



50. 1786 Portrait of Thomas Jefferson Stolen from Polaroid Warehouse

Stolen: Mather Brown: *Thomas Jefferson*

Location: Boston, MA

Year: 1994

Worth: \$1-3 million

When you're preparing a \$3 million rare portrait of Thomas Jefferson for a photo replica, you probably shouldn't store it in a safe that, say, can be broken into with a hammer and chisel, which is what happened at the Polaroid warehouse. The floor where the painting was being stored also lacked an alarm system and night guard. Three million may be baby money, but now the painting is gone. Nice job everybody.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



49. A Bunch of Expensive Art Gets "Stolen" From Two Cali Collectors

Location: Pebble Beach, CA

Year: September 2009

Worth: \$80 million

18 Pieces Stolen: Joan Miro: *Le Grand Ordinateur*, *La Captive*, *La Femme aux Bijoux*, and *Le Dandy*; G.H. Rothe: *Colts*, *America's Pride*, *Experiment*, *Night*, and a signed lithograph; Rembrandt: *St. Jude Praying* and *Woman Making Water*; Auguste Rodin: *Untitled*; Pierre-Auguste Renoir: *Female*; Jackson Pollock: *Untitled*; Henri Matisse: #268, #281, #214 and #15; Vincent van Gogh: *Peasant Woman*

Dr. Ralph Kennaugh and Angelo Amadio reported the theft of millions of dollars of artwork on Sept. 25, 2009 from their home, but the actual heist isn't as interesting as the story that follows it: as the case unfolded it appeared that some of the most expensive artwork was uninsured. When the sheriff's department announced that the victims were suspects in the case, Kennaugh and Amadio sued the sheriff's department for defamation. If the theft was real, it's one of the biggest thefts from a private residence. It could also have been a lame attempt at insurance fraud.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



48. WWII American Army Lieutenant Ships Medieval Treasure Nazi Spoils Home

Stolen: Eight medieval artifacts, including a jeweled 9th-century illuminated manuscript gospel book, a jeweled printed evangeliary from 1513, and an ivory liturgical comb.

No one wants outsiders coming in and stealing their precious cultural artifacts, so when local clergymen got word that Nazi looters were honing in, they hid a dozen or so pieces in a nearby mineshaft. Enter Joe Meador, the U.S. Army lieutenant assigned with seeking out Nazi resistance fighter supplies once the Germans evacuated the area. His men discovered the mine shaft, and instead of guarding the treasures, Meador casually mailed them home. He never attempted to sell anything he took, and it wasn't until his brother tried to sell them 10 years after Joe Meador's death that the two were charged.

Worth: Unknown

Year: 1945



Location: Quedlinburg, Germany

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



47. Picasso's Electrician May Have Stolen That Art

Stolen: 271 undocumented lithographs, watercolors, sketches and Pablo Picasso (Allegedly)

Location: Paris, France
1900- 1932
million



Back in November 2009, the Internets went a-buzzing when Picasso's former electrician, Pierre Le Guennec, pulled 271 original pieces out of a suitcase. Picasso's son, Claude (the only heir with authority to sign off on authenticity), along with the cops, gave Le Guennec the side-eye, wondering if the work was not in fact gifted to him for work done, but instead work stolen while the electrician was on the job. Picasso was notoriously protective of his work, so the art was confiscated until the investigation is completed.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



46. A Truck Holding 28 Very Expensive Pieces of Art Drives Away

Stolen: 28 works of art by Fernando Botero, Eduardo Chillada, Gonzalo Gonzalez, Julio Gonzalez, Antonio Saura, Pablo Picasso, and Cveto Marsic

Location: Getafe, Spain

Year: November 2010

Worth: \$6.5 million

A truck filled with loaned artwork was scheduled to return the pieces to their home galleries in Madrid, Barcelona, and Cologne after being shown in Germany. Unfortunately, the truck was stolen out of its warehouse, and by the time Spanish authorities were able to respond to the alarm, the vehicle was gone. Footage from the security camera showed three hooded men grabbing keys out of the glove compartment. Three weeks later, one of the Chillida statues was found in a junkyard, apparently sold for 30 Euros. Burglar FAIL.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



45. Doctor Steals His Two Most Expensive Artworks From Himself

Stolen: Pablo Picasso, *Nude Before a Mirror*; Claude Monet, *Customs Officer's Cabin at Pourville*

Location: Los Angeles, CA

Year: July 1999

Worth: \$17.5 million

When two baller art pieces went missing from the home of Los Angeles eye doctor, Steven Cooperman, there were some raised eyebrows. There were no signs of a break-in, the burglar alarm had been shut off, and only the two most expensive pieces in the collection had been touched. At the time, the ophthalmologist's license to practice had been revoked, and he had been recently accused of insurance fraud. It took five years for the Feds to find the paintings hiding in a Cleveland storage locker and to convict Cooperman of faking the heist.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

44. Caretaker Steals Warhol From his Employer

Stolen: Andy Warhol, *Warhol Heinz 57 Box*

Location: New York, NY

Year: July 2008

Worth: \$4 million

James Bear built up an elaborate scheme to steal money and art from the hand that fed him, and in addition to the wire, bank, and credit card fraud he committed against the multimillionaire for whom he was a caretaker, Bear snatched this Warhol. He was caught.



