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**RECOVERING A “STOLEN JEWISH LEGACY”:  
LOOTED ART EXHIBITION OPENS AT KAZERNE DOSSIN**

Eighty-five years after Dutch-Belgian philanthropists and art collectors Hugo Daniel Andriess (1867-1942) and his wife Elisabeth Andriess (1871-1963) fled Belgium to escape Nazi persecution, an exhibition that chronicles their lives and legacy has opened in the country they were once forced to abandon. It is the first exhibition in Belgium about the Nazi looting of Belgian Jewish cultural property.

The exhibition “Stolen Jewish Legacies: The Fate of the Andriess Collection,” created by the Jewish Digital Cultural Recovery Project (JDCRP) and curated by Anne Uhrandt, reconstructs the biographies of the Andriesses and the looting of their collection of Old Master paintings and tapestries. It opened yesterday, February 2, 2025, at Kazerne Dossin in Mechelen, Belgium, where it will remain on display until February 28.

The opening event on February 2, 2025, featured contributions from Dr. Veerle Vanden Daelen, Curator and Director of Collections & Research at Kazerne Dossin; Elisabeth Andriess, a descendant of the Andriess family; Geert Sels, author of *Art for the Reich: In Search of Nazi-Looted Art from Belgium* (2022); Ingrid Vander Veken, author of *Lost* (2023); and Sylvie Paesen, archivist at the Musées royaux d’Art et d’Histoire in Brussels.

“Through archival documentation, we have pieced together the biographies of the Andriesses and the journey of their nearly forgotten collection, from its seizure during the Nazi occupation to its partial recovery after the war,” explained exhibition curator Anne Uhrandt, Research and Documentation Officer at the JDCRP.

“This exhibition not only tells the story of this looting; it is also a tribute to the enduring impact of cultural heritage and shows how careful, detailed scholarship can rediscover, protect and uplift legacies that were almost erased by genocide,” said Dr. Veerle Vanden Daelen, Curator and Director of Collections & Research at Kazerne Dossin. “We are honored to showcase this story at Kazerne Dossin.”

Deidre Berger, Executive Board Chair of the JDCRP, said the Foundation is working with artificial intelligence to create a digital archival repository that will document the records of the theft of Jewish cultural property by the Nazis, their allies, and collaborators. “By digitally linking documents from multiple archives, the JDCRP repository will help researchers, family descendants, educators, and others uncover many more stories like that of the Andriesses,” Berger explained. “Such stories help document and reclaim the cultural contributions and achievements of Jews throughout Europe.”



At a roundtable discussion, experts discussed the looting of cultural property from Jewish owners during the Nazi occupation of Belgium. They also presented a textured picture of the lives of Hugo Daniel and Elisabeth Andriessse, enriched by reflections from an Andriessse family descendant, also named Elisabeth Andriessse, who met the elder Elisabeth as a child.

During the roundtable, Sylvie Paesen, archivist at the Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire in Brussels, explained the journey of the museum's tapestry *Winter*, a late-17<sup>th</sup>-century work featuring a two-headed Janus. The Andriesses deposited the tapestry with other objects in their collection at the museum for safekeeping shortly before fleeing Belgium. These objects were nonetheless looted. After the war, Allied Forces recovered the tapestry, and Elisabeth Andriessse later donated it to the museum as a sign of appreciation for its assistance with the recovery of her looted property.

The Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire is now displaying *Winter*, concurrently with the exhibition at Kazerne Dossin. Paesen said, "Until recently, *Winter* was just one of the beautiful tapestries of our collection. But thanks to curator Anne Uhrlandt's request, we discovered that, in addition to the artistic and iconographic value of this artwork, there is also a hidden, partly tragic, partly wondrous history."

"Stolen Jewish Legacies: The Fate of the Andriessse Collection" is an exhibition created by the JDCRP, and curated by Anne Uhrlandt, in collaboration with the Kazerne Dossin Memorial, Museum and Research Center on Holocaust and Human Rights; the Jewish Museum of Belgium; and the Federal Public Service Economy (Economy Ministry of Belgium).

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**About the Jewish Digital Cultural Recovery Project Foundation (JDCRP):** *The JDCRP was founded in Berlin in 2019 by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) and the Commission for Art Recovery (CAR). The Foundation is creating a cross-searchable digital platform for archival documentation, research, and education on the looting of Jewish-owned cultural property by the Nazis, their allies, and collaborators. For more information, visit <https://jdcrp.org>.*

*Exhibition Curator: Anne Uhrlandt, JDCRP Research and Documentation Officer*

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