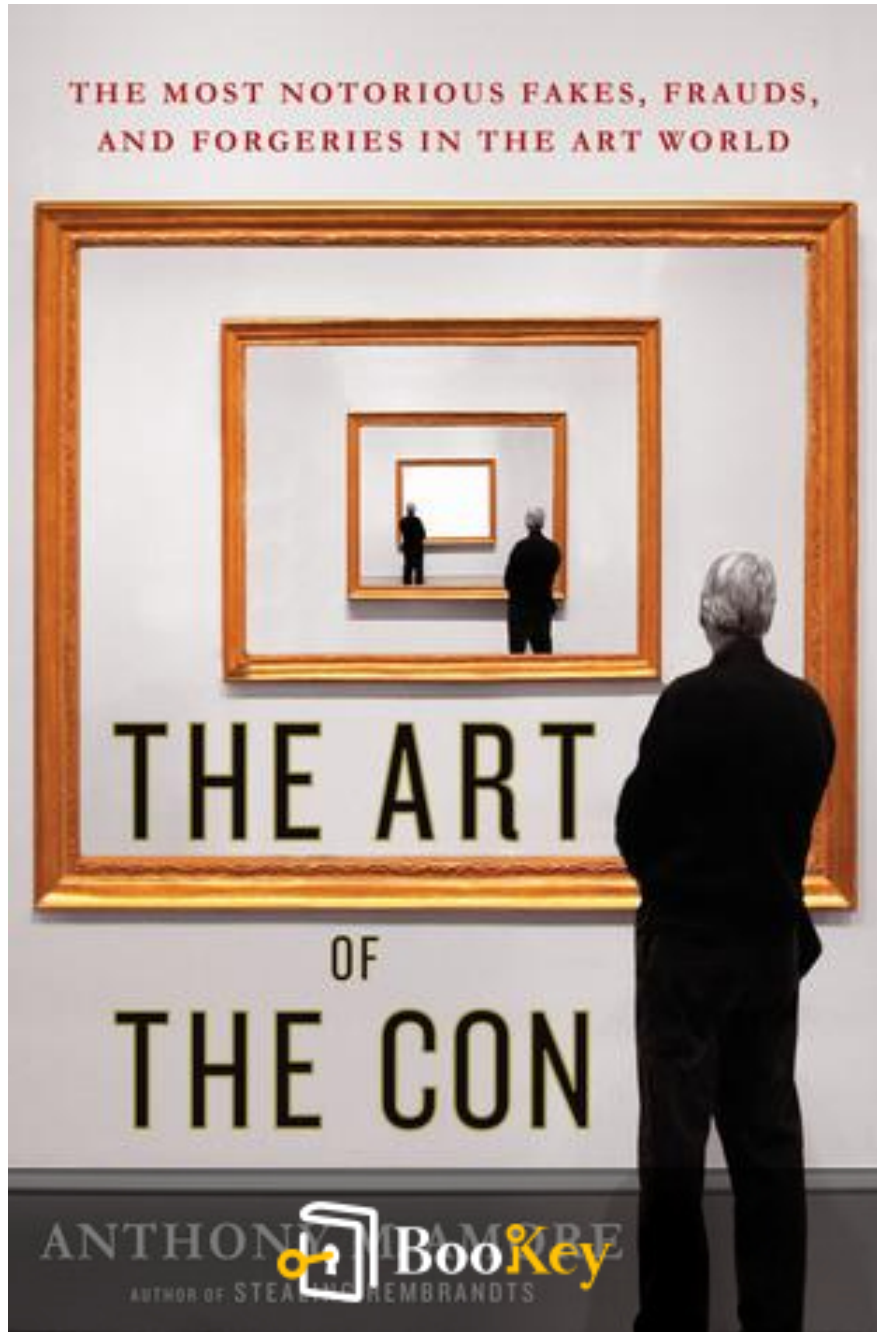


The Art Of The Con PDF (Limited Copy)

Anthony M. Amore



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The Art Of The Con Summary

"Inside History's Most Ingenious Art Heists and Deceptions."

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About the book

In "The Art Of The Con," Anthony M. Amore meticulously peels back the deceptive layers of one of society's most beguiling underworlds - art forgery and the fascinating individuals who perfect this craftiness. As tales of duplicitous schemes unfold, Amore guides readers through gripping accounts of audacious con artists who manipulate an industry built on trust, rarified expertise, and oftentimes, illusion. This captivating journey is interwoven with historical anecdotes, dissecting infamous scams that altered art history while illuminating a pervasive vulnerability that pervades this billion-dollar industry. Complexity and charisma collide in this enthralling exploration of cunning deceit and the relentless pursuit of truth amidst illusion. For those intrigued by tales of trickery and the curious psychology behind it, "The Art Of The Con" is an essential read, inviting readers to look beyond the varnish and into the very heart of the intrigue-filled art world. Grab your magnifying glasses; this book promises to challenge your perception of authenticity.

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About the author

Anthony M. Amore is a distinguished figure in the field of art security, possessing a deep and nuanced understanding of art crime and museum security management. With his extensive background as the Director of Security and Chief Investigator at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, Amore has played a pivotal role in efforts to recover priceless stolen art, attracting national attention and acclaim. His work extends to advising on the protection of cultural heritage, having also served in various roles for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Transportation Security Administration. Known for his insightful writing and investigative prowess, Amore combines his expertise with a passion for unraveling the intricate world of art forgery and theft, rendering "The Art of the Con" an enlightening exploration of deception within the art world.

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Chapter 1 Summary: 1: The Forger

Chapter One: The Forger

Wolfgang Beltracchi, a master forger, orchestrated an elaborate scheme to establish the authenticity of artwork through the creation of fraudulent provenance. Accompanied by his wife, Helene, they cleverly fabricated photographic evidence suggesting these artworks belonged to her grandfather, Werner Jägers, an alleged art collector in Nazi-era Germany. Helene, as the family storyteller and salesperson, convinced the art world of the existence of these hidden treasures, known as the "Jägers Collection," using counterfeit photographs to bolster the narrative.

