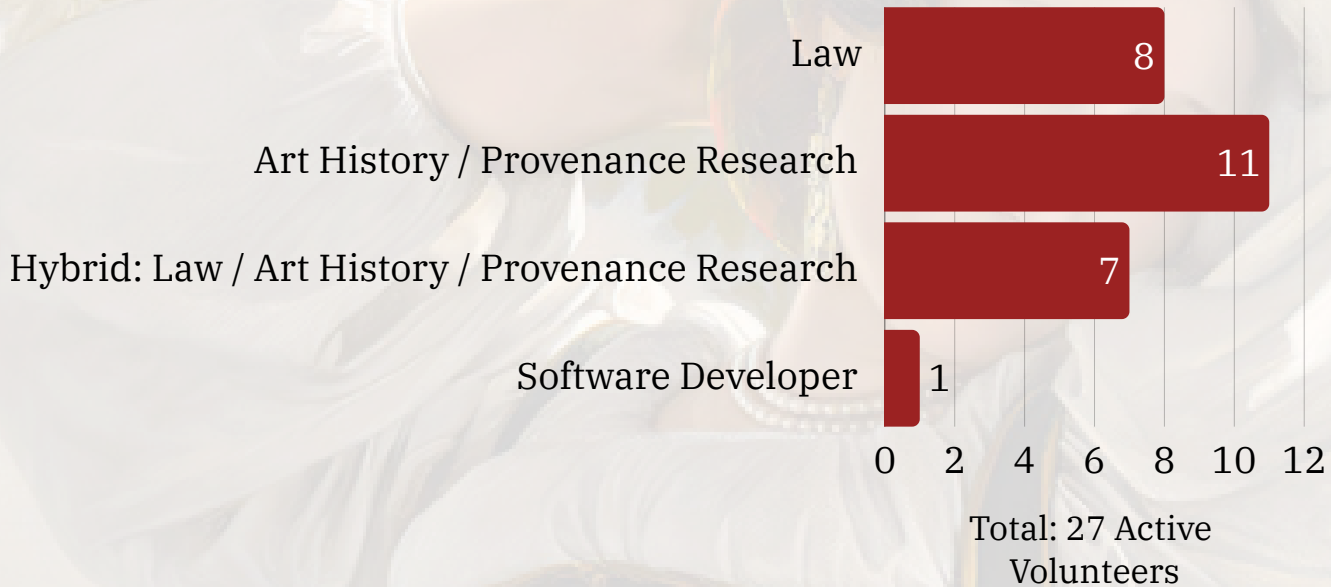
The way a volunteer contributes to the project is directly related to their qualifications:

- **Law:** Legal interns and other volunteers are responsible for adding information to the case disputes;
- **Art** (art history, provenance research or similar): Volunteers are responsible for adding information to the art objects entries;
- **Hybrid** (combined expertise in law and art): Volunteers are responsible for adding information to both case disputes, entities, and artworks.

All new information is reviewed by another volunteer. This method ensures that our internal data-entry guidelines are followed and that the information collected is accurate. Future reviews and additional details will be part of the updates to the Project on regular basis.

MEET THE VOLUNTEERS

Currently, our project involves **27** active volunteers, drawn from multiple professional backgrounds:



Thanks to their time and dedication, the Center is able to continue advancing its research efforts. We would like to thank the following volunteers for their particular outstanding contributions:

Alex Clemens
Amanda Rose
Andre Lebedev
Annie Xiong
Athena Lunau
Georgia Shelley
Goldie Gross
Guillemette Lavergnolle
Hannah Fritschner
Hannah Gadway
Irina Tarsis
John Freeman
Kaitlin Vervoot

Kayla Scullin
Lauren Stein
Livia Solaro
Liran Assaf
Megan Avalos
Megan Graham
Natasha Geen
Nina Paris
Phoebe Greenspan
Rachel Steendhal
Rachelle Wolfe
Sarah-Mae Lieverse
Tess Toland

