

ART & ADVOCACY



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Goudstikker Exhibition at the Jewish Museum

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{ *River Landscape with Ferry (1649) by Salomon Van Ruysdael, one of the artworks recovered by Goudstikker's heir.* }

From March 14, 2009 through August 2, 2009, the Jewish Museum in New York will hold an exhibition entitled "Reclaimed: Paintings from the Collection of Jacques Goudstikker." The exhibition, of which Herrick is a proud sponsor, will display masterpieces by such artists as Jan Mostaert, Salomon van Ruysdael, Jacob van Ruisdael, Jan Steen, and Jan van Goyen, and examine the fascinating history of the artworks — from when the Nazis looted them in 1940 until their return to Goudstikker's heir.

A Brief History

Jacques Goudstikker was the foremost dealer of Old Master Paintings in the Netherlands during the period between World War I and World War II. He was known for his business acumen, his incredible collection of artworks, and his gracious lifestyle, which included entertaining at his 18th-century country villa, Oostermeer, and his castle, Nijenrode. Goudstikker met his wife, Désirée van Halban Kurz, in June 1937, when

he invited her to come from Vienna and sing at one of his charity events at Nijenrode with an orchestra Goudstikker had brought in for the occasion. The two quickly fell in love and married in December of that year. In January 1939, Dési gave birth to their only child, Eduard, known affectionately as "Edo."

Sadly, their happiness was short-lived. After the Nazis invaded the Netherlands in May of 1940, Jacques and Dési, who were Jewish, fled, making their escape by sea. Only two days into their journey, Jacques was killed by an accident on the ship, and his widow and son were forced to continue on without him. Within two months, Reichsmarschall Hermann Goering, the second in command of the Nazi forces, looted more than 1,200 artworks that Jacques had been forced to leave behind and took possession of his real estate. Some of the artworks were found by the Allies after the War and returned to the Netherlands, but because of repressive and unfair restitution policies, Dési was unable to recover them.

The works remained in the Dutch government's custody until 2006, when, after a nearly decade-long struggle, Marei von Saher, Edo's widow and Goudstikker's sole heir, recovered them with Herrick's assistance. At Ms. von Saher's request, Peter Sutton, a noted scholar of Dutch art of the Golden Age and director of the Bruce Museum in Greenwich, Conn., selected a group of the most important paintings for a traveling exhibition that would pay tribute to Goudstikker and celebrate the restitution. The exhibition debuted at the Bruce during the summer of 2008 with a scholarly catalogue published by Yale University Press. At the Jewish Museum, the exhibition will include a number of paintings not displayed at the Bruce.