

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2025 | FINAL ISSUE

EDITORIAL

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 6th and final Newsletter of the **RITHMS** Project. As RITHMS reached its conclusion, its outcomes continue to demonstrate the concrete value of collaboration between law enforcement agencies and developers in creating technological solutions tailored to the real operational needs of those combating the illicit trafficking of cultural goods.

At the same time, the project has shown how essential it is to foster dialogue among researchers, cultural heritage professionals, and institutional stakeholders—both national and European—capable of translating expert recommendations into effective regulatory frameworks.

Our sincere thanks go to all those who contributed to this process and helped ensure that RITHMS leaves a meaningful and lasting impact on the protection of cultural heritage.

RITHMS Team



NEWS

RITHMS Final Review and EUROPOL Engagement



The RITHMS project officially concluded with its Final Review on 12 November in Brussels, marking the end of three years of collaborative research and innovation. The Consortium presented the full set of project results to the two appointed expert reviewers, and Project Officer Alina Suhetzki. The session included a detailed demonstration of the latest version of the RITHMS digital platform, showcasing its advanced analytical capabilities and updated features. Reviewers praised the project for its innovative contributions, strong technical progress, and significant efforts in awareness raising.

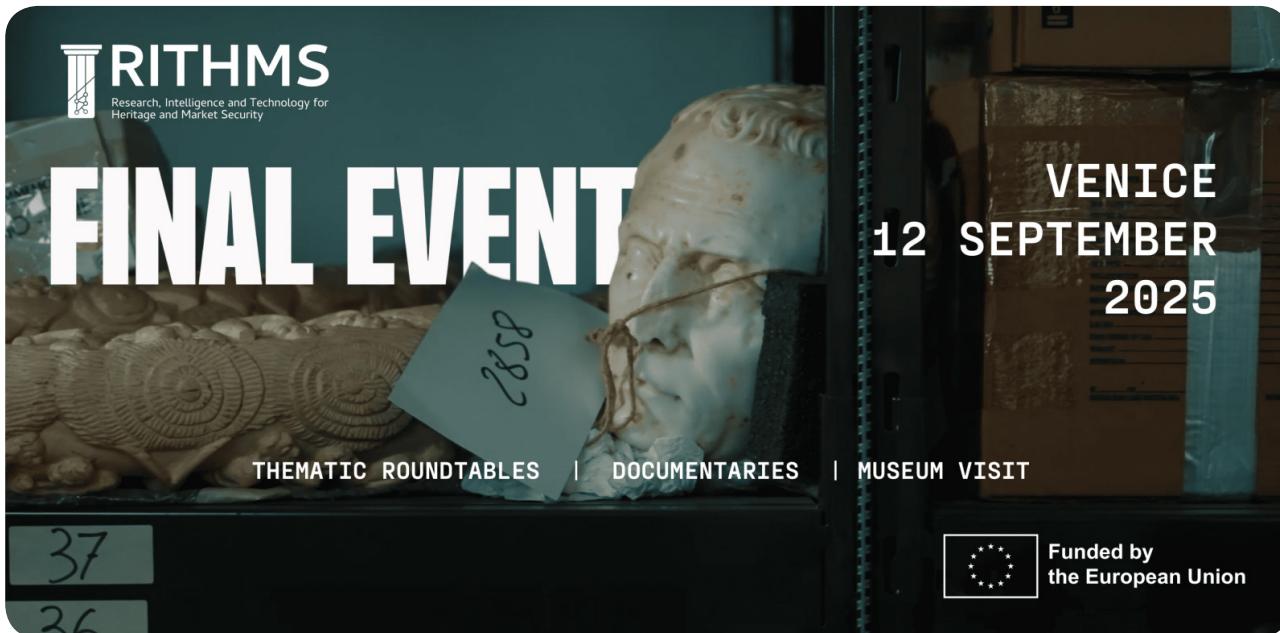
The successful review confirms the **value and long-term relevance of the work** carried out across the Consortium.

In fact, on the day preceding the Final Review, the **RITHMS digital platform was presented at Europol's headquarters in The Hague**. This dedicated meeting represented a fundamental step toward the potential future uptake of the system by Europol and EU police forces. Analysts and representatives of Europol and its Innovation Lab were able to explore the platform's capabilities in depth, with a focus on social network analysis, data integration, and investigative support for countering illicit trafficking of cultural goods.

This milestone marks an important move toward sustainability and operational deployment of RITHMS results beyond the project's formal conclusion.

RITHMS Final Event

On September 12, the Final Event of the **RITHMS project** had gathered Consortium members, institutional representatives, and external experts for a series of roundtable discussions aimed at reflecting on the project's results and its contribution to the protection of cultural heritage.



The event was structured around three thematic areas that emerged as key outcomes of the project's work:

1. The relevance of **national and European policy frameworks** in supporting coordinated action against the illicit trafficking of cultural goods;
2. The **ethical implications** of using AI-based technologies within forensic and investigative contexts;
3. The **operational needs of law enforcement agencies** and the importance of continuous training to ensure the effective adoption of technological innovation.

The discussions highlighted the interdisciplinary approach and collaborative dimension of RITHMS, reinforcing its role in bridging research, policy, and practice in the fight against cultural heritage crime.

Two New Animated Short Films Produced within RITHMS



In the closing weeks of the project, RITHMS affiliated partner **Art Crime Project APS** released two new animated short films written and directed by **Alessandro Garilli**.

Both works use the language of 2D and 3D animation to give voice to stolen masterpieces and raise awareness about the illicit trafficking of cultural heritage.

The short movies were officially presented during the **Final Event of the RITHMS project**. On the occasion of the **European Heritage Days**, on **September 27**, their trailers were also part of a special screening at the **National Etruscan Museum of Villa Giulia**, in Rome.

The Concert



Inspired by Vermeer's masterpiece The Concert—stolen from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston in 1990 and never recovered—the film imagines a world where the painting's characters have lost their music, leaving an entire community in silence.

[Watch Now HERE](#)

The Krater



This short film gives voice to the ancient Euphronios Krater, painted over 2,000 years ago. Through animation, the vase narrates its own dramatic story: stolen, trafficked across the Atlantic, hidden in private collections, and exhibited far from its homeland.

[Watch the trailer HERE](#)

RITHMS Documentary Latest screenings - 13 November

- Brussels (BE): screening before representatives of the main **Directorates-General of the European Commission**;
- Maastricht (NL): screening at the Faculty of Law of **Maastricht University** with the participation of representatives of the Dutch Police.

[Watch the trailer HERE](#)



Find out more about the movie

<https://rithms.eu/communication/events/threads-of-heritage-down-the-rabbit-hole-of-art-crime>

The documentary *Threads of Heritage* continues to gain remarkable attention and positive feedback across Europe. Its strong **awareness-raising impact** on the issue of illicit trafficking of cultural heritage has led to numerous requests for new screenings, often accompanied by **public discussions and expert panels** dedicated to this crucial topic.

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