DATA UNCOVERED

Since its launch in March 2024, the project has progressed through multiple phases and has grown significantly in numbers. The following highlights reflect its progress (as of December 1, 2025):

Phases of the Project

- Initial stage with the lead researcher independently compiling cases into a spreadsheet version of the Database;
- Development of an interactive timeline to visually present the project's findings;



- Onboarding volunteers in October 2024 to support and expand the project's work;
- Applications to grant and funding processes;
- Creation of a platform dedicated and tailored to the project's needs and gradual migration of data into it;
- Continuous improvement of the platform based on the user experience of our volunteers;

Project Progress in Numbers

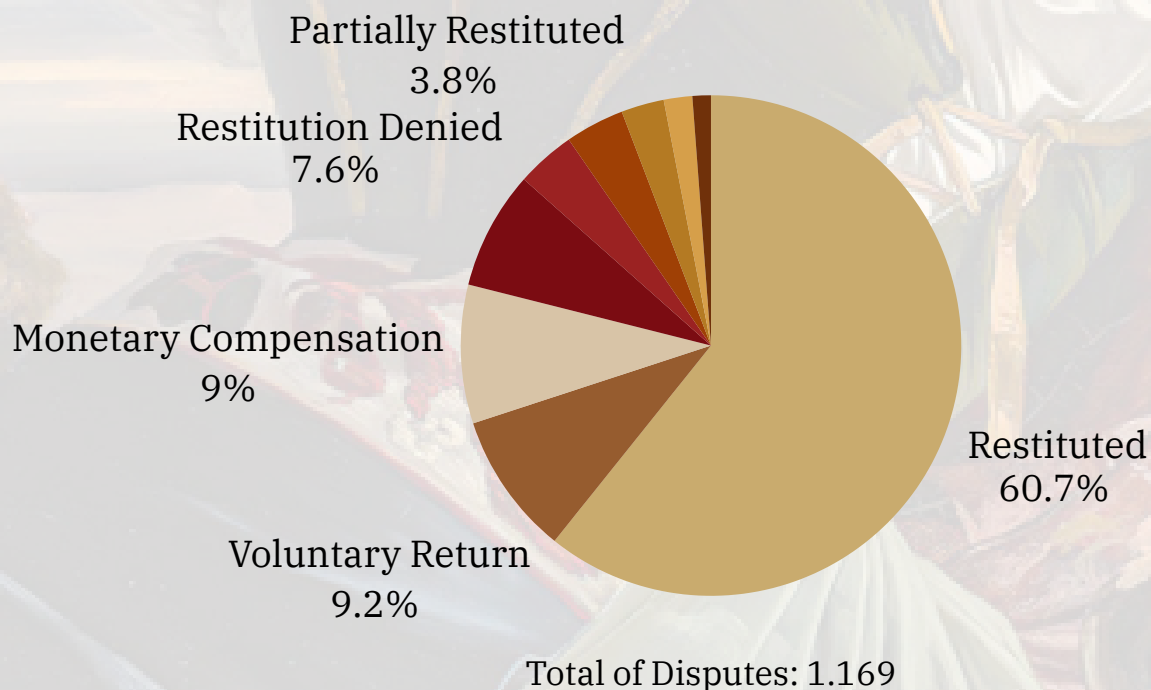
- Total disputes already recorded in the Database: **1.169**
- Disputes pending Database entry: **851**
- Disputes tracked for future Database entry: **1.080**
- Countries of focus for 2026: **United Kingdom** and **Netherlands**

DATA UNCOVERED

As information is incorporated into the Database, an increasing number of connections between the names of artists, claimants, defendants, and third parties are emerging.

Not only connections but also patterns will be presented through interactive visualizations:

- Dispute duration analyses (timeline representation);
- Relationship between types of confiscation and geographic locations;
- Movement steps of flight assets objects;
- Total number of cases associated with a specific person or institution;
- Frequency of types of objects looted;
- Frequency of legal obstacles encountered in restitution claims;
- **Frequency of outcomes achieved in restitution claims or requests:**



* This visualization is presenting available and processed data as of Dec. 1 2025.

