arte DISTRIBUTION

THE GOERING CATALOG

A COLLECTION OF ART AND BLOOD

A 52' FILM WRITTEN BY
LAURENCE THIRIAT AND
JEAN-MARC DREYFUS

DIRECTED BY
LAURENCE THIRIAT AND
FRANCOIS GONCE

FLAIR PRODUCTION

Kaos Films

SCHUCH

PROVISIONAL DELIVERY: JANUARY 2020

LOGLINE

As a fanatic anti-Semitic who had control over the implementation of the "final solution", Hermann Goering built the most impressive collection of 20th century artworks. He shamelessly dispossessed thousands of Jewish families through a gigantic enterprise of plundering throughout Europe. Recently exhumed from the abyss of history, the Goering Catalogue offers indisputable evidence on what was one of the major lootings of the century.

SYNOPSIS

The Goering Catalogue is the very detailed inventory of the works of art collected by Hermann Goering, the second most powerful Nazi, after the Fuhrer. It was recently uncovered in the cabinets of the diplomatic archives of the Parisian Quai d'Orsay Museum, after 60 years of oblivion. It’s a stunning document that reveals the disturbing and paradoxical aesthetic aspirations of Nazi barbarism.

Throughout the Second World War, Goering set up a gigantic enterprise of Nazi plunder. Everything was registered, sorted, listed, numbered, dated and catalogued in a book, with the same rigor as done at all levels of the Nazi system. An incredible trail of clues that help understand how such an organization could have been possible.

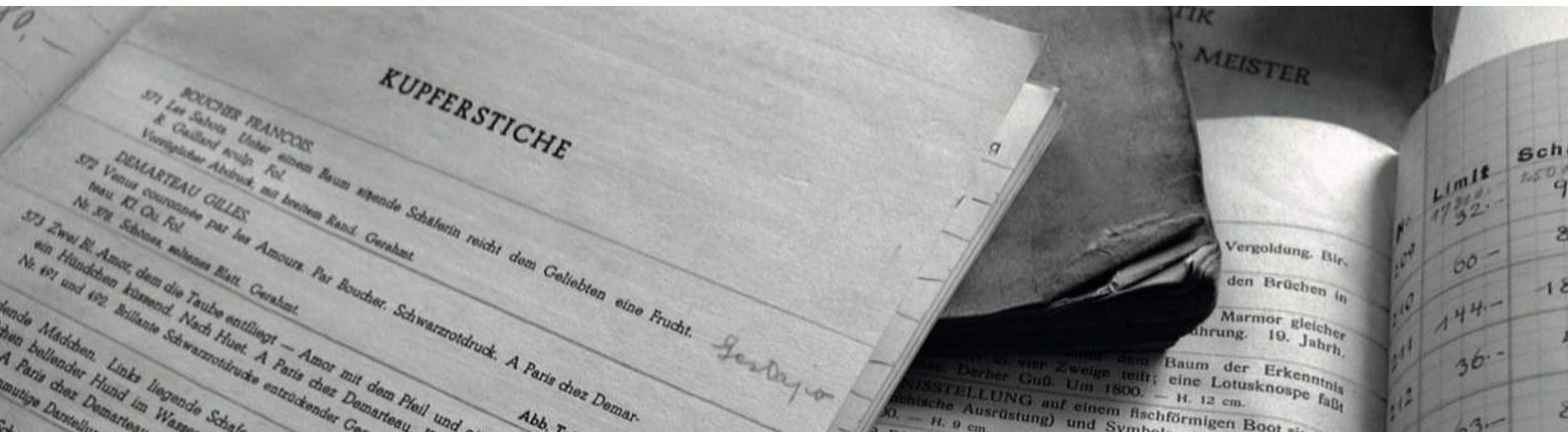
We will go to the four corners of the world to meet families, experts and personalities from the art world for whom this subject remains more relevant than ever.

Vain, egocentric and theatrical, Goering had an inordinate taste for power and pomp. The one who would become Reich’s Marshall had the skills of a leader and a manipulator, showing the most brutal energy. Leon Goldenshon, the psychiatrist from Nuremberg, described Goering as having no moral sense and a very high self-esteem. We have access to the transcripts of their conversations. He dreamt of becoming a "Renaissance man", who would accumulate art masterpieces in his monumental residence in Carinhall, in the heart of the Prussian forest.

