

Stolen Jewish Legacies:

The Fate of the Andriesse Collection

**This exhibition tells
the story of the looting
of the Andriesse
collection in Brussels**

This exhibition traces the lives and cultural impact of the Dutch-Belgian Jewish couple Hugo Daniel Andriesse (1867-1942) and Elisabeth Andriesse (1871-1963), whose significant contributions to European cultural heritage were long neglected.

The Andriesses were socially prominent benefactors of charitable institutions in prewar Brussels and committed collectors of Old Master paintings and textiles. This exhibition retrieves the story of their lives and the fate of their collection, which was looted in 1941 by Nazi-occupation officials in Belgium. Hugo Daniel and Elisabeth Andriesse lived for more than 40 years in Brussels. Following their persecution by the Nazi occupation authorities, they managed to flee to the United States from Europe but without their valuable art collection and private belongings. Although much of the collection was returned to the Andriesse family after World War II, some of the collection remains missing.

This exhibition tells the story of the looting of the Andriesse collection in Brussels and its subsequent distribution by the Nazi government-sanctioned looting agency, the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR), to top members of the Nazi elite, including Commander-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe Hermann Goering. The exhibition reconstructs the biographies of the Andriesse couple and offers case studies on the varied fates of four stolen objects from their collection. At the November 7, 2024, exhibition presentation at the Jewish Museum of Belgium, a book that formerly belonged to Elisabeth Andriesse was presented to her legal heirs.

The project demonstrates how archival material can help in reconstructing the lives and fates of Holocaust victims. It highlights both the dimensions of the pan-European theft of Jewish cultural property, as well as the integral role of cultural plunder in the planning of the genocide of the Jews.

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