The Beltracchis exploited the chaotic history of WWII-era art losses, where many paintings were stolen, lost, or looted, particularly by the Nazis, who aimed to rid the world of what they deemed "degenerate art." This historical backdrop provided a fertile ground for Wolfgang's forgeries, as he meticulously recreated works by notable artists such as Max Ernst and Heinrich Campendonk. These fabrications, supported by falsified documentation, deceived not only auction houses and collectors but also esteemed experts like art historian Werner Spies.

This extensive forgery network was eventually unraveled due to a scientific



analysis revealing anachronistic materials in the paintings, prompting a cascade of revelations about the Beltracchis' fraudulent activities. The art world reeled from the scandal, highlighted by the prestigious sales of these forgeries, including works once acquired by prominent figures like actor Steve Martin. Ultimately, the Beltracchis were apprehended, tried, and sentenced, marking a significant chapter in art crime history, emphasizing the pernicious impact of unchecked credulity in art authentication.

Chapter Two: The Broker

The art world witnessed another audacious forgery scandal, reminiscent of the Beltracchi affair, involving New York's esteemed Knoedler & Company gallery. Ann Freedman, president of Knoedler, was introduced to Glafira Rosales, an art dealer who presented a collection she dubbed the "David Herbert Collection." With ties to some of the most influential artists of the Abstract Expressionist movement, Herbert's supposed connections lent credibility to the artworks, which were, in reality, forgeries produced by Chinese immigrant artist Pei-Shen Qian.

Qian, skilled and struggling in New York, was enlisted by Rosales' partner, Carlos Bergantiños, to create works mimicking artists like Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. Their fraudulent enterprise drew on Qian's expertise, along with manipulated provenance stories involving fictional characters



like "Mr. X." Despite initial skepticism, Rosales and her network profited immensely, duping galleries and collectors, including those at Knoedler.

The scam ultimately unraveled when forensic analyses exposed the frauds. Legal battles ensued, implicating Rosales and her accomplices, who faced significant penalties while tarnishing Knoedler's longstanding reputation. Freedman, facing accusations of negligence but not fraud, maintained she was misled, highlighting a critical lesson on due diligence's necessity in the art world. The fallout emphasized the ongoing challenges in ensuring the authenticity of artworks and the fine line between faith and skepticism in provenance verification.

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Chapter 2 Summary: 2: The Broker

Summary of Chapter Two: The Broker

The art world was left stunned by the audacious forgery of the Jägers Collection by the Beltracchis, who fooled renowned experts with their fabricated provenance and skilled artistry. Despite this scandal, Knoedler & Company, a prestigious New York gallery, quickly fell victim to a similar scheme involving the fictitious David Herbert Collection. The collection was introduced by Jaime Andrade, a seasoned gallery associate, and art dealer Glafira Rosales, along with her partner Carlos Bergantiños. They partnered with Pei-Shen Qian, a talented forger, to produce an array of counterfeit works by iconic Abstract Expressionists like Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko.

Rosales weaved an intricate tale of provenance, involving an anonymous Mr. X and a fictitious Spanish collector, to legitimize the paintings. Despite red flags and previous missteps, Knoedler bought into the authenticity of these artworks, selling them to unsuspecting clients, including prominent figures like Domenico and Eleanore De Sole. Doubts arose when IFAR declared one Pollock forgery implausible, sparking more investigations. As lawsuits piled up, it emerged that the gallery continued trading the dubious artworks without rigorous authentication. Ultimately, evidence exposed the



far-reaching fraud, leading to mass financial and reputational losses, and the eventual closure of the legendary Knoedler Gallery.

Summary of Chapter Three: The Art Ponzi Scheme

While Ann Freedman was embroiled in the Rosales forgery scandal, Larry Salander was orchestrating his own deceit in the art world. Salander aimed to reinvigorate the value of Old Masters through ambitious exhibitions, notably curating a show featuring Caravaggio's *Apollo the Lute Player*. Raised in modest circumstances, Salander built the Salander-O'Reilly Gallery into a premier institution through his self-taught expertise and charismatic persona.

Despite his success, Salander maintained a lavish lifestyle, purchasing opulent gallery spaces and funding expensive exhibitions. To sustain this, he engaged in a Ponzi scheme, exploiting trusted relationships. He illicitly sold artworks without the permission of heirs like those of Stuart Davis and Ralston Crawford, misappropriating funds without informing clients.

Salander targeted not just individuals but also Renaissance Art Investors, forging documents and misrepresenting the source and value of artworks. Salander's scheme unraveled with mounting lawsuits, media scrutiny, and the withdrawal of key pieces from his exhibitions. In 2009, he was arrested



and later pleaded guilty to extensive fraud, receiving a lengthy prison sentence.

Salander's downfall showcased the darker side of the art business, leaving trusted friends and clients in ruins and tarnishing reputations in New York's art scene. The art world was reminded of the critical importance of due diligence and ethical practices in the face of enticing art deals.

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Chapter 3 Summary: 3: The Art Ponzi Scheme

Chapter Three details the art world Ponzi scheme orchestrated by Larry Salander, a significant figure in the Manhattan art gallery scene. While Ann Freedman was unknowingly selling forged artworks, Salander was preparing for two grand exhibitions – "Masterpieces of Art" and "Caravaggio" – aiming to reestablish the value of Old Master artists like Caravaggio, Michelangelo, and Rembrandt. Salander was convinced that contemporary art was overrated and overpriced. He ambitiously priced Caravaggio's "Apollo the Lute Player" at \$100 million, seeing it as a chance to shift focus back to the Old Masters.