Goering was a frenetic collector. He accumulated a collection and an immense fortune, resulting from the persecution of the Jews of Europe. Hitler also had a monumental project to build the largest art attraction in all of the “New Europe” based in Linz, in Austria. His own collection was by far the most important, with over 7000 objects in 1945. But his tastes were bourgeois, and he liked rural and mannered scenes. In contrast, Goering was much more of an art expert and his smaller collection was of much higher value. This competition between the Third Reich’s two leaders will encourage the development of a vast system of Nazi plunder. For both men, owning these works of art was a way of rewriting history by imposing on it a new perception, inscribed in the codes of Nazi ideology only.

When the Third Reich collapsed, Carinhall was dynamited under Goering's own orders. Like all Nazis, he wanted to leave no trace of his obscure activity. Today, there is only a vast forest where treasure "seekers" regularly meet, convinced that the number-two man of Nazism buried artwork there. But his collection was exfiltrated to Berchtesgaden, Hitler’s infamous “Eagles Nest”. Although Hitler's residence was dynamited, the tunnels in which the works were stored in underground cavities are still intact and can be visited today...

This documentary film will be carried by the testimony of the despoiled families but also by lawyers specializing in plundering, psychologists and people in charge of the restitution of the works to the families. We will also meet unexpected witnesses such as Goering's daughter, or those who are still searching for the lost treasure in the forest around Carinhall.



POTENTIAL PERSONALITIES

ANNE WEBBER
Head of the Commission for Looted Art in Europe, London

STEFAN MARTENS
Goering specialist

LEON GOLDENSOHN
American psychiatrist who conducted the interviews with Goering in Nuremberg

LOTHAR JONCKE
German psychiatrist residing in Belgium

CHRISTOPHER MARINELLO
Lawyer in restitution of works, New York

ISABEL VON KLITZING
Research specialists from Berlin

JOHANN CHAPOUTOT
Historian specialising in contemporary history and Nazism, Paris

CHRISTIAN FUHRMEISTER
Art historian under National Socialism, Munich

LAURENCE BERTRAND DORLÉAC
Art historian at the Institut Politique de Paris, Paris (curator of the exhibition "Art en Guerre" 2015)

AURÉLIE FILIPETTI, AUDREY AZOULAY
Former French Ministers of Culture

LUCIAN SIMMONS
Vice President and Head of Restitutions at Sotheby's, New York

BERNHARD MAAZ
Director of the Bavarian Museums, Munich

EYAL DOLEV
Research specialists from Tel Aviv

ERIC MICHAUD
Historian of politics and ideologies, Paris

VISUAL TREATMENT

A door opens. A ray of light is formed and we discover, lying on a table, a document turned yellow over time, the whole scene is shot in a subdued atmosphere. A white glove hand delicately turns the pages, a text with different writings appears in front of our eyes. We discover the name of a city, Paris, the name of a painter, Michelangelo, a date, November 22, 1943. Words used as clues that fill pages and pages of this unique document: the Goering catalogue. All around, carelessly placed, pictures of paintings and of Goering.

With this litany of names, we will search for what was the greatest robbery of the century, the one organized by one of the strongest men of the Nazi regime. The catalogue will be the "matrix" of our narrative, the one to which we will constantly return to when we start another chapter of our storytelling. The Catalogue is a twisted treasure map, a guide to looting and pillaging and gift-giving among the Nazi brass, and a tracking mechanism for the Nazi occupation of Europe. Through we will lead an international investigation.

The atmosphere of the film will be confidential and mysterious, with close-up interviews, undergrounds lit by flashlights, buildings filmed in the moonlight, a forest that is discovered in the early morning in a cloud of mist... This will contrast with the more contemporary and personal scenes, such as those of families who are still looking for their belongings.
There will be many archives in the film, some untouched to underline the historical veracity, and some will be projected on the sites themselves that we will be filming (underground, library, floors, museum walls...). In places that have destroyed such as Carinhall, we will use graphic treatment to reconstruct the space and make the characters evolve in the photos.

The artwork and paintings will also be present, filmed where they have been preserved, usually attached to the walls of a museum.

Sound will also be important to create the atmosphere. We will give sound to the archives, with echos, the crackling of hardwood floors, the sound of rain on a windowpane... all of the above and more will be sound elements that will give the film its character, as will the music that will be an original composition.

