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BOOK REVIEW

Review of Noah Charney, *Art Crime: Terrorists, Tomb Raiders, Forgers and Thieves*. 364 pp. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

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The articles gathered in this book, ably edited by Noah Charney, provide an excellent view into some of the most interesting and troublesome areas of art crime. Though some articles stand up better than others, none stand out as missed opportunities to substantially shorten the volume. The first section covers topics ranging from art forgery to fake wine. The articles featured in this section explore the staggering range of forgery that occurs in the luxury goods markets. Australian legal and criminology scholars Saskia Hufnagel and Duncan Chappell present the Beltracchi Affair, a perfect for-the-big-screen story that aptly serves as an example of how deeply forgers have embedded their work into the art market. This story alone should be a warning to any would-be collector who places too much reliability on the integrity of much fine art being bought and sold on the market today; but, as is pointed out in the article, this story really is just one of many.

The second article, written by art critic and author Blake Gopnik, could have been greatly improved with the inclusion of the basis for it—a prior article written by him that apparently generated a fair amount of criticism. Its inclusion would have made Gopnik's response to critics of the underlying piece that much more powerful and would have eliminated a need to search online in order to fully comprehend this article.

Articles by scholars Simon A. Cole and Toby Bull; security director for the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, Vernon Rapley; and conservation scientist, William Wei, propose solutions for avoiding art fraud and tracking stolen or counterfeit goods. These range from a healthy dose of cynicism, to analog methods, such as fingerprinting, to highly technological ones, such as near field communication and radio frequency identification chip technology. The images and diagrams included in Wei's article are a welcome addition and serve to clarify material that

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otherwise may be difficult to visualize. These old and new technologies are fascinating, and it will be interesting to see how such areas of ensuring the identifiability of authentic works and products evolve as technology continues to advance.

The second part of *Art Crime* offers tales from a wide range of experts in the field. The colorful line-up of professionals includes emeritus research professor at Oxford University, Martin Kemp; former detective chief inspector in the London Metropolitan Police, Charles Hill; and Colonel Matthew Bogdanos, who in addition to serving in the US Marine Corp, is a homicide prosecutor for the New York County District Attorney's Office. All of these authors relate exciting, movie-worthy stories from their respective insider positions. While entertaining, the stories are discouraging for anyone cheering for the successful recovery of stolen artworks.

John Kerr, a lecturer in criminology at the University of Roehampton in London details the pros and cons of various proactive and reactive security measures available through private and public sector policing. Most interesting are the distinctions he draws between the resources and capabilities of public police forces and those of private security firms. Despite the often greater efficiency of the private protection services, Kerr cautions us against eschewing public security services altogether as a reduction of public police force protection, which could signal to criminals that there are fewer people minding the store. This is especially apropos advice since the reliance on privately contracted security in many arenas seems to be a worldwide phenomenon.

Colonel Bogdanos, an anthropologist, US army civilian contractor, Laurie W. Rush, and the Italian politician, Francesco Rutelli, each speak to the courage and bravery exhibited by those people around the world who put their lives in danger to protect important cultural and archeological treasures. Their articles are powerful lights shining on the often nameless heroes who work every day to preserve and maintain the world's cultural heritage. They are also further proof that there are many players in this field that do not originate from the academy, but who have earned their positions as experts from tireless and often risky work in the field.

The articles grouped in the third part of this book are more scholarly in nature. What is striking about this section in comparison to the first two is that it illustrates the difficult job the editor has of juxtaposing the practitioners with the academics. These articles show the mechanics of looting, from smuggling networks all the way to the moment that the work makes it into the hands of a collector. The careful research presented here provides a solid foundation for future policymaking and help for those working to navigate the slippery realms of archeology and antiquities looting.

All of the authors are accomplished researchers and historians, and the articles demonstrate this. Stefano Alessandrini, who has worked for decades with the Archaeological Group of Rome, meticulously traces the history of trafficking in ancient Greek vases. Neil Brodie, a senior research fellow in the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research at the University of Glasgow, follows the comparable paths of Aramaic incantation bowls. Each examines the intersection of scholarship

and looting in these discrete categories. Ironically, both show how the practices of looting or turning a blind eye to less ethical collecting practices may in fact lead to more people, including scholars and the public, having access to works that might otherwise remain hidden in graves or secret collections. Simon Mackenzie and Tess Davis, both scholars at the University of Glasgow, courageously explore the process of trafficking in antiquities in Cambodia and persuasively show that the structures that support the movement of cultural objects from the ground to the international market are far more organized than is often acknowledged.