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



43. The United Kingdom Steals Marble Reliefs Off of the Acropolis

Stolen: The Elgin Marbles

Location: Athens, Greece

Year: 1801-1812

Worth: \$42,500 (then)

Thomas Bruce, the then British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, was granted permission by Ottoman authorities to lift marble reliefs from Acropolis buildings and ship them back to the UK. The British Museum boasts legal ownership, but Greece isn't trying to hear it: Greek authorities claim the Empire didn't have the right to authorize the lift in the first place.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

42. E. Forbes Smiley Steals 97 Maps Over 8 Years



Stolen: 97 rare maps

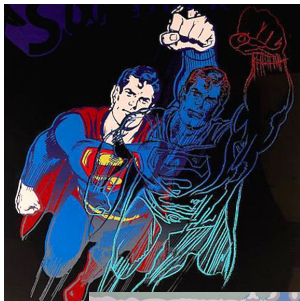
Location: Boston, Chicago, London, New Haven, New York

Year: 1998-06

Worth: \$3 million

E. Forbes Smiley was a well liked and charismatic dealer of rare maps who, over time, gained special privileges for viewing collections. When a librarian at Yale saw Smiley's X-Acto knife on the floor during one of Smiley's private sessions with the map collections, the University questioned him, and eventually contacted the authorities. Smiley was brought in for stealing 97 national treasures from around the world. Because he helped get the maps back, Smiley only spent 3.5 years in jail, but still had to pay \$2.3 million in restitution.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



41. NY Thieves Break Into an Apartment by Drilling Through the Hallway

Stolen: Roy Lichtenstein, *Thinking Nude* and *Moonscape*; Andy Warhol, *Camouflage*, *The Truck*, and *Superman*; Carl Fudge, *Live Cat*

Location: Greenwich Village, NYC

Year: November 2010

Worth: \$1 million



During this Greenwich Village raid, thieves stole hallway security cameras before drilling into a wall in a residential apartment to steal Lichtensteins, Warhols, and pricey jewels. The police called the thieves "creepy," but didn't elaborate on the scheme.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



40. Art Pirates Rob a Picasso Off of Wealthy Arab's Yacht

Stolen: Pablo Picasso, *Buste de Femme 1938*

Location: Antibes, France

Year: March 1999

Worth: \$6.8 million

This painting of Picasso's muse had never been seen publicly or lent to any museum, and it was originally part of the artist's personal collection. The Saudi owner claimed that no one knew he even owned the painting—apparently he would hide it when hosting parties. When the owner's yacht was being worked on, the artwork was to be packaged and kept in a bank vault. It was out from under the protection of the sophisticated alarm system, and the last person to see *Buste de Femme 1938* was the packer who left it wrapped on the floor to be picked up. It was never picked up.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

Stolen: Andy Warhol, 11 commissioned silkscreens, including portraits of Muhammad Ali, Chris Evert, Tom Seaver, Jack Nicklaus, OJ Simpson, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Willie Shoemaker, Pele, Dorothy Hamill, Rod Gilbert, and Richard L. Weisman himself

Location: Los Angeles, CA

Year: December 2010

Worth: \$10 million

The "theft" of this collection was super clean: no fingerprints, no signs of a break-in, nothing in the house other than this collection touched. Cops say there were no leads other than the cleaning lady who discovered the paintings missing. The collector, Richard L. Weisman, declined to cash in his \$25 million insurance policy on the art because he didn't want the insurance company questioning his family. Ummm...O.K.

39. Collector's Warhol Collection Is Stolen, He Doesn't File Insurance Claim



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

38. Caravaggio is Stolen From Church, Rumors Abound



Stolen: Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Nativity with St. Francis and St. Lawrence (The Adoration)*

Location: Palermo, Italy
Year: October 1969
Worth: \$20 million

What grants this heist a spot on our list is the endless list of rumors that speculate on this valuable painting's whereabouts. The local Sicilian Mafia are prime suspects, given that a former gangster admitted to stealing it after receiving orders from someone with higher rank. There is an additional story of amateurs robbing the painting and subsequently selling it to mobsters. A third story is that the painting ended up tucked away in a barn where rats and pigs went at it, destroying it for all time. Other rumors say the painting was destroyed by earthquake or fire, while others think it still sits in a private collection. It's worth a lot, so if you ever see it cash in.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

37. Thieves Rob Vanderbilt/Whitney Murals From the Edenhurst Gallery

Stolen: Maxfield Parrish, *Panel 3A and Panel 3B of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney Mansion Murals*

Location: West Hollywood, CA

Year: July 2002

Worth: \$4 million



The Edenhurst Gallery in Los Angeles exhibited works by Maxfield Parrish commissioned by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney-of Vanderbilt family money and Whitney Museum fame-sixty years after her death. Thieves disabled alarms, cut through the roof, and dropped in to grab the two panels from a mural that originally appeared in the Vogue beauty and New York socialite's Fifth Avenue apartment. Each mural measured five feet by six feet, an impressive heist indeed.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

36. Man Walks Into Museum, Puts Dali Statue in his Bag



Stolen: Salvador Dali, *Woman with Drawers*

Location: Bruges, Belgium

Year: August 2010

Worth: \$150,000

This past August, a man walked into the Belfort Museum and put Dalí's 1964 bronze statue in his bag. There were surveillance cameras and a guard, but the work was not protected by an alarm, and dude just walked right out.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