THE NEW YORKER (February 12, 2016)

Page Turner

The Revelations of a Nazi Art Catalogue by Sarah Wildman

Adolf Hitler presents "The Falconer," by the Austrian painter Hans Makart, to Hermann Göring as a present.
PHOTOGRAPH BY ULLSTEIN BILD/GETTY

The folder is, at first glance, unremarkable: gray, archival, tied with a small, neat ecru ribbon. Jotted in pencil is a notation: "*Collection GOERING, inventaire des peintures*." Inside is a ledger, brittle with age but well preserved, its handwritten notations spanning two-hundred-odd pages and eleven years. The first is from April 1933: a listing for a Venus painted in oil on wood by Jacopo de' Barbari, purchased in Rome for twelve thousand lira, displayed in a private office of Carinhall, the hunting estate outside Berlin belonging to the Nazi second in command, Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring. One thousand three hundred and seventy-five paintings follow this Venus, all of them carefully recorded: date of receipt, title of painting, painter, description, collection of origin, and destination. Tintoretto, Renoir, Rubens, Monet, Corot, van Gogh, Botticelli, a large group of Cranach; it goes on. After 1940, the pace of acquisition becomes frantic, obsessive, and the names of the European masters are

often matched in provenance with names of some of the greatest art-collecting families and dealers of the early twentieth century: Goudstikker, Rothschild, Rosenberg, Wildenstein. It all stops abruptly in the spring of 1944.

Hermann Göring's personal art log is a twisted treasure map, a guide to looting and pillaging and gift-giving among the Nazi brass, and a tracking mechanism for the Nazi occupation of Europe. It has long been known that Göring was among the most zealous of Nazi art collectors: at the end of the war, he packed the booty stored at Carinhall into trains and fled south toward Berchtesgaden, in Bavaria; he blew up Carinhall behind him. The collection was discovered by Allied soldiers, and, in 1945, the *New York Times* pegged the worth of the works at two hundred million dollars (part of a slew of breathless American coverage, according to Nancy Yeide, the author of "Beyond the Dreams of Avarice: The Hermann Goering Collection"). The catalogue of Göring's art provides a perversely fascinating yardstick for the changing taste of a man known for personal eccentricities as well as horrifying brutality. The emphasis, at first, is on northern European Romanticism, along with the nude female form. But the collection shifts, becomes more expansive, and, occasionally, eschews the Nazi laws on so-called degenerate art to scoop up some of the modern greats. "I fully admit I had a passion for collection," Göring said on the witness stand at Nuremberg, with a "vulpine" smile, according to Janet Flanner, who reported from the trial for *The New Yorker*. "And if they were to be confiscated, I wanted my small part." He was convicted of crimes against humanity and sentenced to hang; he killed himself with a purloined cyanide capsule before the sentence could be carried out.

