

ART THEFT: AN EXAMINATION OF IT'S FORMS

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QMUL ART THEFT WORKSHOP JUNE 21 2016

AGENDA



- 1. ART THEFT: THE DEFINITION AND DATA PROBLEM**
- 2. AN APPROACH TO BE TAKEN**
- 3. ART THEFT: SOCIAL CONTEXTS AND CASES**
- 4. SOME CONCLUSIONS**

1. ART THEFT: THE DEFINITION AND DATA PROBLEM





ART OR VANDALISM?

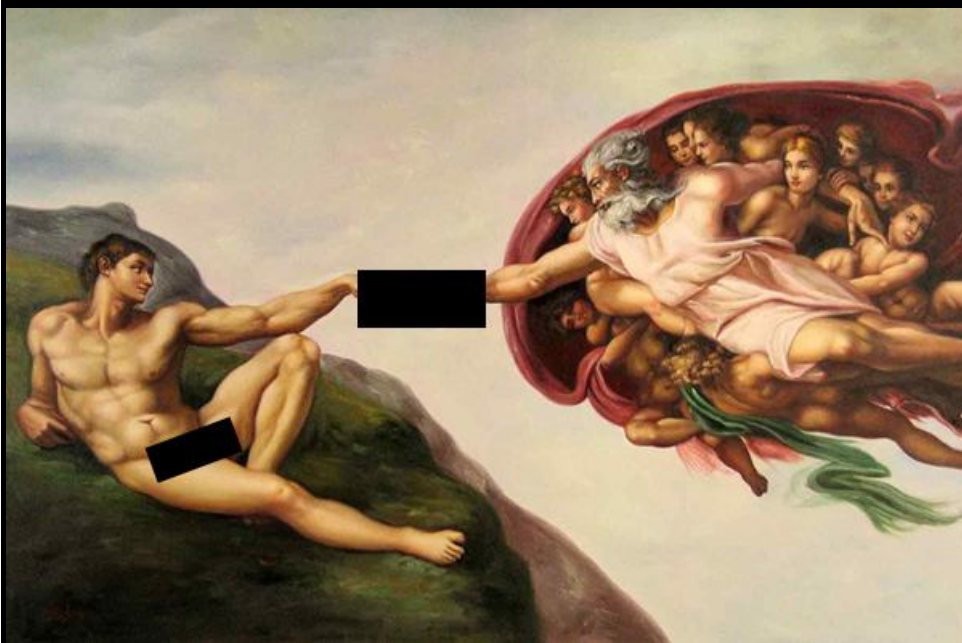
[Mr. Brainwash](#)

[Charlie Chaplin \(Red\), 2011](#)

[Current Bid: \\$10,000](#)