Born in 1949, Larry Salander was a self-taught art expert who became a key player in the art world after opening the Salander-O'Reilly Gallery. Known for his passion and unique style, he mingled with celebrities and lived a lavish lifestyle. However, his quest to revive Renaissance art led him into substantial debt and fraudulent schemes. He manipulated art estates, selling works unknown to or without compensating their owners. The cases involved Earl Davis, son of artist Stuart Davis, and the family of Ralston Crawford, both of whom trusted Salander with valuable art collections that he sold illicitly.

The fraud extended to collectors, descendants of famous artists, and even celebrity friends like Robert DeNiro and tennis star John McEnroe. Salander



sold multiple interests in single paintings, deceiving investors and running a massive Ponzi scheme. Eventually, an investigation led to his arrest, and he was charged with stealing \$88 million through deceitful practices. Facing undeniable evidence, Salander pleaded guilty and received an 18-year prison sentence, alongside restitution claims exceeding \$114 million. The chapter closes on the devastation Salander left in his wake, highlighting his role as one of the biggest art fraudsters in New York's history.

Chapter Four shifts focus to Jasper Johns, an acclaimed American artist awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2011. Johns is renowned for his iconic "Flag" series, reflecting themes of identity and patriotism, notably during the McCarthy era. His works, including the "Flag" sculpture, became historically significant, with several ending up in prestigious collections like those of the Hirshhorn Museum and the Art Institute of Chicago.

However, Johns's trust was betrayed by Brian Ramnarine, a foundry owner and artisan whom Johns had worked with. Ramnarine produced unauthorized copies of Johns's work and attempted to sell a fake "Flag" sculpture for \$10 million, claiming it was an original gifted to him by Johns. Ramnarine was eventually caught and convicted, highlighting the challenges of art forgery, especially when forgers have access to artists' molds.

Another betrayal came from Johns's longtime studio assistant, James Meyer, who stole several works, claiming they were gifts, and sold them for



millions. Faced with overwhelming evidence, Meyer pleaded guilty to the charges.

Despite the chaos, Johns prepared for a retrospective titled "Jasper Johns: Regrets" at the Museum of Modern Art, reflecting on the betrayals and sadness he experienced. The exhibition's title and theme poignantly encapsulate the personal and professional turmoil Johns faced due to the fraudulent acts surrounding his artworks.

Chapter	Highlight	Main Events	Key Figures	Outcome
Chapter Three	Art World Ponzi Scheme	<div>Larry Salander's Ponzi scheme involving art estates.</div> <div>Grand exhibitions: "Masterpieces of Art" and "Caravaggio".</div> <div>Manipulation and fraudulent sales of artworks.</div>	<div>Larry Salander - orchestrator of the scheme.</div> <div>Victims included Earl Davis, Ralston Crawford's family, and celebrities like Robert DeNiro.</div>	<div>Charged with stealing \$88 million, sentenced to 18 years in prison.</div> <div>Restitution claims exceeding \$114 million.</div>
Chapter Four	Betrayals Surrounding Jasper Johns	Unauthorized production and	Jasper Johns - victim of forgery and theft.	Ramnarine convicted of

Chapter	Highlight	Main Events	Key Figures	Outcome
		sale of John's work by Brian Ramnarine. Theft and sale of artworks by Johns's assistant James Meyer. Retrospective "Jasper Johns: Regrets" at MoMA.	Brian Ramnarine - foundry owner and perpetrator. James Meyer - former studio assistant guilty of theft.	art forgery. Meyer pleaded guilty to theft charges. Johns's resilience showcased through MoMA exhibition.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: The Overvaluation of Contemporary Art

Critical Interpretation: Salander's belief that contemporary art is overrated compared to the enduring masterpieces of Old Master artists like Caravaggio and Rembrandt offers a compelling lesson on recognizing genuine value amidst prevailing trends. In our own lives, this viewpoint can inspire us to reevaluate the things we hold in high esteem, encouraging us to look beyond current fads and seek lasting quality and substance. It's a reminder to not be swayed by the collective excitement of the moment, but to dig deeper, trust our judgment, and appreciate things based on their intrinsic worth and timeless impact. This approach encourages thoughtful introspection and a return to fundamental values, whether in art, personal relationships, or our individual aspirations.

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Chapter 4: 4: The Trusting Artist

Chapter Four: The Trusting Artist

In February 2011, at a prestigious ceremony in Washington, D.C., renowned artist Jasper Johns joined esteemed figures, including Maya Angelou and Warren Buffett, as he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. This honor recognized Johns' transformative influence on American art, notably his exploration of identity and patriotism through nontraditional methods. Johns' work, particularly his iconic 1954 painting of the American flag, challenges viewers' perceptions and prompts deeper examination. This masterpiece, rich in political symbolism, was created during an era of intense patriotism amid Cold War tensions.

Johns' connection to the American flag extends to a 1960 sculptural version, which eventually tied him to the White House when a bronze version reached President John F. Kennedy. Johns' exploration with this symbol resulted in multiple bronze sculptures, which were cast using innovative techniques over the years in collaboration with various craftsmen, leading to ambiguity about original ownership.

Despite the impact and acclaim of works like "Flag," complications arose from unauthorized reproductions and forgeries. Notably, artisan Brian



Ramnarine played a troubling role, producing unauthorized versions of Johns' pieces. This deception prompted legal action and highlighted the vulnerabilities within the art world.

In a significant trial, Johns testified against Ramnarine, who faced an overwhelming case against him, eventually leading to his guilty plea for multiple counts of fraud. Johns' testimony was lucid and compelling, emphasizing transparency against forgery. The legal confrontations surrounding Ramnarine and others unveiled a broader network of art forgery challenges, including Johns' former assistant James Meyer, who was implicated in a separate fraud case involving stolen artworks from Johns' studio.

Amid these events, Johns unveiled an exhibition titled "Jasper Johns: Regrets," an introspective collection reflecting perhaps his own experiences and the broader themes of betrayal and reflection in the art community.

