

# Wartime Art Theft: Hermann Göring's Art Collection (1945)

## Abstract

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The German government and military had looted millions of art works throughout Europe, particularly those belonging to Jewish families and public institutions. A significant share of the looted artworks ended up in the private collections of Hitler or Hermann Göring. This footage was taken after the German defeat in 1945 and shows American military personnel removing Göring's private collection of artworks from a storage facility in Berchtesgarden. The exact provenance and ownership of many artworks and precious objects found after the defeat of Nazi Germany remains unclear to this day.

Since 1943, members of the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives program under Allied command had worked to safeguard architectural sites as well as artistic and religious treasures during the advance on Germany. After Germany's defeat, they continued their work identifying and returning cultural artefacts to private owners and institutions. The so-called Monuments Men performed a great service, though many works of art were also lost during the war.

## Source

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/In the mountainside the 101st Airborne Division discovered the hiding place of an enormous treasure trove which Hermann Goering had looted and commandeered from art galleries and homes all over Europe. *Adam and Eve* by the 16th-century artist Frans Floris was among the priceless loot that the Americans evacuated.

/This picture, *Portrait of a Priest*, is by the Flemish master Frans Hals.

Source: Imperial War Museums

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