BANKSY SCHOOL YARD JUNE 2016





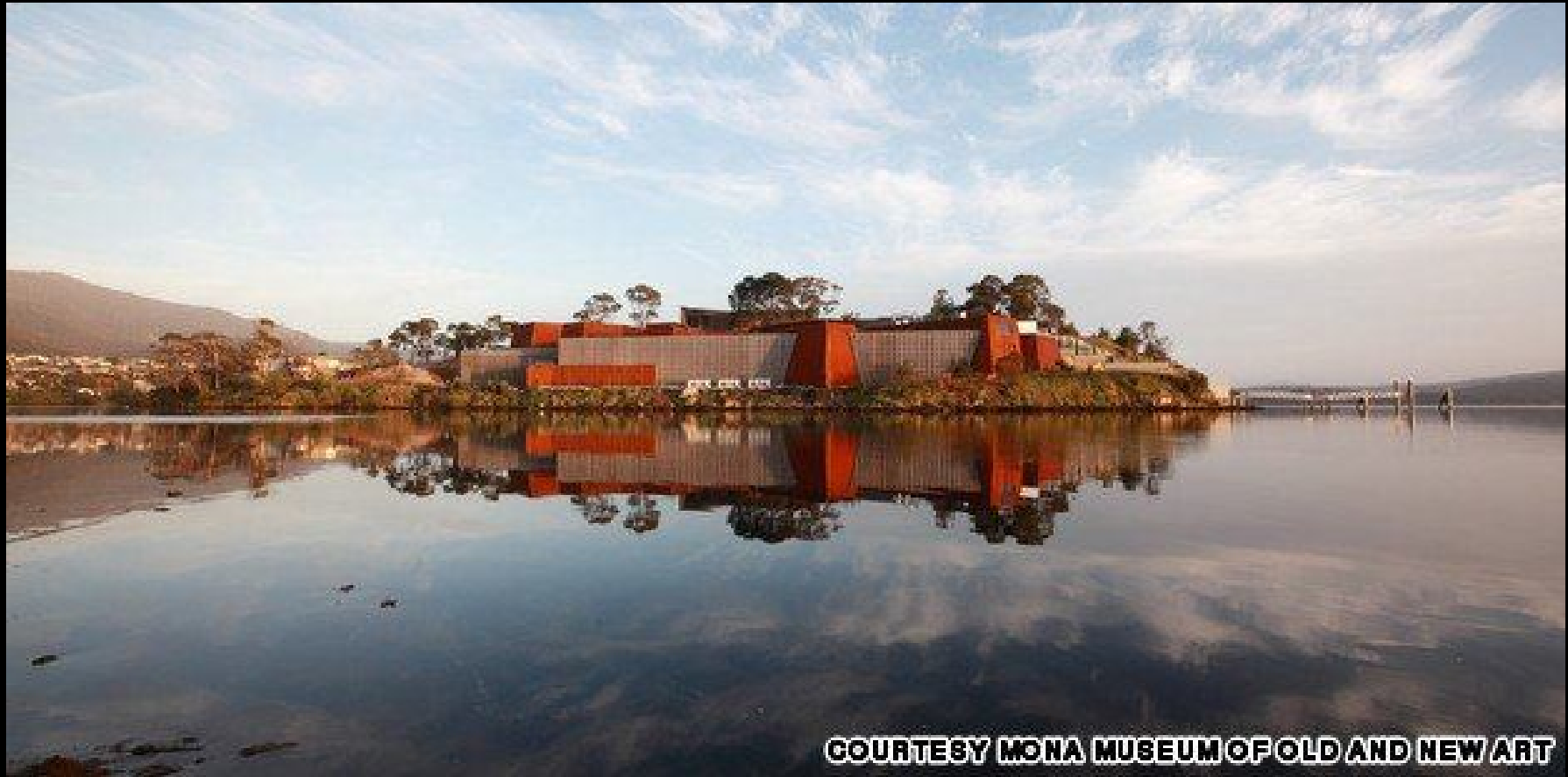
FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION



DUNG DEAL

Chris Ofili's controversial, dung-decorated *Virgin Mary*
sold for \$4.6 million Christies, London, June 2015





COURTESY MONA MUSEUM OF OLD AND NEW ART



BRANCUSI V UNITED STATES [1928]

How do you recognize what is and is not a work of art? Does an artwork's title help you interpret an artwork? Is a title necessary to give the artwork meaning?



A page from *America*,
March 13, 1927

"How do you recognize
what is and is not a work
of art? Does an artwork's
title help you interpret
an artwork? Is a title
necessary to give the
artwork meaning?"
MOMA JULY 2014