Chapter Five: The Inheritor

Libraries in the United States often house significant yet overlooked art collections, some inherited from patrons or artists, like John Singer Sargent's contributions to the Boston Public Library (BPL). Sargent's masterpiece, "Triumph of Religion," signifies his monumental engagement



with the mural as a superior art form and showcases his shift from portraiture, reflecting his standing as a leading figure in art.

In 2010, jewelry broker David Wilson sought to venture into fine art acquisitions, eventually encountering Luigi Cugini, who claimed descent from Sargent's collaborator Joseph Coletti. Cugini offered Wilson valuable paintings, allegedly authenticated by reputable sources. Despite a promising storyline involving Sargent's personal gifts to Coletti, FBI special agents, disguised as prospective buyers, proposed an illicit operation led by Cugini.

Cugini's history revealed prior counterfeit allegations, including fraudulent claims involving other famous artists like Picasso and Matisse. His elaborate scams involved faking provenance and misappropriating artistic legacies to deceive buyers.

The FBI dismantled Cugini's facade, verifying with experts and uncovering discrepancies in his claims, notably the false affiliation with Joseph Coletti. The successful investigation led to Cugini's arrest and exposure of fraudulent art valued at millions, securing a conviction for mail fraud while highlighting recurrent forgery vulnerabilities.

The narratives of both chapters reflect art's profound yet precarious intersections with fame, authenticity, and deception, resonating with themes of artistic legacy, trust, and resilience amid criminal exploitation in the art



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Chapter 5 Summary: 5: The Inheritor

Chapter Five: The Inheritor

Across the United States, many libraries possess overlooked art collections, thanks to donations from wealthy benefactors or local artists. Among American libraries, the Boston Public Library (BPL) stands out, not only for its architecture designed by McKim, Mead & White, echoing European grandeur, but also for the artistic contributions by John Singer Sargent. Sargent, renowned as the 19th century's leading portrait artist, enhanced the library with his Triumph of Religion mural. Shifting focus from portraits to murals, he aspired to secure his legacy in a higher artistic echelon. Sargent avoided the challenges of fresco by using the marouflage technique, allowing him to paint in his studio in Britain and later affix the works in the library. He collaborated with young sculptor Joseph Coletti, whose craftsmanship is still visible in various Boston landmarks.

Fast forward to Florida in May 2010, where David Wilson, a jewelry broker curious about the art world, approached art dealer Luigi Cugini. Cugini showcased a collection from his grandfather, Joseph Coletti, claiming it held genuine works by prominent artists like John Singer Sargent. Cugini, eager to sell, convinced Wilson of the paintings' authenticity with dubious documentation. However, Wilson was no ordinary buyer; he and his partner



Jason Richards were FBI agents investigating art fraud. Cugini had a history, including involvement with Vilas Likhite, in defrauding unsuspecting buyers with counterfeit art, leading to criminal investigations that featured art falsely attributed to prominent artists. Ultimately, the agents uncovered that Cugini's collection was fake, arresting him for mail fraud. This chapter highlights both the enduring influence of Sargent through his protégé Coletti and exposes art fraud in contemporary settings, showcasing how genuine passion for art and deceit can intertwine.

Chapter Six: The Captor

In the early 20th century, Harry and Ruth Bakwin, devoted pediatricians with a shared love for art, amassed one of America's most notable Impressionist collections. Their 1929 purchase of Van Gogh's *L'Arlésienne*, *Madame Ginoux*, complemented an already prestigious assortment, including works by Picasso, Cézanne, and more. Following Ruth's demise in 1987, their son Edward chose the Van Gogh, later selling it due to concerns over its safety in his modest apartment. His fear was justified—his brother Michael previously lost precious artworks, including a Cézanne, to thieves during a family trip in 1978. Their investigation revealed the astonishing difficulty of selling identifiable, high-value art in the black market.

Years later, through serendipity, the Art Loss Register (ALR) got involved



when a Russian Lloyds Insurance inquiry surfaced about Bakwin's missing paintings. ALR's founder, Julian Radcliffe, initiated an intricate negotiation involving international agents and ethical dilemmas, ultimately recovering the Cézanne in 1999 after legal battles. Despite reclaiming ownership, financial burdens compelled Bakwin to sell the masterpiece, illustrating the complexities and costs in recovering stolen cultural treasures.

The saga continued with the remaining Bakwin artworks leading to another twist: attorney Robert Mardirosian, revealed as holding the paintings, faced charges after investigative journalist and agent maneuvers. Through judicial proceedings, Bakwin won restitution, yet the ordeal underscored broader challenges within art recovery processes. Mardirosian's plans, marred by overconfidence and story inconsistencies, were thwarted by expert testimony and his own self-incriminating public statements, culminating in a conviction that highlighted the intricate dance between legality and ethics within art repatriation. This chapter deftly explores the fraught intersection of art acquisition, criminal deception, and the pursuit of rightful ownership.



Chapter 6 Summary: 6: The Captor

Chapter Six Summary: The Captor

As postdoctoral students in Europe, Harry and Ruth Bakwin's dedication to their studies and each other led them to amass one of America's most esteemed art collections. In 1929, during a family trip to Europe, they purchased Vincent van Gogh's "L'Arlésienne, Madame Ginoux," marking the beginning of their prestigious collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works. This collection featured artists like Picasso, Cézanne, and Matisse. Their children shared a love for art and inherited pieces from the collection. Edward Bakwin, out of fear of theft, sold the Van Gogh piece for over \$40 million through Christie's in 2006.

