

Declaration by the signatory art museums of Switzerland in respect of cultural assets looted under the Nazi regime and during the Second World War (1998)¹

- I. The signatory art museums are aware of the issue and are committed to investigating and establishing, to the fullest extent possible, the ownership of cultural assets looted under the Nazi regime and during the Second World War.
- II. The signatory art museums are fundamentally opposed to the illegal appropriation of cultural assets and support efforts either to return such objects to their lawful owners or their heirs, or to find a solution appropriate to both sides.
- III. The signatory art museums are willing to examine thoroughly any claims of ownership made in respect of cultural assets from the period in question, and to contribute constructively to achieving a joint solution where such claims are shown to be legitimate.
- IV. The signatory art museums are committed to transparency in their inventories, which are accessible both to researchers and to individuals with a proven interest.
- V. The signatory art museums are positively disposed toward the establishment of a documentation and coordination centre as well as a database of cultural assets looted by the Nazis.
- VI. The signatory art museums point out that some of them contributed to preserving Jewish-owned cultural assets against the depredations of the Nazis. This included receiving collections for safekeeping during the war in order to protect their owners against expropriation; the cultural assets concerned were returned to their owners intact after the war was over.

Signatories: Aargauer Kunsthhaus; Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel; Kunstmuseum Bern; Bündner Kunstmuseum; Musée d'Art et d'Histoire Genève; Kunsthhaus Glarus; Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts Lausanne; Kunstmuseum Luzern; Kunstmuseum Solothurn; Kunstmuseum St. Gallen; Kunstmuseum Winterthur; Kunsthhaus Zürich

¹ Original version in German: http://www.bak.admin.ch/?lang=de&webcode=d_15144_de