35. Painting in the Malraux Museum is Swiped in 1973, Returned in 2010



Stolen: Edgar Degas, *Blanchisseuses souffrant des dents (Laundry Woman with Toothache)*

Location: Normandy, France

Year: December 1973

Worth: \$450,000

The Louvre had lent the Malraux Museum this Edgar Degas painting in 1961, and twelve years later, it was swiped from its walls. Interestingly enough, this came 50 years after the Malraux Museum's founder, then 22 years old, was sentenced for stealing old Khmer temple sculptures from Cambodia. In October 2010, the painting popped up in in a Sotheby's catalog and when a Malraux employee recognized it and asked the painting's owner to return it.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



34. The U.S. Invades Iraq, Forgets to Protect Iraqi National Museum

Stolen: Diorite statue of Entemena, Sacred Vase of Warka, 5,000 year old golden vase from Ur, 5,000 cylinder seals

Location: Baghdad, Iraq

Year: April 2003

Worth: Unknown/Priceless



When the U.S. invaded Iraq, the chaos left the national museum unguarded. Looters went to work, carrying off between 2,000 and 170,000 items. These were some of the most historically significant objects of Western Civilization, and is considered an absolute mess up on all accounts.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



33. Art Thieves Usher in Y2K By Jacking a Cezanne



Stolen: Paul Cezanne, *Auvers-sur-Oise*

Location: Oxford, England

Year: December 1999

Worth: \$5.1 million

This past New Year's you might've popped bottles but we're guessing you didn't make off with a \$5 million painting. In 1999, the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford was hit hard. Using scaffolding around a newly built library wing, professionals climbed on the roof at the world's first university museum and broke through a skylight. Instead of turning off the security system, they opened smoke canisters to set off fire alarms. They took one painting, ignoring everything else, and bounced. No demands of ransom and no efforts to sell instigated rumors that the piece was stolen to order.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

32. The National Museum of Anthropology Gets Robbed on Christmas Eve



Stolen: Mixtec gold jewelry, Zapotec jade mask of the Bat God, Aztec obsidian monkey urn and jade and shell mosaic mask, various Mayan sculptures, including Pacal's burial mask

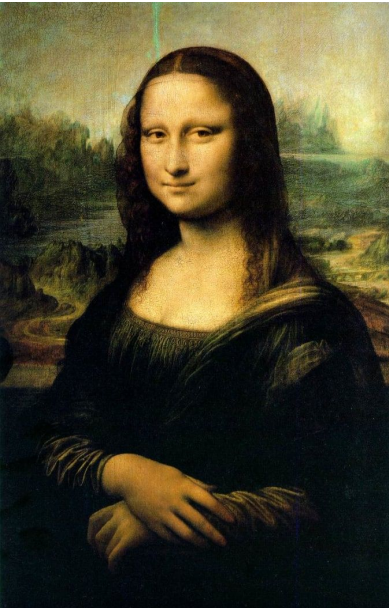
Location: Mexico City, Mexico

Year: December 1985

Worth: \$20 million

You know what's not a good Christmas present? Having to work. You know what's even worse? Walking into work at 8 o'clock in the morning and realizing that seven showcases are missing glass covers and almost 150 pieces of pre-Columbian jewelry are not where they are supposed to be.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



31. Louvre Custodian Steals the Mona Lisa

Stolen: Leonardo da Vinci, *Mona Lisa*

Location: Paris, France

Year: August 1911

Worth: \$100 million

Convinced by con artist Eduardo de Valfierno to snatch the Queen Bee of portraits, Vincenzo Perugia, a museum custodian, finished his shift and hid in a closet until the building closed. Perugia tucked the painting under his shirt and walked out, no prob. He was caught two years later when he tried to sell Mona Lisa to an Italian art dealer.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



Location: Cairo, Egypt
Year: August 2010
Worth: \$50 Million

30. Burglars Rob Egypt's Mahmoud Khalil Museum For This Van Gogh-Twice

Stolen: Vincent van Gogh, *Poppy Flowers (Vase with Flowers)*

Rob them once, shame on you. Rob them twice, well, then they asked for it. Especially when only seven of the 43 cameras worked and all the alarms were out. Security measures were so lax that the thieves were able to drag a nearby couch underneath the painting and cut it out of its frame with box cutters unnoticed? And this painting had already been stolen from the museum once? Come on. The second art heist in this museum's history was pulled off seamlessly, and now Egypt's general prosecutor is holding the museum accountable: the Culture Ministry's Head of Fine Art was detained for negligence and 14 other officials can't leave the country, including the 11 museum officials that are being tried in court and facing 3 years. Oops.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



29. Bus Driver Robs a de Goya From London's National Museum

Stolen: Francisco de Goya, *Duke of Wellington*

Location: London, England

Year: 1961

Worth: \$390,000

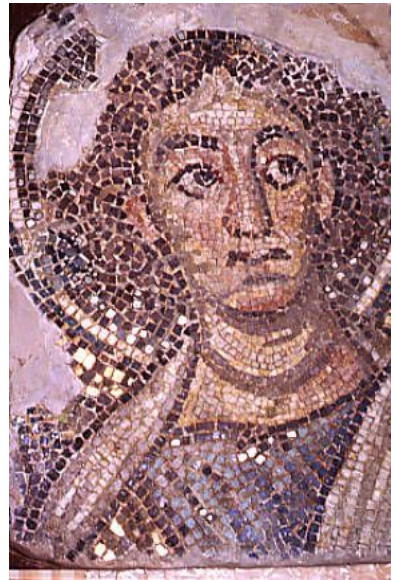
Kempton Bunton was mad that the government spent crazy tax dollars on a painting, the retired bus driver climbed into an open window of London's National Museum and then left with this portrait of the English royal. He made it out, but he then asked for a ransom. He claimed his intent was to use the money to buy TV licenses for the poor before turning himself in.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