This fear was not unfounded, as in 1978, Edward's brother, Michael, suffered the theft of seven valuable paintings, including Cézanne's "Bouilloire et Fruits," from his home in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. The crime was notable for its execution without forced entry and sparked significant investigation by local and federal authorities. Despite Michael's efforts to recover the artworks, the case remained unresolved for decades, with complexities surrounding the stolen paintings and difficulties in fencing such high-value items. Over time, art thefts like these often involve complex syndicates or turn into unsolved mysteries, with pieces resurfacing long after



original thefts, sometimes due to the criminals unable to capitalize on their theft.

Years later, the stolen Cézanne reemerged, leading to a lengthy legal battle for its return. Despite successfully recovering it with the help of the Art Loss Register (ALR) and its founder Julian Radcliffe, Michael ultimately sold the painting due to the security risks and expenses. Investigations later uncovered an elaborate art fraud involving attorney Robert Mardirosian, who had been in possession of the stolen paintings found posthumously in the attic of a deceased client's home. A series of convoluted international negotiations and legal efforts ensued, revealing an intricate web of deceit. The resolution involved significant financial and emotional costs and highlighted the challenges of recovering stolen art. Though justice was served eventually, with Mardirosian's arrest and conviction, the case highlighted the complexity and global nature of art crime and its lasting impact on victims and the art market.

Chapter Seven Summary: The Double Dealer

Ely Sakhai, a notable figure in Roslyn Heights, New York, became famed for his philanthropy and later infamy as an art con man. His art forgery came to light after helping return a looted painting, "Jeune Fille a la Robe Bleue," from Nazi-occupied Belgium to its rightful owners in 2009. This act, however, contrasted sharply with his art market misdeeds. Sakhai began his



career selling antiques and easily replicated Tiffany lamps. Ambitiously expanding into fine art through his gallery Exclusive Art Ltd., he devised a complex scheme whereby he bought midrange originals, had meticulous copies made by underpaid Chinese immigrant artists in a studio above his gallery, and then sold the forgeries to art markets in Asia, particularly Japan, relying on cultural tendencies to avoid conflict and embarrassment, distancing his fraudulent activities.

Sakhai exploited his ownership of authentic paintings by using their original certificates of authenticity for the copies, significantly boosting their credibility. He meticulously recreated not just the artwork but also associated era-appropriate frames and other details to fool potential buyers into thinking they were purchasing authentic masterpieces. His scheme unraveled when two major auction houses, Sotheby's and Christie's, discovered and compared two identical Gauguin paintings, which led to an investigation revealing Sakhai's extensive network of fraud.

The investigation, led by FBI Agent James Wynne, revealed numerous cases of forgery and financial deceit spanning decades. Sakhai's grand scheme eventually resulted in his arrest in 2004 on mail and wire fraud charges, leading to a guilty plea with a substantial restitution agreement. Despite his conviction, the full extent of his forgeries remains unknown with potentially hundreds of undiscovered copies still in circulation. Sakhai's story exemplifies the shadowy world of art forgery and its enduring ripple effects



on the art community, underscoring the difficulties in authenticating art and protecting buyers from sophisticated cons.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Fear can drive crucial decisions and consequences.

Critical Interpretation: By understanding how fear influenced Edward Bakwin's choice to sell a valuable piece of art, you gain insight into the power of fear as a motivator. This knowledge encourages you to recognize when fear is impacting your decisions and use that understanding to navigate complex circumstances with greater awareness. It emphasizes the importance of balancing caution with courage, thus inspiring you to protect your passions while still moving forward despite uncertainties.



Chapter 7 Summary: 7: The Double Dealer

Chapter Seven: The Double Dealer

The story unfolds in Roslyn Heights, New York, where the Chabad of Roslyn, funded by Ely Sakhai, serves as a center for Jewish services and education. Ely Sakhai, a Jewish émigré from Iran, became a notable philanthropist but was also involved in a significant restitution effort: returning a painting looted by Nazis during World War II. The painting in question, "Jeune Fille a la Robe Bleue" by Belgian artist Anto Carte, was stolen from a Belgian family. The family's treasure was eventually tracked to Ely Sakhai's Long Island gallery, prompting art recovery specialists like Christopher A. Marinello and ICE's Bonnie Goldblatt to act. The painting's return closed a painful chapter for its rightful owner.

Sakhai's willingness to relinquish the painting was overshadowed by his demand for compensation, revealing a more complicated character. The art dealer was known for his philanthropic efforts, yet his business practices unveiled a darker side. Sakhai was involved in a forgery operation, using skilled yet underpaid Chinese artists to duplicate paintings, which he sold as originals. His scheme spanned internationally, with many duped buyers in Asia.



Eventually, Sakhai was caught when art experts discovered his fraudulent practices during a Sotheby's auction. The fraudulent Rembrandt and other counterfeit works led to his arrest. He pleaded guilty to conspiracy and mail fraud, resulting in a prison sentence and a significant restitution agreement.

Chapter Eight: The Bait and Switch

In Los Angeles, the art gallery Chateau Allegre owned by Tatiana Khan was embroiled in a major art forgery case. Khan, a respected art dealer, commissioned a talented trompe l'oeil artist, Maria Apelo Cruz, to reproduce a Picasso pastel under the guise of assisting police in a sting operation. Unbeknownst to Cruz, Khan sold the forgery as an original to investors Vic and Jack for \$2 million, claiming it was from Malcolm Forbes's collection—a significant selling point.

However, suspicions arose, prompting an investigation led by Dr. Enrique Mallen, an expert on Picasso. His analysis revealed the work was fake. The FBI's Special Agent Linda English, known for cracking major financial frauds, delved into Khan's history. She discovered the deceit involved wire fraud and witness tampering. Khan told different stories to explain the pastel's origins, none of which held up under scrutiny.