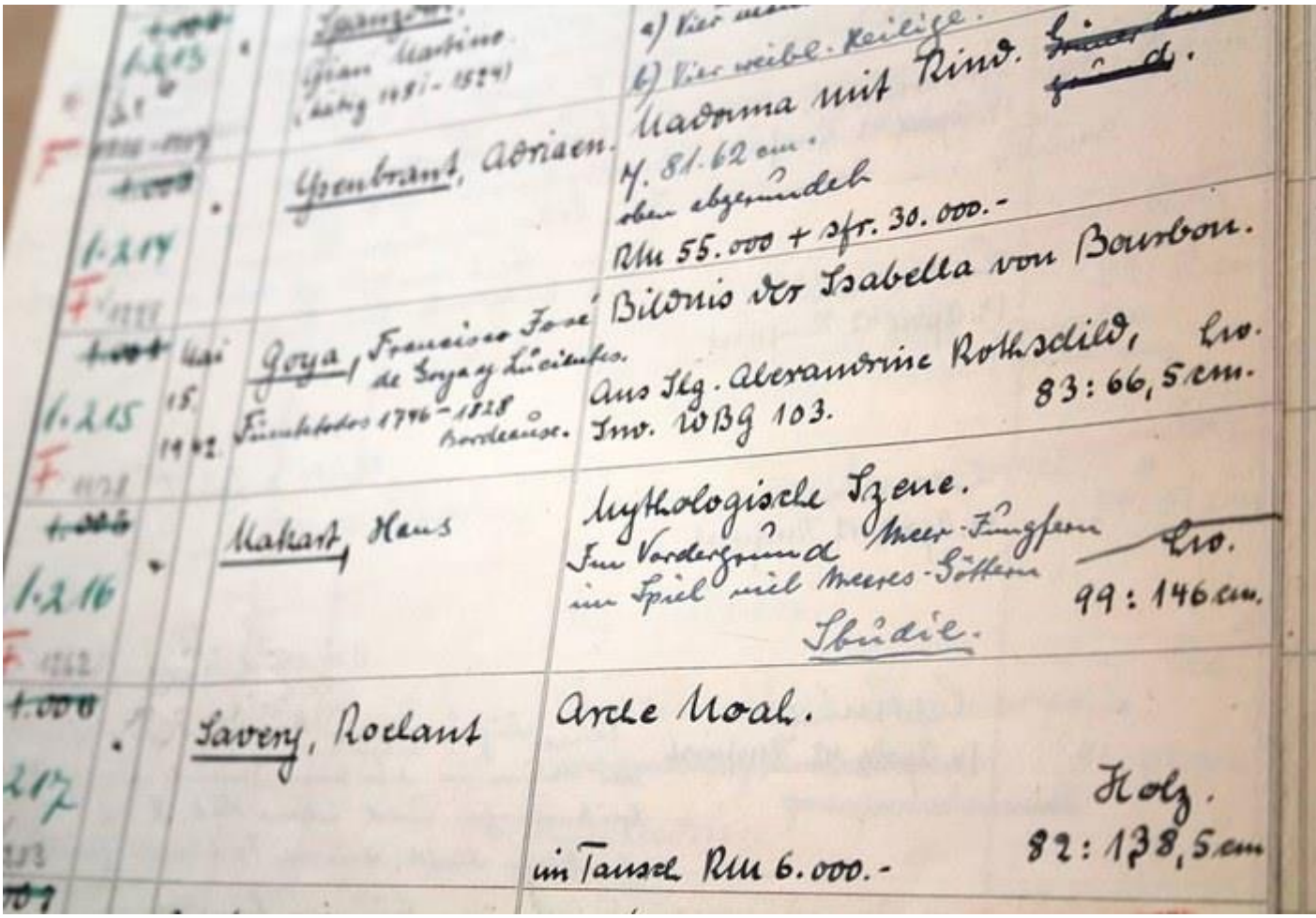
In October, "Le Catalogue Goering" was published, in French, by Flammarion, in conjunction with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to a flurry of almost universally enthusiastic French press. On the television station France 3, Isabelle Richefort, the deputy archives director, explained the fascination: "For many people, wartime looting is a rather abstract concept," she said. "Here we can see how it happened, day by day." Only *Le Monde* was unimpressed, complaining that stories of Göring's collection were not truly new (though this catalogue had not previously been examined), and that it was not printed like an art book (the images provided are roughly postage-stamp size, for the most part).

It is true that "Le Catalogue Goering" is not a coffee-table book. The publication of the catalogue reflects a new sort of scholarly interest in Nazi writing, which walks a difficult line: explaining Nazi ideology and sustaining historical interest in the period without turning its documents and relics into fetishes. The recent German reissue of "Mein Kampf," published with extensive commentary, falls into the same category, as does the translation, a few years ago, of the Alfred Rosenberg diaries, published by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and also bracketed by analysis. In the case of "Le Catalogue Goering," it can seem perilously titillating to peer over the edge of propriety into the eccentric private life of a monster. Göring's world was one of tremendous luxury, with access to everything from jewels to zoo animals to morphine (he was an addict). It was all acquired, of course, at a horrific price. And the catalogue provides a fuller picture of how spoliation itself was an integral, early part of the Nazi effort to degrade, dehumanize, and expel the Jews, setting the stage, ultimately, for mass murder.