28. Looters Take Advantage of Turkey's Invasion of Cyprus

When Turkey invaded Cyprus in the 1970s, looters went to work and stole Sixth Century frescoes from the Cypriot Orthodox Church that they then trafficked to the United States. Some of these frescoes had never been recovered. But just a month ago, Boy George was interviewed on Dutch TV and was shown in front of an 18th century icon of Christ that he bought from a London art dealer. Turns out, it was one of these works, and church officials saw it in the background and contacted his manager to get it back. No comment thus far on what church officials were doing watching a Boy George interview.

Stolen: Frescoes, sculptures, paintings, and relics
 Year: 1974
 Location: Nicosia, Cyprus
 Worth: \$20 million

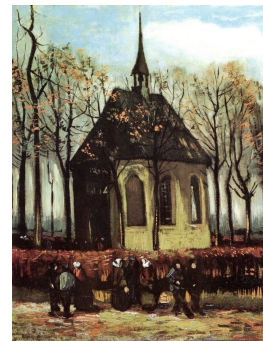


BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

27. "The Monkey" Climbs a Ladder Into the Van Gogh Museum

Stolen: Vincent van Gogh, *View of the Sea at Scheveningen* and *Congregation Leaving the Reformed Church at Nuenen*
 Location: Amsterdam, Holland
 Year: December 2002
 Worth: \$3 million

When international art thief "The Monkey" passed by the Van Gogh museum with his accomplice, they peeped a ladder left by construction guys the day before. Using it to reach the 15-foot high, first-story window, "The Monkey" smashed the glass, stole two paintings, and crawled out through the broken window with the help of a rope to slide to the ground. They left behind the cloth that protected their hands when they broke the window, the ladder, the rope, and a hat. The evidence got them caught, but the paintings haven't been found yet. Dutch law grants art thieves ownership of stolen private art after twenty years, and after thirty years if it's public art. Really. So whoever has these only has to wait it out another couple decades and they'll be all set.



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

26. "Goldfinger" Steals Picasso While Picasso's Granddaughter Sleeps

Stolen: Pablo Picasso, *Maya and Her Doll* and *Portrait of Jacqueline*

Location: Paris, France

Year: February 2007

Of the some 600 Picasso artworks that have been stolen throughout history, none were as audacious as this one. Thieves slipped into the French home of Picasso's granddaughter, Diana Widmaier-Picasso, while she and her mother slept. They grabbed what they came to get and left without any trace of their break-in. Turns out, Abdelatif Redjil, better known as "Goldfingers" and "Locksmith" in Parisian police circles, was behind the whole thing. If his name sounds familiar, it's because he was the guy that held Princess Diana's hand during her last breaths after the infamous car crash of 1997.



Worth: \$66 million

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



Location: Dumfriesshire, Scotland

Year: August 2003

Worth: \$65 million

25. Axe Carrying Men Steal a DaVinci Painting on a Tour of Drumlanrig Castle

Stolen: Leonardo da Vinci, *Madonna of the Yarwinder*

Lesson #1: Don't invite strangers into your home. Yeah, so you live in a huge castle in the middle of Scotland and you want to stunt extra hard. But lest we forget about all the haters out there who will be quick to pose as a tourist, overpower your tour guide, take your most valuable painting, and dip in a white Volkswagon Golf GTI before switching to a black BMW. Lesson #2: Be careful who you bring in your circle. Because now you have the lawyers from the private investigation firm you hired conspiring to extort almost \$7 million from you by threatening to destroy your most valuable painting if you don't pay them. Oye.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

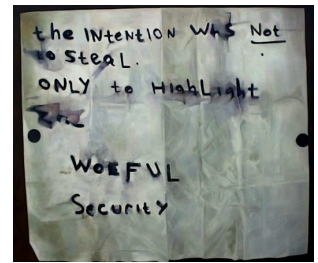
24. The Whitworth Gallery Gets Called Out on its Horrible Security

Location: Manchester, England

When this crew of criminals made this art grab, they avoided security cameras, alarms, and guards while stealing three masterpieces from the Whitworth Gallery. They then left behind a thank you note, to the museum for making it so easy. Feds found the pieces behind a subway station toilet a few days later. In between Becky's number for promises of a good time and hilarious obscenities, a note was scrawled by the thieves who promised they didn't intend to actually steal the pieces, they just wanted to bring focus to the terrible security.

Stolen: Vincent van Gogh, *The Fortification of Paris with Houses*; Pablo Picasso, *Poverty*; Paul Gauguin, *Tahitian Landscape*

Year: April 2003
Worth: \$6.8 million



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



23. The "Takeaway Rembrandt" is Stolen Four Times

Stolen: Rembrandt, *Jacob De Gheyn III*

Location: London, England

Year: August 1981

Worth: N/A

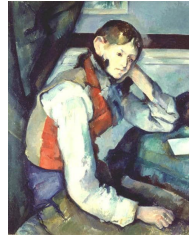
Nothing is stolen more than Yung Berg's chain but this Rembrandt portrait comes close. This painting was first stolen from the Dulwich Picture Gallery in London, but it was later recovered in a taxi. It has been stolen a total of four times, and no one has ever been apprehended-it has always just "shown up". After the taxi find, it later turned up in a luggage rack at a British army post train station in Germany, another time underneath a graveyard bench in Streatham, and the final time on the back of the bicycle. Get this thing its own security detail, people!