Despite Khan's elaborate scheme, health issues and mounting medical debts pressured her to accept responsibility. She was sentenced to probation instead of prison due to her health, and her assets, including a valuable de Kooning painting, were seized for restitution. Her career and schemes came to an end as she declared bankruptcy, her once-praised reputation in art reduced to deceit and forgery.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Philanthropy vs. Personal Gain

Critical Interpretation: In Chapter 7, 'The Double Dealer,' you're confronted with the duality and complexity of Ely Sakhai's character, who embodies both the potential for positive impact through philanthropy and the darker, selfish ambition inherent in unethical actions. The situation teaches a pivotal lesson about the importance of authenticity and integrity in one's actions. True philanthropy should stem from a genuine desire to benefit others, not be overshadowed by personal gain and deceit. This key point can inspire you to evaluate your motives, ensuring that your actions in life are driven by honesty and a sincere commitment to making the world a better place. It prompts a reflection on whether your public persona aligns with your private decisions and encourages living a life where your contributions reflect authentic goodwill, rather than being a facade for obscure intentions.



Chapter 8: 8: The Bait and Switch

Chapter Eight, "The Bait and Switch," unfolds a compelling tale of art forgery and deception centered around the world of art collector Malcolm Forbes' famed collectibles, including Fabergé eggs and historic documents, and how his name would later be tied, albeit indirectly, to a shocking art scam. Renowned for his love of collecting and qualitative over quantitative approach, Forbes' legacy would posthumously become a selling point for art fraud.

The story takes an insider look at the life and eventual schemes of Tatiana Khan, owner of a Los Angeles art gallery named Chateau Allegre. Khan, in an elaborate art scam with ties back to a Forbes collection, commissions a talented trompe l'oeil artist, Maria Apelo Cruz, known for creating classic reproductions, to make an exact replica of a pastel drawing by Pablo Picasso. Khan misleads Cruz into believing that the replica was to be used in a police sting against art thieves. However, Khan's duplicitous nature turns the tables and instead, the replica is sold as an authentic Picasso to investors for a staggering \$2 million.

As the narrative unfolds, Khan's web of deceit extends deeply into the art dealership, hinging heavily on her supposedly strong ties to the Forbes family collection. Enter business associates Jack K. and Vic S., who become entangled in Khan's fabrications, fully believing in their purchase of

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authentic, high-value art. But the illusion of legitimacy begins to unravel when questions of authenticity arise, leading to an investigation by a respected art expert, Dr. Enrique Mallen. Through his meticulous eye and unrivaled knowledge of Picasso's works, Dr. Mallen exposes the replica as a forgery, casting doubt on Khan's legitimacy.

Under FBI scrutiny, Khan's empire of deception steadily collapses as Special Agent Linda English gathers evidence of multiple fraudulent sales schemes connected to Khan's supposed acquisition of the Forbes Collection. English's investigation exposes Khan's multiple falsehoods and fraudulent narratives, culminating in charges of wire fraud, witness tampering, and providing false statements.

Facing significant jail time in the midst of deteriorating health and intense pressure from prosecutors, Khan accepts a plea bargain that spares her a lengthy prison term but comes with a heavy restitution order, which she struggles to meet. The final chapters of her fraudulent career conclude with bankruptcy, signifying a bitter end for a once-influential figure in the art world.

Chapter Nine, "The Printmaker," transitions to the history of prominent modern Jewish artist Marc Chagall, carving a narrative around his influence, work, and the intersection between his Jewish heritage and art. Chagall, born in 1887 in Russia, is lauded for his multi-faceted artistry, notably in



paintings, stained glass, and lithography. His collaboration with New York publisher Leon Amiel on *The Story of Exodus* exemplifies the deep connection between his artistry and faith. Amiel's ties to modernist artists like Chagall, Picasso, and Dalí elevate his status in the art world.

However, Amiel's success story takes a dramatic turn, as he becomes embroiled in an art fraud scandal involving counterfeit lithographs and serigraphs. The narrative dives into the unsettling frequency of making forgeries in the art world, exacerbated by Amiel's business decisions and collaboration with print dealers like Carol Convertine and Martin Fleischman.

As the story expands, it becomes apparent how Amiel's and other printmakers like him capitalized on the explosive market for fine art prints, propelling a deceptive industry forward. The chapter traces Amiel's operations and the dismantling of an elaborate fraud by federal agents, emphasizing the scale, from legitimate publishing to underground forgeries. The investigation, nicknamed "Operation Bogart," weaves through an intricate web of deceit.

The narrative concludes by spotlighting the rise and fall of counterfeit art operations, exposing key figures like Donald Austin, who, like others drawn to fraudulent ventures, grapple with the legal ramifications. Meanwhile, this exploration into art crimes serves as a cautionary tale of how the shadowy



underbelly of the art world can ensnare even the unsuspecting and highlights efforts to preserve authenticity in the deeply treasured realm of art.

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Chapter 9 Summary: 9: The Printmaker

Chapter Nine: The Printmaker

The chapter explores the life and work of Marc Chagall, a prominent Modernist painter born as Moishe Shagal in Russia in 1887. Known for emphasizing his Jewish heritage through numerous artworks inspired by the Bible, Chagall's legacy as a versatile artist includes painting, sculpture, and lithography. His stained glass works adorn synagogues, cathedrals, and even the United Nations building. In his later career, he focused on lithography, mastering the craft at Fernand Mourlot's atelier. One of his significant contributions during this period was "The Story of Exodus," featuring 24 vibrant lithographs, made in collaboration with his Jewish-rooted publisher Leon Amiel. Amiel, a well-connected art publisher and friend to artists like Picasso and Dalí, amassed wealth through innovative printing techniques but later became entangled in art fraud scandals. The infamous case of Carol Convertine Galleries highlighted issues within the art world regarding counterfeit art, linking back to Amiel's network and underscoring the broader challenges of provenance, authentication, and the booming trade in questionable prints that followed World War II.