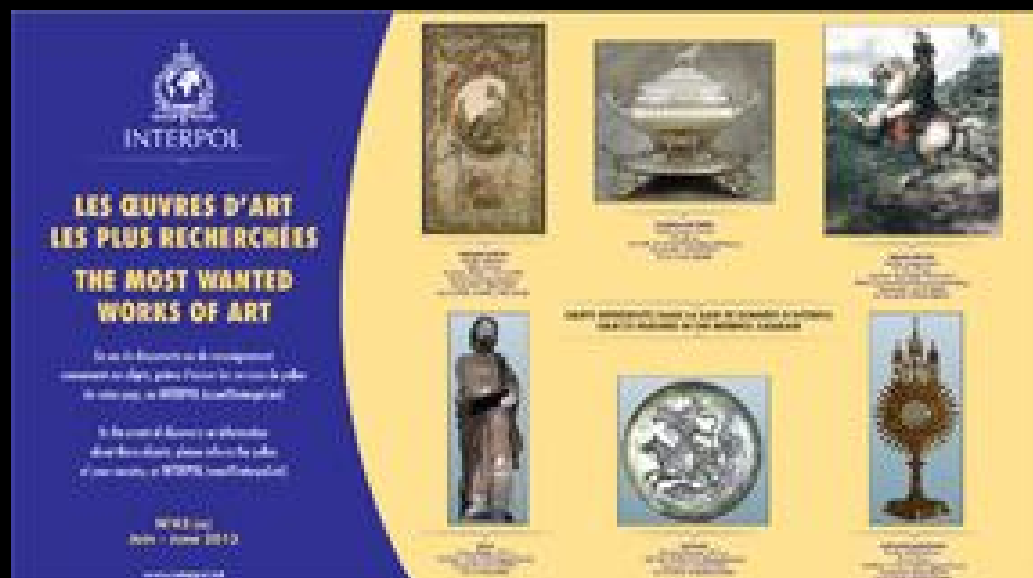
ART THEFT 'DARK FIGURE'

FEW STATISTICS

NOT A SPECIFIC CRIME AT LAW

LOW REPORTING

LOW RECOVERY





CONNECTING POLICE FOR A SAFER WORLD

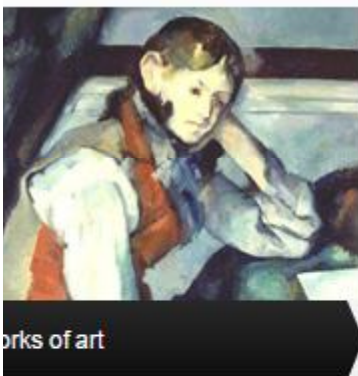
Search : Keyword English

- WANTED PERSONS
- MISSING PERSONS

WORKS OF ART

Back

Share Print



Works of art

The illicit traffic in cultural heritage is a transnational crime that affects the countries of origin, transit and final destination. The illicit trade in works of art is sustained by the demand from the arts market, the opening of borders, the improvement in transport systems and the political instability of certain countries.

Over the past decade we have seen an increasing trend of illicit trafficking in cultural objects from countries in the Middle East affected by armed conflict. The black market in works of art is becoming as lucrative as those for drugs, weapons and counterfeit goods.

In February 2015, the United Nations Security Council approved [Resolution 2199](#), calling for countries to take appropriate steps to prevent the trade in stolen Iraqi and Syrian cultural property. It also recognized the global role of INTERPOL in addressing this illicit trade.

At INTERPOL, we are working to raise awareness of the problem among the relevant organizations and the general public. We encourage not only police, but also art and antiques dealers and owners of works of art to play an active role in the exchange of information. This combined action will strengthen our efforts to curb the erosion of our cultural heritage.

International data

The efficient exchange of data is central to these efforts. INTERPOL's [database of stolen works of art](#) is a key tool, accessible to law enforcement agencies and other authorized users across the world.

In addition, certain types of data can be accessed openly by the general public:

Photos : 13



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EXISTING DATA BASES ALL HAVE LIMITATIONS