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

22. Armed Masked Burglars Rob the E.G. Bührle Collection

Location: Zurich, Switzerland
 Year: February 2008
 Worth: \$163 million

The thieves that ran through this private museum in Switzerland robbed it like they were hitting a 7-Eleven. They donned ski masks and waved pistols minutes before closing time and then swiped \$163 million worth of paintings from a single room. It is the largest European heist to date.



Stolen: Paul Cezanne, *Boy in the Red Waistcoat*; Vincent van Gogh, *Blossoming Chestnut Branches*; Claude Monet, *Poppies near Vétheuil*; Edgar Degas, *Count Lepic and his Daughters*



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



21. Kate Moss Gets Her Banksy Stolen While She Sleeps in Bed

Stolen: Banksy, silkscreen portrait of Kate Moss
 Location: London, England
 Year: May 2010
 Worth: \$100,000

It makes sense that thieves singled out Kate Moss' North London home the night after her Topshop launch party, she had some amazing art in there. Kate was asleep with her Kills guitarist boyfriend Jamie Hince and her mother when she heard a noise, woke up and scared the thieves away. But not before they made off with three pieces.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

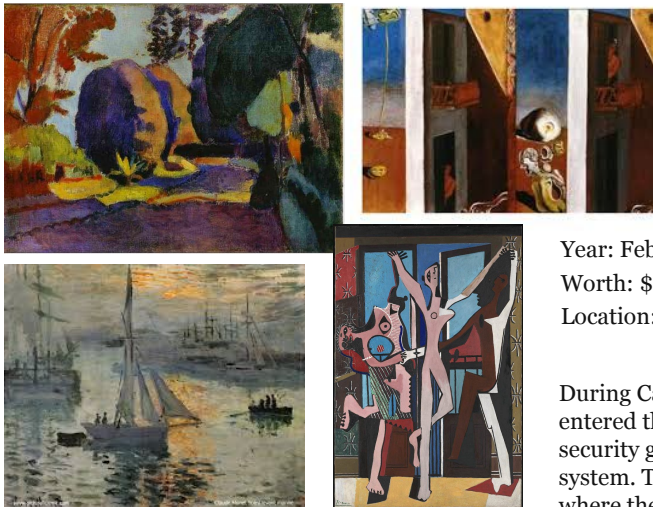
20. The Henry Moore Foundation Gets Robbed, Statue is Sold for Scrap Metal

A group of traveling thieves used a crane to steal this two-ton sculpture, loaded it into a Mercedes flatbed truck, and began selling the art as scrap metal. The piece hit several scrap yards throughout Europe before heading to China. At the sculpture's staggering \$5.3 Million value as an art piece, we think it's pretty safe to say that these thieves didn't get their money's worth in scrap metal.



Stolen: Henry Moore, *Reclining Figure*
Location: United Kingdom
Year: December 2005
Worth: \$5.3 million

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



19. Drug Lords Rob the Museu Chacara Do Ceu During Carnival

Year: February 2006
Worth: \$50 million
Location: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

During Carnival, men armed with machine guns entered the Museu Chacara Do Ceu and forced security guards to shut down the security system. They left with the works into the streets, where they disappeared into a crowd of thousands of celebrating Brazilians. Drug lords stationed in the surrounding favelas are said to be involved.

Stolen: Salvador Dali, *Two Balconies*; Henri Matisse, *Luxembourg Gardens*; Pablo Picasso, *Dance*; Claude Monet, *Marine*

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

18. Howard Carter and Crew Excavate King Tut's Tomb

Egyptian tombs were protected with curses of sickness and death, but that rarely stopped tomb raiders. Historians speculate King Tut's tomb was robbed at least twice between the mid 18th Dynasty and the late 20th Dynasty, when tomb raiders ran rampant. The first gang of thieves, working solely in the antechamber and annex, were mainly concerned with metals and sellable perishable items, like linens and cosmetics. The second worked a bit more intricately, hitting the entire tomb through a tunnel. The final, complete swipe went down in 1922 when Howard Carter and George Herbert took everything.



Stolen: Jewelry, adornments and objects made of gold, precious stones, alabaster, copper and faience
Location: Valley of Kings, Egypt
Year: 1922
Worth: Priceless

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



17. The Yugoslavian Mafia Hits a German Museum for \$40 Million

Stolen: J.M.W. Turner, *Light and Colour and Shade and Darkness*; Caspar David Friedrich, *Nebelschwaden*
Location: Frankfurt, Germany
Year: July 1994
Worth: \$40.8 million



The Yugoslavian Mafia handled this art heist in Germany, ordering thieves to hide out in the Schirn Kunsthalle Museum overnight and bounce with three paintings. The thieves were caught, but the masterminds weren't, even when the mobster, known only as Stevo, tried to sell the paintings to a cohort in Marbella.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

16. The First Recorded Art Heist

Stolen: Hans Memling, panels of
The Last Judgment
Location: Florence, Italy
Year: 1473
Worth: \$5.5 million

The first recorded art heist involves a pirate who attacked a Florence-bound ship and whisked a triptych off to Poland, where it's held today at the Gdansk Cathedral. What makes this theft notable is that the receivers of the stolen piece have been granted copyrights. They are the owners of stolen property, but make money any time *The Last Judgment* is loaned out or photographed.