EVENTS

The Project has already been featured at several international events, including:

- **Maastricht University (MACCH)** - *Spark Session on the Nazi-Looted Art Restitution Project with Amanda Buonaiuto*, November 2025;
- **University of Gdansk (online)** - *Ars Auro Prior- Restitution of Lost and Stolen Art Work- International Seminar*, December 2024;
- **University of Amsterdam (Herkomstgroep)** - *Research group meeting introducing the Project*, May 2025;
- **Quinlan Partners (online)** - *Lunch Talk (Nazi-Looted Art Restitution Project: About and Progress)*, May 2025.

Alongside the Project, the Center has remained committed to educating and informing the public about the restitution of Nazi-Era looted art. In support of this mission, it has hosted numerous events in 2024-2025 dedicated to this theme:

- **Center for Art Law Webinar (online)** - *News & Updates about the Nazi-Looted Art Restitution Project*, October 2024;
- **Center for Art Law Annual Conference (Christie's New York)** - *Nazi-Era Disputed Art: Research & Restitution*, April 2024;
- **Center for Art Law (Kunsthaus Zürich)** - *Before it is too late: critical look at an exhibition about art. context, war and conflict*, September 2025;
- **Art Law Colloquium (online)** - *Nazi Art Plunder in Postwar Western Europe*, February 2025;
- **Center for Art Law Webinar (online)** - *Recent Global Developments in Nazi-Looted Art Restitution*, December 2025 (Upcoming).

Collectively, these opportunities to discuss about the Project and continued interest in the matter demonstrate that the issue of Nazi-Era looted art remains highly relevant, even more than 80 years after the end of the Second World War.

PLANS FOR 2026

Center for Art Law is prepared to expand the Project in several ways in the coming year:

AI Integration

Often, the researched data is not easily accessible online, and while multiple databases cover this subject, many contain inaccuracies or incomplete information. This makes it necessary for volunteers to consult more than five different sources for each case in a cross-referencing analysis, and even then, it is sometimes impossible to fill in every requested detail.

To assist with this process, the Center plans to test and integrate AI tools developed for provenance purpose to help fill in missing data within the Database. This process will be carefully controlled to avoid inaccuracies: after the use of the AI tool, all data will be reviewed by a volunteer to ensure its reliability, following our driven principle “trust but verify”.

Development of Interactive Visualizations and Database Public Release

Another goal is the development of the digital aspect of the Project. Interactive visualizations showcasing the data in multiple formats will be created and made publicly available alongside the public release of the Database. The access will be offered without any fees.

Funding

The Center is pleased to announce that the Project will receive partial financial support in 2026 from the Claims Conference, the World Jewish Restitution Organization (WJRO), thanks to the German Finance Ministry. In order to fully develop the Project, the Center continues to seek additional grants and donations.

LETTER OF GRATITUDE TO THE PROJECT SUPPORTERS

The **Center for Art Law** would like to extend its deepest gratitude to all those who have contributed time, expertise, and financial support to the the Nazi-Era Looted Art Restitution Project. We are indebted to all who have worked on cases and in the archives over the decades to make our work possible.

This project would not have been possible without the insights and guidance provided by:

Peter Toren, Irina Tarsis, Abbey Walmsley, Andre Lebedev (Angel Developer), Christopher Pietsch, Evie Joselow, Eileen Morris-Brankovic, Laurel Zuckerman, Marc Masurovsky, Marc Porter, Olaf Ossman, Richard Aronowitz and Wesley Fischer.

We are also deeply grateful for any and all financial support that makes this work possible. Special thanks to the Center's seed donors, including **Peter Toren**, as well as **Art Ashes**. We are looking forward to receiving additional funding from the **Claims Conference** and **World Jewish Restitution Organization (WJRO)** in 2026.

With sincere appreciation,


Amanda Buonaiuto

Lead Researcher of the Nazi-Era Looted Art Restitution Project





Center for art law

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