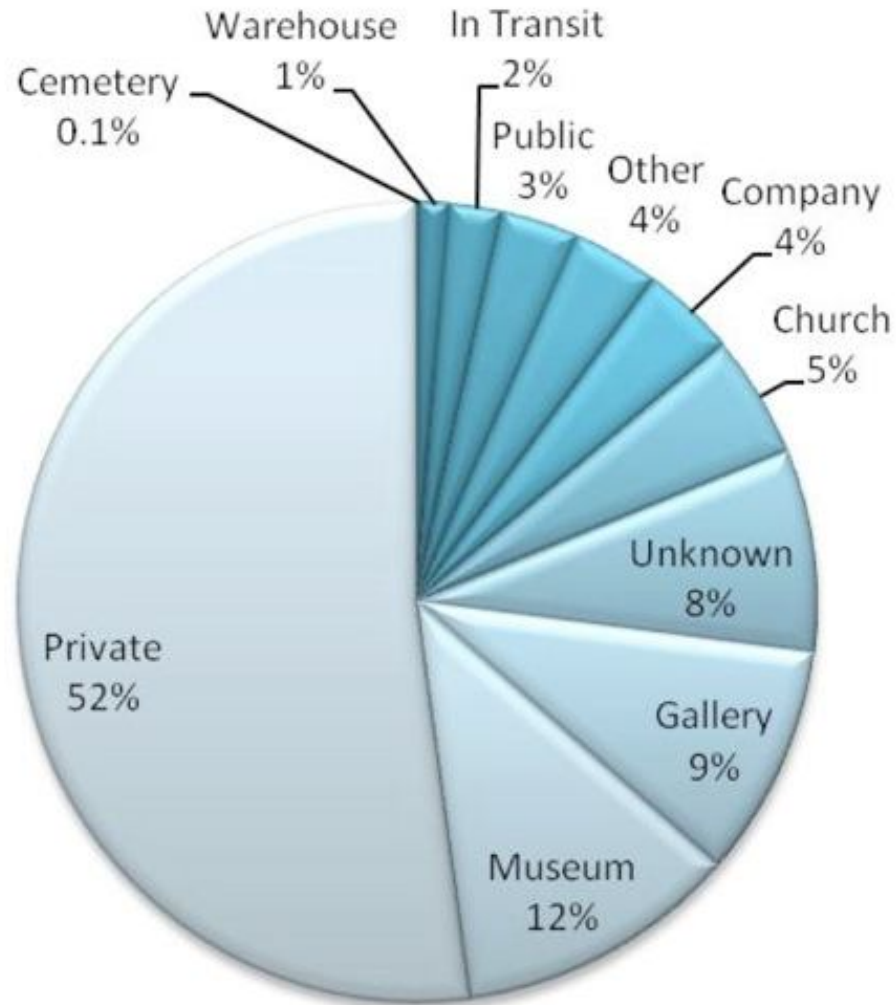
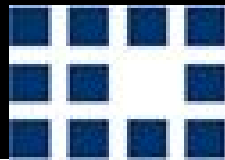


Van Mieris, *A Cavalier*

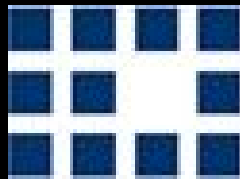
ART LOSS REGISTER [ALR]: 2009



Total records on ALR database April 2009: 210,533
Works that are currently unaccounted for: 200,839
Works that have been located: 9,694