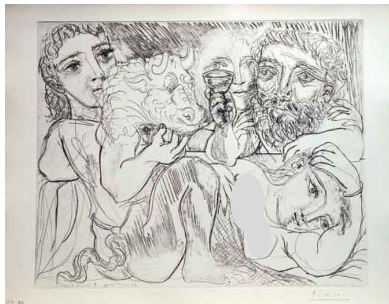
BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

15. Three Men Pay The Entrance Fee at the Pinacoteca Do Estado Museum and then Rob It

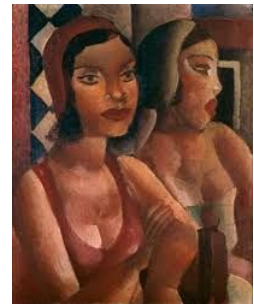
Stolen: Pablo Picasso, *The Painter and the Model* and *Minotaur, Drinker and Women*; Emiliano Di Cavalcanti, *Women at the Window*; Lasar Segall, *Couple*

Location: Sao Paulo, Brazil
Year: June 2008
Worth: \$612,000

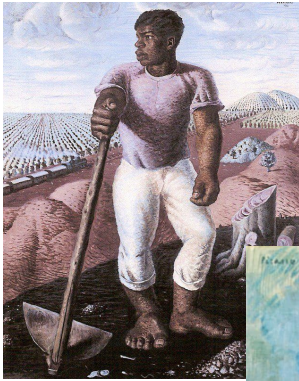
An art-for-order theft came to fruition with three men in the Pinacoteca Do Estado Museum stealing paintings at gunpoint. After paying the \$2 entrance fee, they headed upstairs and ordered three unarmed security guards to the floor. Within ten minutes, the job was done and the thieves left with the framed pieces in two bags.



Pablo Picasso - Minotaur, Drinker and Women - 18 June 1933 (with signature)
Etching - 298 x 365 mm - Copyright: Succession Picasso 2008



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



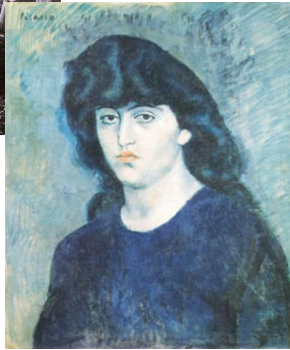
14. Three Men Rob the Sao Paulo Museum of Art for \$55 Million Worth of Art

Stolen: Pablo Picasso, *Portrait of Suzanne Block*
Candido Portinari, *O Lavrador de Cafe*

Location: Sao Paulo, Brazil

Year: December 2007

Worth: \$55 million



Six months before the Pinacoteca Museum theft, three men broke into the Sao Paulo Museum of Art in the early morning using only a crowbar and carjack to force open the museum's steel doors. The paintings and the men were gone in three minutes, but they were found less than a month later.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



13. The Nazis Spend 12 Years Looting Europe's Art Collections

Stolen: More than 100,000 pieces of silver, paintings, ceramics, books and religious treasures

Location: Europe

Year: 1933-1945

Worth: \$500+ million

Nazi looting organizations, including the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg für die Besetzten Gebiete and the Dienststelle Muehlmann were in charge of collecting masterpieces during World War II. For 12 years, they ravaged private collections, museums, architecture, churches, libraries and other institutions to get their hands on 20 percent of Europe's artwork.



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

12. IRA Members Break Into the Russborough House, Try to Ransom Art to Free Comrades



Location:
Dublin, Ireland
Year: 1974
Worth:
\$13 million



Stolen: Johannes Vermeer, *Lady Writing a Letter with a Maid*; Francisco de Goya, *Portrait of Dona Antonia Zarate*; Velasquez, *Maid in Kitchen with Christ and Disciples*; *Outside the Window*; Thomas Gainsborough, *Portrait of Madame Bacelli*

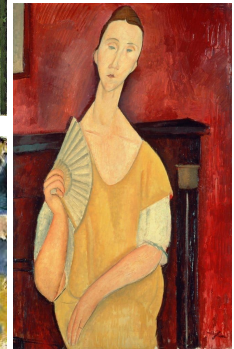
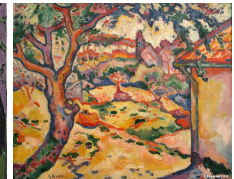
The politically radical Rose Dugdale broke into the house of former conservative Sir Alfred Beit of de Beers diamonds money, and his wife. With three other IRA members, she pistol-whipped the man of the house, and stole 19 works of art. They later sent a ransom note, asking for the release of two sisters on hunger strike in London's Brixton jail in exchange for the stolen pieces. Sentenced to 11 years in jail after the paintings were recovered, Dugdale refuses to speak about the robbery to this day.

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

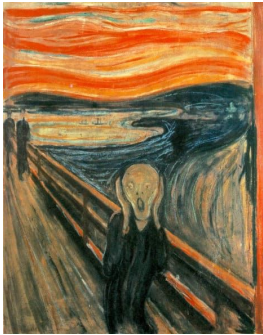
11. The Parisian Museum of Modern Art is Robbed While Guards Sleep

One man cut the gate padlock and broke a museum window to steal \$600 million worth of work. One man. And all the while, guards slept, alarms fell flaccid and cameras pointed to the roof.