Chapter Ten: The Telescam

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This chapter delves into the audacious art scam orchestrated by Kristine Eubanks, founder of Fine Art Treasures Gallery. Alongside her husband Gerald Sullivan, Eubanks ran televised art auctions on networks like Dish Network and DirecTV, targeting middle-class consumers eager to acquire high-end art. Utilizing the digital print form known as giclée, Eubanks leveraged this technology to sell purported original works by famed artists such as Picasso, often without rightful authentication. Her operations expanded to different avenues, including eBay and art auctions on cruise ships, duping both artists like John O'Brien and unsuspecting buyers. Persons such as Myron Temchin, who realized the scam upon receiving off-quality prints with fraudulent certificates, prompted an FBI investigation led by Special Agent Christopher Calarco, ultimately leading to Eubanks's arrest and conviction. However, the widespread impact of Eubanks's fraudulent operation and its ripple effect on artists like the late John O'Brien revealed much about the vulnerabilities in the art market to deceit and exploitation.



Chapter 10 Summary: 10: The Telescam

Chapter Ten: The Telescam

This chapter explores the deceptive world of art forgery and the bold operations of Kristine Eubanks and her husband, Gerald Sullivan, who ran the Fine Art Treasures Gallery. This enterprise broadcasted televised art auctions, claiming to offer authentic works and high-quality objects. Eubanks, with a rich background in art and media, capitalized on digital printing innovations, particularly giclée prints—high-end digital prints popularized by figures like musician and photographer Graham Nash. The couple's operation mainly targeted middle-class art enthusiasts, marketing giclée prints as valuable collectibles.

Eubanks's success in the art market drew in artists like John O'Brien and Charlene Mitchell, who hoped to benefit from Eubanks's platform. However, the artists soon discovered that their works were being sold without their knowledge or authorization, with knock-off versions flooding platforms like eBay and even cruise ship auctions managed by companies like Princess Cruises. These unauthorized sales significantly devalued the artists' genuine works.

Victims like the O'Brien family faced devastating financial and reputational

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impacts, with John O'Brien tragically passing away before justice was served. The true scale of the fraud came to light when art collector Myron Temchin realized that his supposed Picasso lithographs were nothing more than expensive photocopies. His discovery led to an FBI investigation spearheaded by Special Agent Christopher Calarco, revealing that Eubanks's operation had defrauded numerous victims, amassing millions in illicit earnings.

The eventual arrest and conviction of Eubanks and her associates exposed the audacity and scope of their fraudulent scheme. However, the market for fake art remains a persistent issue, as people like Martha O'Brien continue to struggle with the long-lasting effects of such scams.

Chapter Eleven: The Internet

In this chapter, the focus shifts to the vast e-commerce landscape, especially the unchecked proliferation of online scams. With billions of internet users worldwide, conmen have found a fertile ground for traps. Platforms like eBay, the world's biggest online marketplace, have become a venue for both legitimate sellers and scam artists alike.

eBay's success is undeniable, boasting millions of buyers and listings. While it facilitates access to rare and sought-after items, it has also become



notorious for art forgery and deception. The site's model, which allows private parties to list items and manage transactions, has been exploited by fraudsters. Con artists leverage eBay's reach to sell counterfeit art, playing on the desire of buyers to unearth hidden treasures. Examples include forgers like Geoffrey Spilman and David Henty, who deal in fake paintings, or James Coombes, who was conned into buying counterfeit Chihulys.

Other figures, such as the East Hampton dealer John Re, have similarly swindled art collectors with fake claims and backstories to sell counterfeit Pollocks. The platform's susceptibility to deceit is further highlighted by past major scams, including that executed by Kenneth Walton, who forged artist signatures to inflate the value of artwork on eBay dramatically.

eBay itself has taken steps to combat fraud, reducing illicit activity significantly over recent years and implementing measures to safeguard its marketplace. However, both the enduring appeal of the "too good to be true" deal and the relentless innovation of scammers ensure that art fraud remains a significant challenge in the age of online shopping.

Chapter	Summary
Chapter Ten: The Telescam	Details the fraudulent operations of Kristine Eubanks and Gerald Sullivan, who ran the Fine Art Treasures Gallery, broadcasting televised art auctions. They used digital printing advances, notably giclée prints, deceiving middle-class art enthusiasts about the value of collectibles.

Chapter	Summary
	<p>Artists like John O'Brien and Charlene Mitchell were exploited, with unauthorized sales occurring on platforms like eBay and cruise ship auctions.</p> <p>Significant financial and reputational damage occurred, notably affecting victims such as Myron Temchin and the O'Brien family.</p> <p>An FBI investigation revealed the extent of fraud, resulting in the arrest and conviction of Eubanks and associates.</p>
Chapter Eleven: The Internet	<p>Examines online scams proliferated by the vast e-commerce landscape, primarily on eBay, exploiting its reach and the thrill of finding hidden treasures.</p> <p>eBay was plagued with art forgery issues by con artists like Geoffrey Spilman, David Henty, and Kenneth Walton among others.</p> <p>Describes high-profile scams that manipulated art value, such as fake Pollocks and counterfeits sold with fictitious backstories.</p> <p>eBay implemented measures that reduced fraudulent activities, yet the allure of "too good to be true" deals keeps driving art fraud on the platform.</p>



Chapter 11 Summary: 11: The Internet

Chapter Eleven: The Internet and E-Commerce Fraud

The rise of the internet has dramatically reshaped the consumer landscape, establishing what many term the "information superhighway." This global network offers infinite opportunities, largely because the potential customer base spans the entire planet. By 2017, e-commerce in the United States alone was projected to generate \$370 billion in sales. However, the unprecedented access to goods and services also opens doors for devious behaviors, with internet scams infiltrating daily life. From phony emails soliciting personal information under the guise of surprising inheritances to deceptive online business proposals, the need for digital vigilance is paramount as online scams become increasingly sophisticated and frequent.