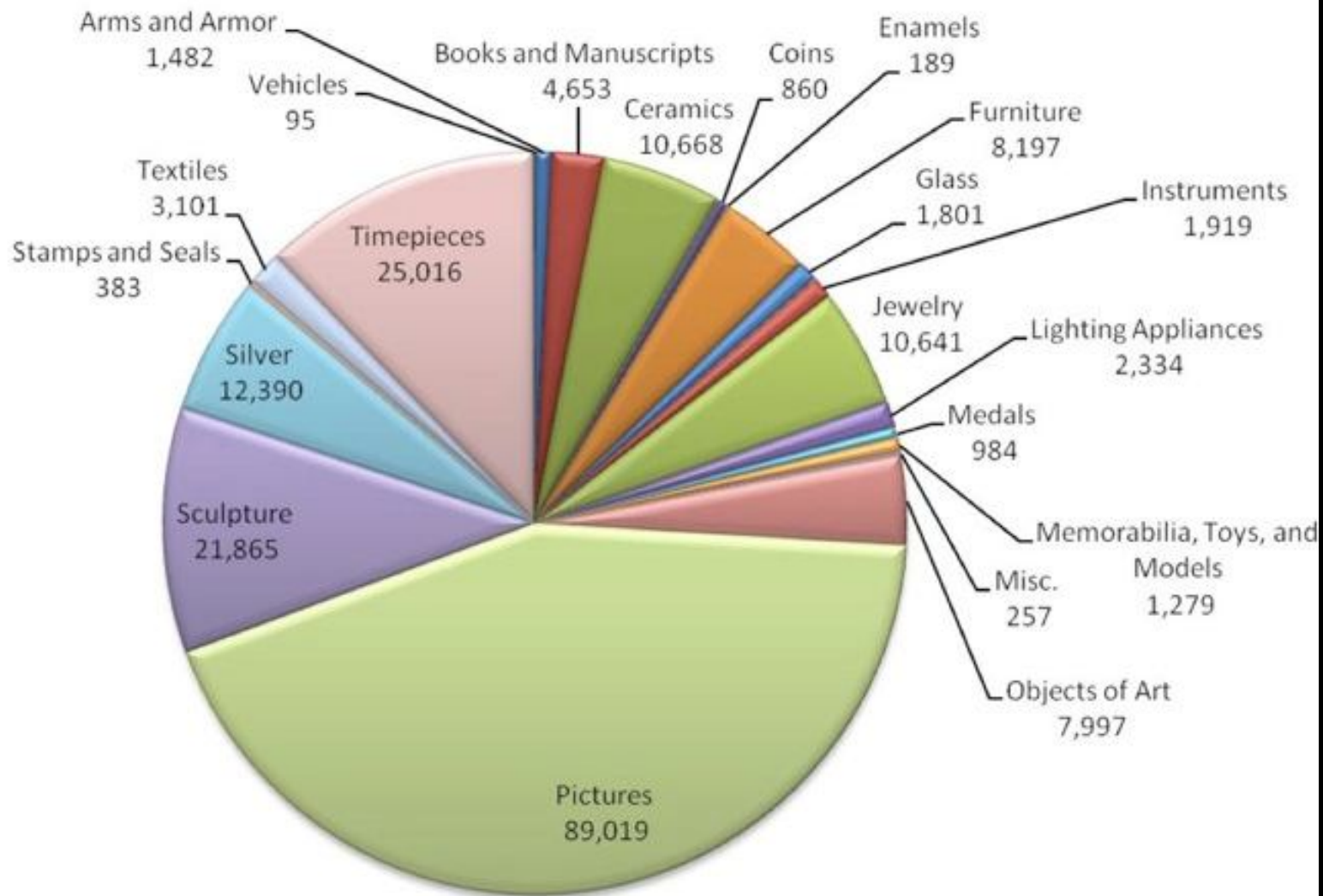


Thefts by Location as reported to the ALR



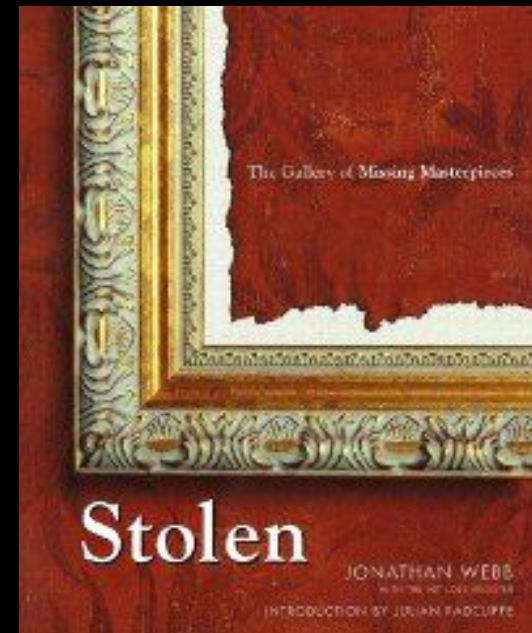