Stolen: Henri Matisse, *La Pastorale*; Georges Braque, *L'olivier près de l'Estaque*; Amedeo Modigliani, *La femme a l'eventail*; Fernand Léger, *Nature-mort aux chandeliers*; Pablo Picasso, *Le pigeon aux-petits-pois*
Location: Paris, France
Year: May 2010
Worth: \$600 million



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



10. Edvard Munch's "The Scream" and "Madonna" are Stolen at Gunpoint

What do you get when two men have been hired to steal the most iconic piece of modern artwork in popular culture on a Sunday morning? A big storm. Masked thieves entered the Edvard Munch Museum in Oslo on an August morning with a .357 magnum, and tore two Edvard Munch pieces from the walls. The museum utilizes a silent alarm and security guards, but Norwegian police don't carry guns, so armed guards are rare. After making it out, the thieves hid the paintings in Norwegian drag racer Thomas Nataas' Batmobile-style bus (he was later acquitted of accessory charges). Rumor has it that the mastermind behind a slew of notorious Norwegian bank robberies was involved, but investigators are keeping quiet.

Stolen: Edvard Munch, *The Scream* and *Madonna*

Location: Oslo, Norway

Year: August 2004

Worth: \$87 million

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

9. The Russborough House is Robbed Again, in Six Minutes

John Boorman's 1998 thriller, *The General*, illustrates the exploits of Irish criminal mastermind Martin Cahill, who robbed Sir Alfred Beit, who appears on this list twice for having his art stolen. A crew of 13 pulled off the biggest art theft of the time in six minutes, stealing 18 paintings belonging to the millionaire collector. Cahill was never charged, although he was behind the whole heist and sent the pieces all across Europe. He denied dabbling in drugs-his brothers were convicted on heroin charges in the 80s-but one of the Vermeer paintings was found after it was smuggled to Antwerp and used as collateral on a loan from a diamond dealer to buy drugs and a Gabriel Metsu piece was given in exchange for a drug shipment in Istanbul.

Stolen: Johannes Vermeer, *Lady Writing a Letter with her Maid*; Francisco de Goya, *Portrait of Dona Antonia Zarate*; Peter Paul Rubens, *Portrait of a Dominican Monk*; Gabriel Metsu, *Man Writing a Letter*

Location: Dublin, Ireland
Year: May 1986
Worth: \$50 million



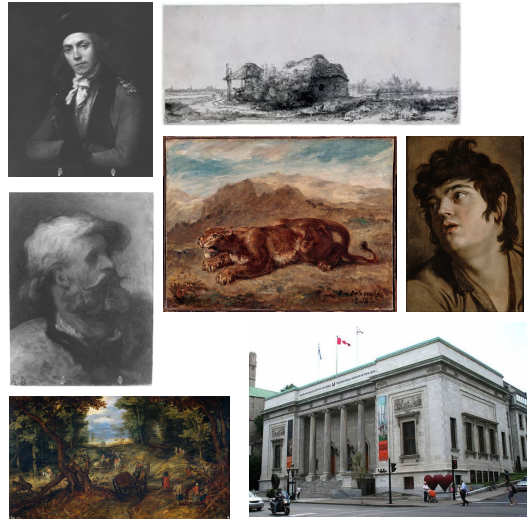
BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

8. Thieves Rob The Montreal Museum of Art

Stolen: Thomas Gainsborough, *Gen. Sir Thomas Fletcher*; Rembrandt, *Landscape with Cottages*; Peter Paul Rubens, *Head of a Young Man*; Honore Daumier, *Head*; Eugene Delacroix, *Lionne at Lion dans leur Antre*; Elder J. Bruegel, *Landscape with Buildings and Wagon*

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts was hit hard when three hooded men slipped in through a broken skylight with sawed-off shotguns. They gagged and bound three guards and made off with a shitload of jewelry and 18 paintings, including a rare Rembrandt landscape worth \$1 million. The biggest heist in Canadian history took 30 minutes to complete.

Location: Montreal, Canada
Year: September 1972
Worth: \$2 million



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

7. Japanese Yakuza Set up a Long-Term Art Heist

Stolen: Claude Monet, *Impression, Soleil Levant, Camille Monet and Cousin on the Beach at Trouville, Portrait of Jean Monet, Portrait of Poly, Fisherman of Belle-Isle, and Field of Tulips in Holland*; Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Bather Sitting on a Rock*; Berthe Morisot, *Young Woman at the Ball*; Sei-ichi Naruse, *Portrait of Monet*

When Japanese crime boss Shunichi Fujikuma was serving a five-year sentence for a charge that involved almost eight kilos of heroin, he met members of an art theft syndicate, who organized a robbery at the Marmottan Museum. Fujikuma later circulated a catalog of nine paintings, which ignited rumors that the Japanese mob Yakuza were dabbling in art theft. Six years later, it all went down when five masked men armed with pistols swarmed the building and made off with the paintings. The artworks were later found in Corsica.