The original catalogue is still held at the French diplomatic archives, a crisply anonymous high-security building in the suburb of La Courneuve, about five miles

outside Paris. I visited in October, accompanied by Frédéric Du Laurens, a career diplomat, now retired—he was the ambassador to Argentina in the nineteen-eighties—whose last job was director of the archives. Du Laurens pointed out to me that from 1940 to 1944 Göring acquired what amounts to roughly "three paintings *each week*." Frau Emmy Göring had a particular liking for French Impressionists, he explained, and many of the paintings were given to her as gifts. (Christmas always brought a fresh collection.) Every January 12th, Göring's birthday, the Nazi brass, including Hitler, showered him with art. With the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, Belgium, and France, there was almost entirely unfiltered access to some of the most important Western art in the world. Nancy Yeide, who carefully assessed the *goût* of Göring in her book, notes that his haul was hung carelessly in his enormous hunting lodge: layered on the walls, without regard for presentation, origin, or appreciation.

For nearly half a century after the war, the Göring catalogue lived in the home of Rose Valland, who, in 1932, had become a volunteer at the Jeu de Paume museum and, during the occupation, was made the museum's overseer. Valland was a self-created success among Paris's art-world élite: a lesbian who had grown up in a small town, the daughter of a blacksmith. She was also a purposefully quiet woman who used her position—and her knowledge of German—to record Nazi efforts to strip France of its artistic patrimony. The Jeu de Paume became a warehouse, and a transit station, for the systematic sluicing of French art into the Reich, particularly work that had been in private—and Jewish—hands. Göring visited the museum some twenty times to select items for himself, his wife, his homes. He was not alone in his greed: the best of the best was supposed to be kept for Hitler; the next tier of Nazis would then select for themselves. Valland kept a careful log, night after night. Some of the "degenerate" art, she wrote, was burned—including, it is believed, pieces by Dalí, Picasso, and Braques. In 1944, as the war neared its end, Valland alerted members of the resistance to the last train bound for Germany carrying French art. Her name now graces the lobby of the French diplomatic archives.



*Hermann Göring's personal art log is a twisted treasure map and a tracking mechanism for the Nazi occupation of Europe. *PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY SARAH WILDMAN **

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY SARAH WILDMAN

In the first years after the war, there was a flurry of activity to repatriate the art despoiled from France and scattered throughout Germany and Austria. Teams of "Monuments Men" (Valland among them, representing France) set out to search for the places where Nazis had hidden Europe's treasures. As the Cold War kicked in and the Korean War began, the verve for restitution waned. But Valland never let go. She spent her life searching for pieces that had not been restored to their rightful owners, travelling to Eastern Europe and searching museums for pieces. (Cate Blanchett plays a character loosely modelled upon Valland in the 2014 movie "The Monuments Men," based on the book of the same name by Robert Edsel.) She seems to have come across Göring's catalogue sometime in the immediate post-war period—and she held on to it, perhaps to use for a second book, about lost art. (Her first, "*Le Front de L'art*," from 1961, was the basis for the Burt Lancaster film "The Train.") The ledger was in one of a thousand boxes turned over to the French Ministry of Culture just before her death, in 1980. There it moldered. Then, in the early nineties, her collection was turned over to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which finally began to take an inventory. Soon, the world returned to where Rose Valland had always been. After the Washington Conference on Holocaust Era Assets, in 1998, global interest in the art stolen by the Nazis was renewed.

I asked Ambassador Du Laurens if the archive had an obligation, in some way, to report that they owned such a document. Was that why they chose to publish it? Did the archive owe something to the victims? The question seemed strange to him. The hope, he said, was to advance the return of art. Later, I asked the same question of Jean-Marc Dreyfus, a professor in Holocaust studies at the University of Manchester, who edited the book. I have known Dreyfus for years; I first followed him around Paris for a story in 2004, after he co-wrote a book, "Des Camps Dans Paris," on the elaborate Nazi-era looting of French Jews. I turned to him often for advice when I was writing my own book, about a search, through archives and cities, for the lover my grandfather left behind when he fled Vienna. "You should know after your research that archives do not exist per se," he replied, via e-mail. "They are 'invented' by the way people look for them and read them."

The Flammarion book is a peculiar item. Several introductory texts preface the translated catalogue. One senses that we, the readers, are being discouraged from enjoying the art in this context, and are meant instead to be overwhelmed by the extent of the looting, by the mechanisms for this form of Nazi domination, the sheer scale of greed. (The book is six hundred pages.) The first of the introductions, by the former French foreign minister Laurent Fabius, describes the Göring collection as "an odious hunting trophy, the fruit of the villainous plundering of jewels of European art." In the center of the book, along with black-and-white images of Carinhall at the height of Göring's power, there are three gorgeously rendered full-color photographs of four pages of the catalogue itself, with Talmudic explanations of the handwriting, the categories used, and the process by which the art was inventoried. In conversation, Dreyfus described the catalogue as "the shopkeeper of both terror and the most brilliant European tradition." "It is also," he noted, "a document reflecting and implementing Nazi ideology." The majority of art included was "suitable" art, and the catalogue offers a narrative of whose lives were considered worthy of such art, and whose lives were deemed expendable.