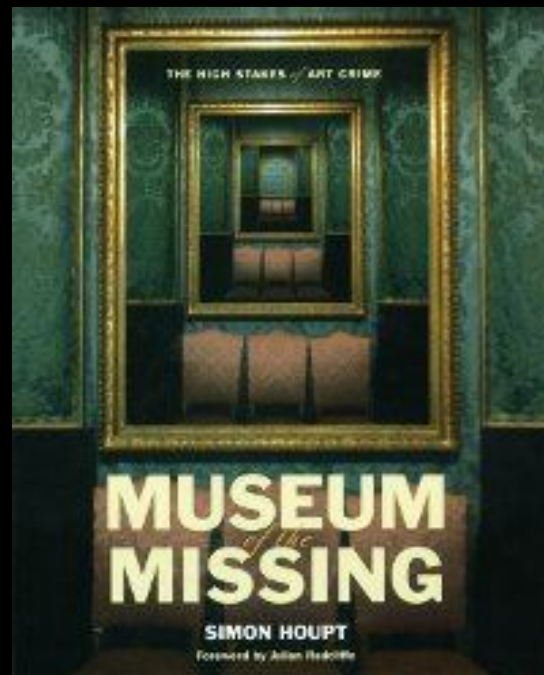
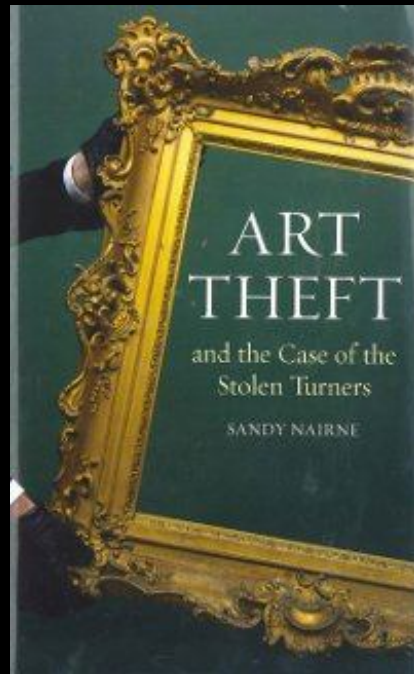
THE ART LOSS REGISTER™