Location: Paris, France
Year: November 1985
Worth: \$12 million



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



6. One Man Steals \$30 Million Worth of Clocks

Stolen: 200 clocks and watches, including the *Marie-Antoinette* made by Abraham-Louis Breguet

Location: Jerusalem, Israel

Year: April 1983

Worth: \$30 million

Abraham-Louis Breguet's *Marie-Antoinette* clock is worth a cool million, and it was only a small part of this epic heist at the La Mayer Institute for Islamic Art. Authorities were convinced that the work was carried out by a half dozen or so men, suggested by the tools, food, and bottles left behind. Turns out it was the work of one man, a notorious Israeli bank robber, who confessed the theft to his wife while he was on his deathbed. The timepieces were later found scattered throughout Europe and Asia.



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM



5. Thief Steals a Portrait in Hopes of Meeting his Brother's Bail

Stolen: Thomas Gainsborough, *Duchess of Devonshire*

Location: London, England

Year: 1876

Worth: \$150,000

Criminal Adam Worth heard his brother was in jail, so he stole this portrait from the Thomas Agnew & Sons Gallery with the intention of selling it for his sibling's bail. When Worth heard his brother was free, the bank robber and forgery connoisseur decided to keep the painting for himself. When it was finally recovered years later, financial heavyweight J.P. Morgan was quick to snatch it up at auction.



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

4. Fake Policemen Rob The Gardiner Museum on St. Patrick's Day

Year: March 1990
Worth: \$300 million
Location: Boston, Massachusetts

On St. Patrick's Day in Boston, two men in police uniforms (even donning fake mustaches), told security guards they were investigating a disturbance at the Isabella Gardner Museum. They handcuffed the guards and stole more than a dozen pieces by cutting them from their frames in 90 minutes. Convicted art thieves, dealers, South American drug cartels, the Irish Republican Army, Japanese underworld figures, and Boston-area mobsters were all suspected to be culprits of what's considered the biggest unsolved heist in US history. No one has been charged with the thefts and the pieces are still MIA.



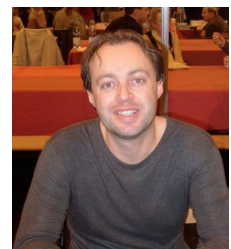
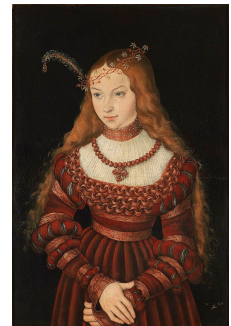
Stolen: Rembrandt, *Lady and Gentleman in Black* and *The Storm on the Sea of Galilee*; Johannes Vermeer, *The Concert*; Edouard Manet, *Chez Tortoni*

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

3. One Man Robs \$1.4 Billion Worth of Art Over Six Years

Stolen: All kinds of stuff including: Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Sybilie, Princess of Cleves*; Jean-Antoine Watteau, *Two Men*

Traveling French waiter and self-taught art historian Stephane Breitwieser wanted to create a personal collection of some of the most expensive and revered pieces in the world, but instead of waiting around to earn \$1 billion to afford his ambitions, he stole the work he wanted. Six years and 239 pieces later, he had amassed a massive collection. Experts speculate he committed one theft every 15 days and manipulating both his girlfriend and his mother as accomplices. Though Breitwieser accumulated one of the most valuable collections of stolen art, he gained further notoriety as the destroyer of it when he was caught in 2001 and shredded, burned, and even tossed more than half of the masterpieces into the Rhone-Rhine canal out of panic.



Location: Europe
Year: 1995-'01
Worth: \$1.4 billion

BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

2. An Underground Tunnel Leads to the National Museum

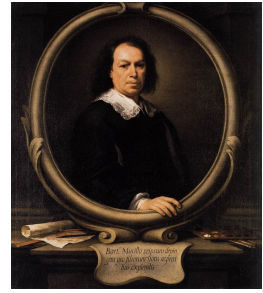
Stolen: Esteban Murillo, *Self Portrait*; Gustave Courbet, *The Virgin Mary and Jesus*; Adolphe Piot, *Landscape*

Location: Asunción, Paraguay

Year: July 2002

Worth: \$1 million

In 2002, thieves dug an 80-foot long, 10-foot deep tunnel into the National Fine Arts Museum in Paraguay. They used fake names to rent out retail space less than a quarter of a football field away from the national museum, and recruited a staff to help. Two months later, the crew snuck in during closing hours unnoticed and bounced with a dozen paintings.



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM

1. Swedish Criminals Pull a Thomas Crown Affair

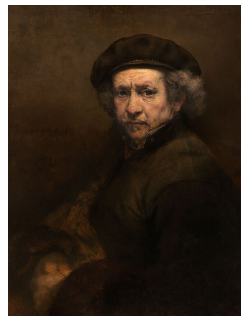
Stolen: Rembrandt, *Self Portrait*; Renoir, *Young Parisian* and *Conversation with a Gardner*

Location: Stockholm, Sweden

Year: December 2000

Worth: \$30 million

First, a Mazda, doused in barbecue lighter fluid, exploded on one side of town. Then, a Ford exploded on the other side of town. While police went to investigate, three men, one with a machine gun, calmly walked into the Swedish museum and went to work. Then they rolled out in a speedboat that was waiting for them at the adjoining wharf. They were gone in 30 minutes. Between the arranged diversions across town and the spikes laid out prior to the heist on the roads leading to the Swedish National Museum, they had plenty of time to grab, go and disappear.



BRIGHTARTLESSONS.COM