"For me, the most important thing is to keep [alive the] memory of what happened," Corinne Herschovitz told me, in Paris, in October. We were sitting in a bistro in the Fifth Arrondissement. Herschovitz is an art-restitution lawyer. In 1999, she won a major case restoring several paintings that had been hung on the walls of the Louvre to their rightful owners. Like others I spoke to—including Simon Goodman, the author of "The Orpheus Clock," about the search for his own family's vast looted holdings, and Lynn Nicholas, the author of "The Rape of Europa"—Herschovitz is frustrated that the book is not indexed, that it was not written or set up to be used specifically as an aid in restitution efforts. Still, she said, its very presence is ballast against the drift toward amnesia. The catalogue, with its quotidian brutality, will serve as one of what French historians call the *lieux de memoire*, places of memory, she told me. As we lose eyewitnesses, the theory goes, we will turn to letters and locations—and art catalogues—to bear witness to the horrors of the past.

It may be that the most important aspect of "Le Catalogue Goering" is not anything new that it offers, exactly; in fact, what it tells us is about how much is still to be known—the questions we have not yet learned to ask. After I returned from France to this country, I spoke with Lucian Simmons, the senior provenance expert at Sotheby's. For two decades, Simmons's work has focussed not only on insuring the legality of a sale but also on reminding buyers of the world of art and luxury these pieces once inhabited. "I'm delighted it is published," Simmons said. "You can never

have too many sources when you are trying to build a provenance. Is it going to move the dial hugely? Probably not. But it may provide an answer in due course to a question we hadn't had before. You are rekindling memories, and you are bringing back the memory of patronage, and experience, which the Nazis tried to wipe out."

THE TELEGRAPH

Hermann Goering's 'full catalogue' of looted Nazi art published for first time

Hand-written manuscript of Nazi art collection of Hermann Goering, Hitler's number two, published in book on Wednesday

Hermann Goering and Adolph Hitler examine a painting at what is probably the exhibit "Entartete Kunst" (Degenerate Art) Photo: CORBIS

By Henry Samuel, Paris

6:00AM BST 30 Sep 2015

The full handwritten catalogue of Nazi number two Hermann Goering's **huge collection of stolen art masterpieces** is to be published for the first time on Wednesday.

Kept in France's diplomatic archives, the document, which includes notes on which Jews the works were confiscated from and where they were sent, was until now only available to scholars.

The entire list will be published in The Goering Catalogue, published by Flammarion.

It is hoped the work will help in **the battle to return looted art to its rightful owners and their descendants**.

Hitler's right-hand man committed some of the most heinous crimes in history. But he went to great lengths to be surrounded with beauty, exploiting his power to loot some of the world's most fabulous works of art to adorn the walls of Carinhall, his country retreat near Berlin.

Hermann Goering (1893 - 1946), inspects German troops in Vienna, following the 'Anschluss' and the German occupation of Austria Photo: Getty Images

His collection has been the subject of several books, whose authors have sought to piece together the vast collection via wartime archives in the US and Germany, as well as Goering's letters to his dealers and auction catalogues.

However, Second World War historian Jean-Marc Dreyfus, who wrote an introduction to the book, said: “This is the first time that we have the complete catalogue. My colleagues in other countries tried to reconstitute the list of works in this extraordinary collection, but there was uncertainty over 300 to 400 works because we didn’t have this catalogue.”

