

PRESS RELEASE

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German Lost Art Foundation approves approximately 2.1 million euros for 20 provenance research projects in the area of “Nazi-looted art” in the second round of funding in 2021

In the second round of funding this year, the German Lost Art Foundation has approved applications for 20 research projects in the field of “Nazi-looted art”. On the recommendation of its Funding Committee, the Executive Board of the Magdeburg-based foundation approved approximately 2.1 million euros for provenance research at museums, libraries, academic institutions and for four private applicants.

For example, the Evangelische Akademie Tutzing at Schloss Tutzing (Tutzing Castle) on Lake Starnberg is one of the first church-supported institutions to receive funding from the Foundation to examine objects suspected of being removed during Nazi persecution. The castle had been richly furnished by its former owner, the Jewish-Hungarian art collector Marczell von Nemes, who died in 1930. The subsequent owner, Albert Hackelsberger, and his family were persecuted by the National Socialists, and little of the original furniture and art objects remain in Tutzing today.

The collections of another castle are also being closely scrutinized: About 160 objects from the former private collection of Philipp, Prince of Hesse are being examined, most of which are housed in the Museum Schloss Fasanerie in Eichenzell near the town of Fulda. Philipp, Prince of Hesse had been a member of the NSDAP and the SA since 1930, he enjoyed close contact with Adolf Hitler and Hermann Göring and traveled to Italy as a special ambassador; he also took on the role of art agent for the “Sonderauftrag Linz” – an unrealized project commissioned by Hitler during the National Socialist tyranny – among other things. Following the discovery of several objects in the Museum Schloss Fasanerie that are (or could be) cultural property seized as a result of persecution, the Kulturstiftung des Hauses Hessen (a cultural foundation) now intends to systematically examine the holdings for cultural property seized as a result of Nazi persecution.

The search for the heirs of confiscated art is the focus of the Hochschule für Jüdische Studien (College of Jewish Studies) in Heidelberg. It has identified numerous books from the estate of Rabbi Emil Davidovic (1912-1986) as Nazi-looted art. The majority of the books examined came from the huge stock of Nazi-looted art that had been collected during the “protectorate period” in the so-called Jewish Central Museum in Prague and in Theresienstadt. The Heidelberg project is the second project of its kind since this funding opportunity was newly introduced by the Foundation in 2019.

Since 2008, the federal and state governments have funded provenance research into Nazi-looted art with a total of 41.7 million euros, with which 400 projects have been realized to date. The German Lost Art Foundation in Magdeburg, which was founded by the federal government, the states and leading municipal associations on Jan. 1, 2015, is Germany’s central point of contact on questions of unlawfully seized cultural property. The Foundation receives institutional funding from the German Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, from which it also receives funding for its projects. Applications for longer-term projects can be submitted by January 1 and June 1 of each year.

The German Lost Art Foundation not only funds research projects, it also documents cultural property losses in its publicly accessible database “Lost Art” as search and found-object reports. The Foundation presents the results of the funded projects in its research database “Proveana” via www.proveana.de

An overview of the funded projects can be found in the annex.

Further information on funding opportunities is available at: www.kulturgutverluste.de

German Lost Art Foundation

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