E-commerce's impact has been felt across various traditional retail sectors, including bookstores overtaken by Amazon and music stores subsumed by digital media platforms like iTunes. Blockbuster, for instance, has been replaced by streaming services such as Netflix. Despite some negative repercussions, online shopping provides significant advantages, offering quick access to diverse and exotic products—from cutting-edge tech gadgets to rare collectibles.

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Among online platforms, eBay stands out as a prominent marketplace that has revolutionized buying and selling. Founded by Pierre Omidyar in the mid-1990s, eBay functions not as a direct seller but as an intermediary connecting buyers with private sellers globally. Items on eBay range from the simple and affordable to the extremely rare and valuable, facilitating transactions primarily through PayPal. A notable feature involves its art listings, where buyers can find everything from apparent masterworks to overpriced pieces by ambitious amateurs. Not surprisingly, the intersection of art, money, and inexperienced buyers cultivates a fertile ground for scams.

In 2014, the Telegraph investigated individuals like Geoffrey Spilman and David Henty, who capitalized on this environment. Both sold forgeries on eBay, particularly mimicking L. S. Lowry's work due to their knowledge of his simple materials and style. Spilman used multiple accounts and stories of inheritance for credibility, while Henty adopted realistic art materials, claiming to be a copyist rather than a forger. Despite brief setbacks, these individuals often continue their dubious activities by exploiting loopholes and creating new accounts after previous ones are banned.

Art isn't the only item exploited; the scam of selling counterfeit Dale Chihuly glass art on eBay surfaced with the case of James Coombes. Initially intending to donate genuine Chihuly work to Gonzaga University, Coombes instead bought fakes from Michael Little, who promised

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authenticity, falsified documents, and manipulated his digital reputation. Despite expert interventions from people like Katherine Elliott, the scam ensnared multiple victims, highlighting vulnerabilities in the art market where provenance is hard to verify online.

Similarly, Jovian "John" Re capitalized on dubious provenance. Posing as a woodworker claiming to have found Jackson Pollock paintings, he deceived buyers out of about \$1.8 million. Despite investigations and expert validations debunking the authenticity of Re's paintings, the scam points to a recurrent problem in art dealing—buyers' willingness to ignore red flags due to their optimism of finding undervalued masterpieces.

The culmination of these stories underscores a key aspect of online auctions: trust. Websites like eBay try to mitigate fraud through vigilant monitoring, anti-fraud software, and a comprehensive buyer protection plan, but con artists are constantly evolving, exploiting both the internet's anonymous nature and people's credulity.

Epilogue: The Persistent Nature of Art Fraud

Despite advancements in fraud detection and secure online transactions, art forgery remains a flourishing criminal enterprise. The fall of 2014 revealed numerous fraud cases internationally, cementing art forgery as a global



issue.

In Russia, an art expert's house arrest for misattributing a fake work by Boris Grigoryev unnerved the museum community. Concurrently, Austrian authorities hunted for victims defrauded by Serbian gangs selling counterfeit Picassos. Similarly, in Australia, a contentious legal case implicated art dealer Peter Gant in the sale of questionable Brett Whiteley works.

Europe also saw attempts to profit from forgery; in Britain, sketches by the notorious forger Eric Hebborn were up for auction, while in New Zealand, Elmyr de Hory's fake Monet paintings surfaced. German police, too, pursued a network linked to Russian and Israeli studios producing counterfeit art.

Notably, some forgers, like Mark Landis in the U.S., operated without monetary gain, donating works to museums while avoiding prosecution by not accepting payment, exemplified in the documentary "Art and Craft." This episode showcased how art fraud, irrespective of its outcome, continues to captivate fraudsters and the unsuspecting public alike.

Overall, the art world continues grappling with the risk of forgery. From alluring potential victims and deceiving experts to the satisfactions illicit gains offer to swindlers, art forgery remains a complex challenge intersecting crime, economics, and human susceptibility.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Digital Vigilance in E-Commerce

Critical Interpretation: In the sprawling landscape of internet and e-commerce, being constantly aware and vigilant can safeguard your online experiences. As you navigate through enticing platforms overflowing with products and opportunities, always take a moment to scrutinize the legitimacy of a too-good-to-be-true offer. The digital world is replete with both genuine treasures and elaborate traps, so cultivate a mindset that questions and confirms before you click 'buy.' Such discernment not only shields you from crafty scams but reinforces a prudent approach to all your digital transactions. Let the stories of others' missteps be the cautionary tales guiding your journey through the internet bazaar.

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Chapter 12: Epilogue

Epilogue Summary

In the fall of 2014, the art world was rocked by a series of high-profile forgery cases that underscored the global nature and complexity of art crimes. In St. Petersburg, Russia, an art expert faced house arrest after misattributing a painting to avant-garde artist Boris Grigoryev, which later turned out to be a fake. This not only stirred fear within the Russian museum community but also showcased the vulnerability of experts to sophisticated forgeries. Concurrently, in Austria, authorities sought victims of a Serbian gang that profited from selling counterfeit Picassos, revealing an extensive scam despite the prior arrest of the gang. As efforts continued to notify defrauded buyers, Australia witnessed a legal battle tied to art dealer Peter Gant, who was implicated in selling fake Brett Whitely paintings.

In the United Kingdom, forgeries by Eric Hebborn, who imitated Renaissance styles, were auctioned off, drawing significant attention. Meanwhile, New Zealand was dealing with Claude Monet forgeries by Elmyr de Hory, surfacing in Auckland and auctioned by his descendant. Germany, too, saw legal action against individuals involved in an art forgery network sourcing imitations from studios in Russia and Israel.



In stark contrast, back in the United States, the documentary "Art and Craft" spotlighted Mark Landis, an eccentric forger known for donating his fakes to museums without seeking profit, a paradox in the world of art fraud that shielded him from prosecution. These incidents collectively highlight the enduring allure and lucrativeness of art fraud, fascinating both onlookers and criminals lured by the prospect of easy riches through deceptive artworks.

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