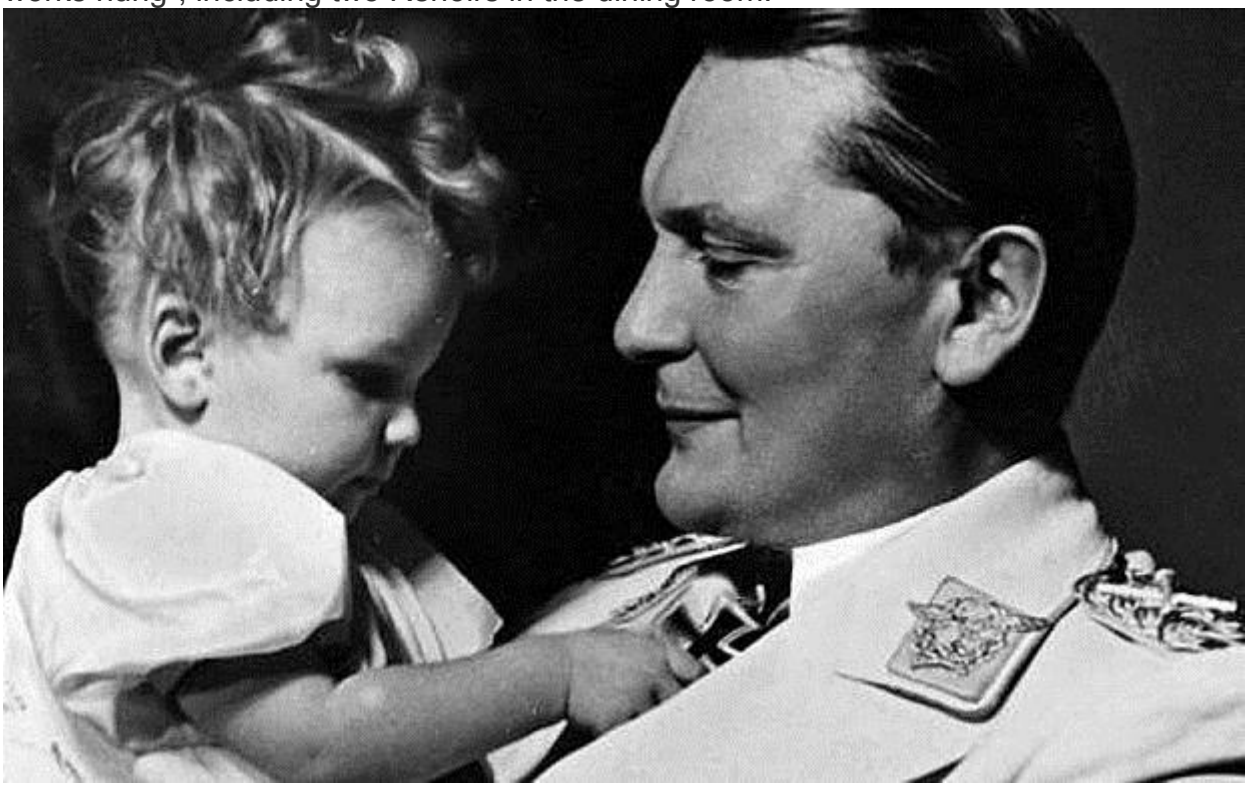
“It is a spiders web of art spoliation.”

The catalogue lists around 1,400 stolen art works, from Botticelli and Durer to Renoir and Monet, along with 250 sculptures and 168 tapestries.

Paintings include Van Gogh’s Bridge at Langlois in Arles and Velasquez’s Portrait of the Infanta Margaret.

Resembling a simple bookkeepers log, the tome sat on Goering’s desk in his office and is full of annotations written in five different hands.

“Each time an art work was sent to Carinhall, his chateau outside Berlin, it was noted down,” Mr Dreyfuss told RFI. “It even notes in which rooms of his residence the works hung”, including two Renoirs in the dining room.



Edda Goering as a baby with her father

Details included the name of the work, the artist, description and origin, with pieces coming from all over occupied Europe.

“Above all, it details the origin of the collection, with most of these works pillaged from Jewish families, he said.

Laurent Fabius, the French foreign minister and whose Jewish art dealer family had its collection confiscated in the war, said the register was being published so that “the general public has at its disposal this photograph of the biggest art collection of confiscated works along with that of Hitler,” whose looted collection contained 5,000 works.

With the Allies closing in at the end of the war, Goering loaded his art collection into private trains and moved it deep into Bavaria, and then to the Austrian border.

But the trains were intercepted by the Allies, sent to Munich and the contents inventoried. Goering was caught in Bavaria, and committed suicide the day before he was due to be hanged for crimes against humanity following the Nuremberg trials in 1946.

The **wartime hunt for stolen Nazi treasures** was the subject of 2014 film starring George Clooney called Monuments Men.

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