Greek forensic archaeologist, Christos Tsirogiannis, delves into the seedy world of looted antiquities, often stolen from graves. He examines how these objects, despite excellent documentation of their illegal origin, make their way into the prestigious auction houses of the world. Tsirogiannis also collaborates with co-author David Gill, a professor of archaeological heritage and head of the Division of Humanities at the university campus of Suffolk, to look at the need for more transparency in the antiquities market, which is evident in part from how entrenched known illicit dealers are in the antiquities trade. Together, they examine the impact, or surprising lack thereof, of the Medici Polaroids, an astounding example of documentation clearly showing the illegal methods employed to acquire antiquities even to this day.

In the case of Africa, as George Abungu, a Cambridge-trained archeologist and former director-general of the National Museums of Kenya writes, the vastness of the continent and the challenges of politics, religion, and economics make tracking and controlling looting an overwhelmingly complicated task. And in the final chapter of this section, Lawrence Rothfield, former faculty director of the Cultural Policy Center at the University of Chicago, points out that the challenges of the world of antiquities and archeology share little with the world of fine art theft. The two provide much needed reminders in two crucial areas of concern that frequently get overlooked. Unfortunately, the book leaves out entirely another area that must not be overlooked in the conversation on global looting of antiquities and archeological materials: the whole of Central and South America.

Charney sets the stage for the fourth and final section of this collection with a lengthy survey spanning war crimes from AD 212 to the present. While informative, it treads on territory previously covered by the first three sections and potentially confuses the discussion about addressing issues of looting and restitution through the lens of current legal and policy conversation. Despite the fact that looting of cultural and fine art heritage has happened practically since the beginning of time, effective legal solutions must be based on current standards, international expectations, and contemporary notions of justice. Given the reality of statutes of limitation and given the real concerns that returning all art and antiquities to original owners might empty museums around the world, it makes more sense to limit conversations about potential legal solutions to more contemporary disputes rather than to muddy the waters by dipping back into ancient history.

Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, a research associate at the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard University, starts off the articles in the fourth part of this volume with an illuminating look at how the systematic obfuscation of information has impacted the search and recovery of artwork looted in the Ukraine during World War II. Next, Howard N. Spiegler, an attorney who serves as the co-chair of Herrick, Feinstein's International Art Law Group, takes us through a restitution case that is very important in that it has spurred legislation aimed at providing immunity from lawsuits to foreign states lending artwork to the United States even when the ownership of the artwork may be disputed. As of this writing, the legislation is currently awaiting a vote in the Senate. This is a case that originated in the first half of the last century, yet is still causing ripples in today's law-making.

The article on due diligence written by Christopher A. Marinells and Jerome Hasler, both of the Art Recovery Group, raises some interesting and indeed critical points about a purchaser's obligations to investigate the provenance of artwork. However, it devolves into an advertisement for the Art Recovery Group's services. Next to such fascinating stories, extensive research, and thoughtful proposals put forth in the other article in the fourth part of the volume, this contribution is definitely the weakest.

The last three articles in the book turn our attention to legal solutions. The proposed network of national prosecution services by the former Italian state prosecutor, Paolo Giorgio Ferri, is admirable, although it raises the question of exactly how such an enforcement body would come together and under precisely what laws it would operate. An equally ambitious, but much better laid out, plan is offered by Judge Arthur Tompkins in his article proposing a permanent international art crime tribunal. Nevertheless, both proposals leave much to be discovered and negotiated. Hopefully, these sorts of proposals will eventually find enough purchase in the international community to move beyond the postulation of legal experts.

In the final article of the book, Asif Efrat, assistant professor of government at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, Israel, compares the paths taken by two of the largest market nations, the United States and the United Kingdom, in their ultimate, if reluctant, adoption and implementation of the UNESCO Convention.[1] It concludes with a rather optimistic view of the future, articulating the hope that the long road traveled to eventual adoption and compliance with an international treaty in the case of the United States and the United Kingdom will serve as a model for future debates over cultural heritage.

What is missing from this volume is some hard editing of Charney's introductions for each of the book's four parts. While full of interesting and useful information (not to mention helpful overviews of the authors and material presented in each section), each part's introduction is rife with ghost footnotes to material to which readers would most certainly appreciate having access. Nevertheless, with so much written in the field of art crime, a book offering so many novel perspectives

[1]Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, 17 October 2003, 2368 UNTS 1.

as this one is a true accomplishment. The impressive array of authors masterfully compiled here by Charney, and the engaging views they represent, create a readable, yet scholarly, tool for anyone interested in the area of art crime. *Art Crime: Terrorists, Tomb Raiders, Forgers and Thieves* will almost certainly find a place in many classrooms, including my own.

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