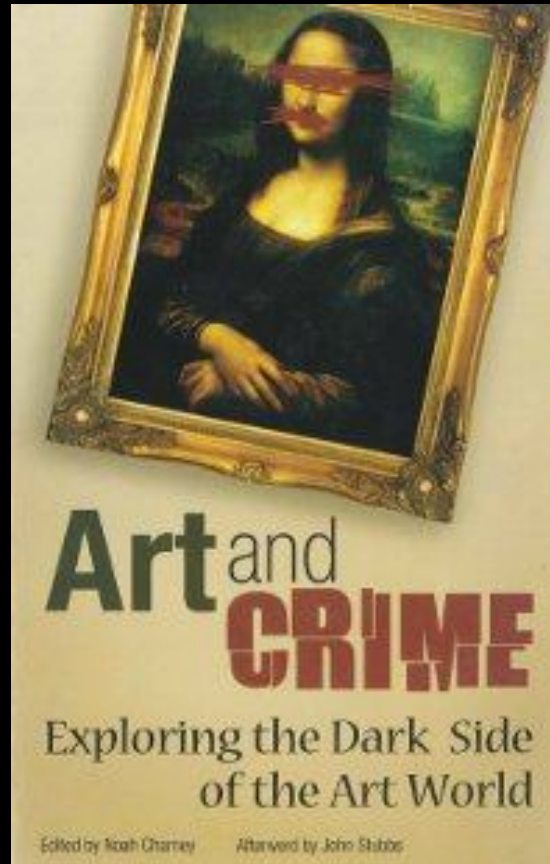
www.artloss.com



Items Registered on ALR Database by Category

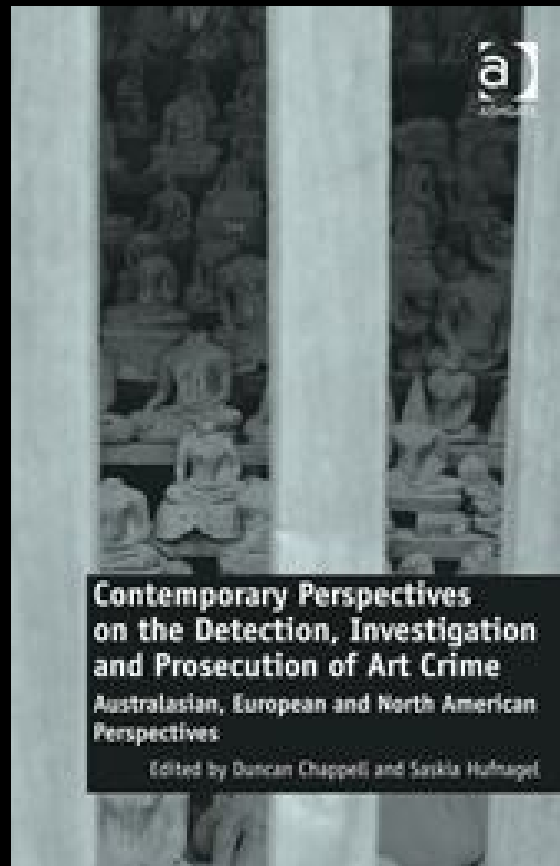
2. AN APPROACH TO BE TAKEN: RECENT MEDIA AND SCHOLARLY ACCOUNTS

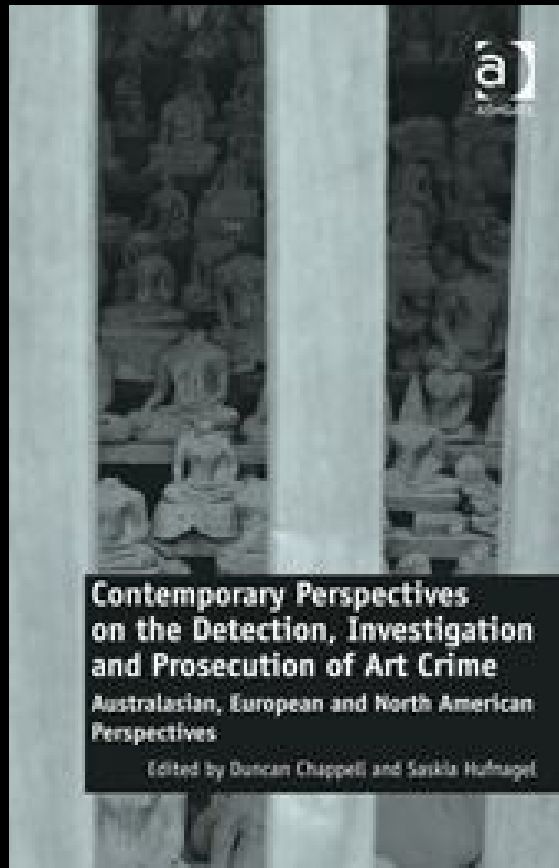




**TIJHUIS, E 'WHO IS STEALING ALL THOSE PAINTINGS?'.
IN CHARNEY, N (ED: 2009) *ART CRIME:
EXPLORING THE DARK SIDE OF THE ART WORLD.*
PRAEGER: SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA. 41-51**

3. ART THEFT: SOCIAL CONTEXTS AND CASES





**CHAPPELL, D AND POLK, K. 'THE PECULIAR PROBLEM OF ART THEFT'.
IN CHAPPELL, D AND HUFNAGEL, S (EDS: 2014) *CONTEMPORARY
PERSPECTIVES ON THE DETECTION, INVESTIGATION AND
PROSECUTION OF ART CRIME*, ASHGATE: FARNAM UK, 37-56.**

SOCIAL CONTEXTS

- * RESIDENTIAL AND ALLIED BURGLARY
- * THEFT FOR PLEASURE
- * TAKING ADVANTAGE OF TRUST
- * ORGANISED CRIME?
- * THEFT FOR POLITICAL REASONS
- * THEFT OF HISTORY
- * THE ART DISAPPEARS
- * INCOMPETENT OFFENDERS



RESIDENTIAL AND ALLIED BURGLARY

Burglary



THEFT FOR PLEASURE



TAKING ADVANTAGE OF TRUST



MARCH 2015: PICASSO'S ELECTRICIAN ORDERED BY FRENCH COURT TO RETURN 271 STOLEN PAINTINGS WORTH OVER \$ 75 MILLION, PLUS TWO YEAR SUSPENDED SENTENCE

ORGANISED CRIME?



THEFT FOR POLITICAL REASONS





THEFT OF HISTORY

January 2016. Stolen artefacts stashed by British art dealer are returned to Italy. Italian and Swiss police discovered 45 crates of archaeological relics worth €9m at storage unit at Geneva Freeport

THE ART DISAPPEARS



INCOMPETENT OFFENDERS



Dutch art theft: Two Romanians jailed



4. SOME CONCLUSIONS

