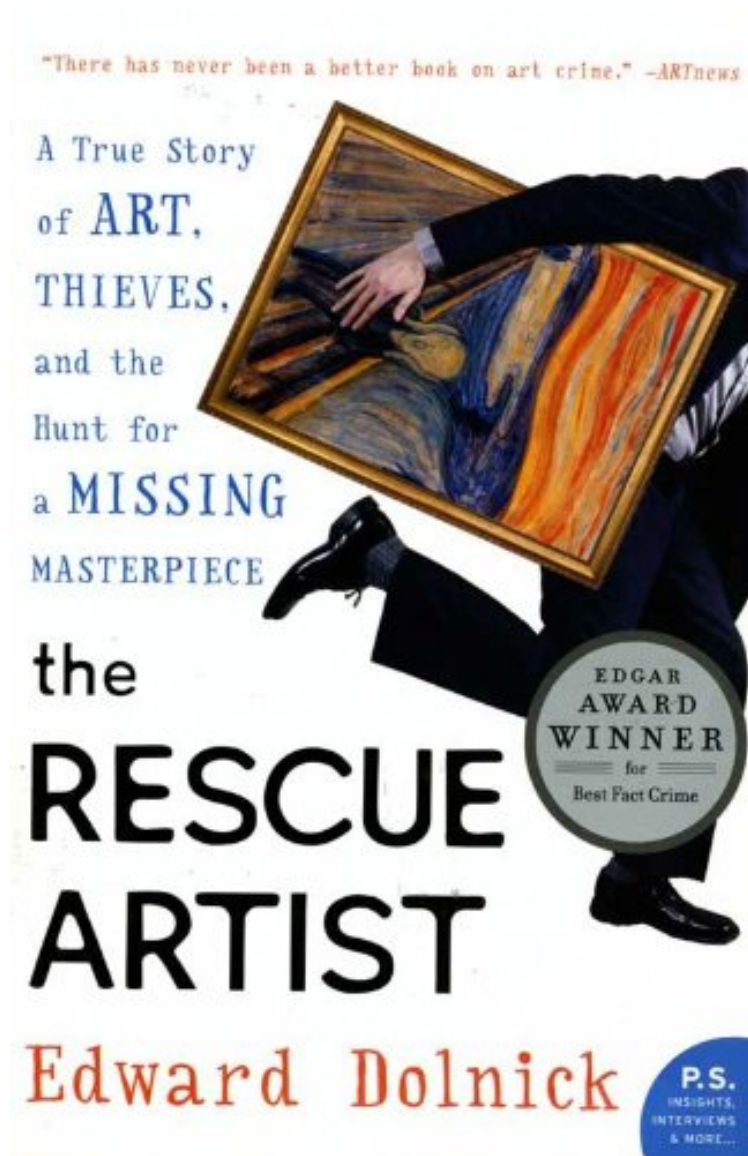


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# The Rescue Artist: A True Story of Art, Thieves, and the Hunt for a Missing Masterpiece

Edward Dolnick

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**Edward Dolnick : The Rescue Artist: A True Story of Art, Thieves, and the Hunt for a Missing Masterpiece** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Rescue Artist: A True Story of Art, Thieves, and the Hunt for a Missing Masterpiece:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. the shambolic quest to retrieve 'the scream'By Bart MillsThe theft of an irreplaceable work of art is perhaps the most outrageous and fascinating crime our civilization can imagine. A jewel

robbery is a terrible piece of effrontery, never mind the value of the object, but even the rarest gem is replaceable, or nearly so. Identity theft can make our blood boil, but it's not as consequential as its analogue, kidnapping. If criminals can ever be romanticized, art thieves qualify for a Hollywood gloss. They must have taste, they must be gentlemen—and they are often portrayed that way. Edward Dolnick says, "Phooey!" In "The Rescue Artist," his breezy, entertaining survey of art crime and art criminals, he shows that art thieves are just like most other thieves, only dumber. He wraps his anecdotal survey around a close examination of the 1994 theft of Edvard Munch's "The Scream," as told from the point of view of the detective who led the effort to get the painting back, Charley Hill. Hill comes on as a master of the long con, assuming just the right undercover identity to wrest the stolen artwork back without actually paying anything for it. It's an almost comical quest, as Hill maneuvers around clueless Norwegian police and incompetent museum security personnel, to get close to the villains who are close to the dumbos who took the painting. "The Rescue Artist" could not be filmed, because it disposes of all the master-criminal clichés; Hollywood adores. But it makes a fascinating story. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Takes discipline to stick with it By weatherfield I thought that the subject matter would be interesting but found sticking to this book was a real effort. It's not written like a flowing story. It's more of a series of accounts. Didn't get involved with the characters at all. Just didn't enjoy. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. How Art Theft is Perceived By Mary Schneider I found the details of art theft and the processes of finding and recovery very interesting. The author spent more time than I felt necessary on the various aspects of Charlie Hill's life. It went on and on and there were areas of repetition. The language was rather raw at times and while perhaps totally accurate was not necessary to the story. I had thought to recommend this book to my Art Book Club but having read it, have decided not to do so.

In the predawn hours of a gloomy February day in 1994, two thieves entered the National Gallery in Oslo and made off with one of the world's most famous paintings, Edvard Munch's *Scream*. It was a brazen crime committed while the whole world was watching the opening ceremonies of the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer. Baffled and humiliated, the Norwegian police turned to the one man they believed could help: a half English, half American undercover cop named Charley Hill, the world's greatest art detective. *The Rescue Artist* is a rollicking narrative that carries readers deep inside the art underworld -- and introduces them to a large and colorful cast of titled aristocrats, intrepid investigators, and thick-necked thugs. But most compelling of all is Charley Hill himself, a complicated mix of brilliance, foolhardiness, and charm whose hunt for a purloined treasure would either cap an illustrious career or be the fiasco that would haunt him forever.

From Publishers Weekly The little-known world of art theft is compellingly portrayed in Dolnick's account of the 1994 theft and recovery of Edvard Munch's iconic painting *The Scream*. The theft was carried out with almost comical ease at Norway's National Gallery in Oslo on the very morning that the Winter Olympics began in that city. Despite the low-tech nature of the crime, the local police were baffled, and Dolnick (*Down the Great Unknown*; *Madness on the Couch*) makes a convincing case that the fortunate resolution of the investigation was almost exclusively due to the expertise, ingenuity and daring of the "rescue artist" of the title: Charley Hill, a Scotland Yard undercover officer and former Fulbright scholar who has made recovering stolen art treasures his life's work. Hill is a larger-than-life figure who seems lifted from the pages of Elmore Leonard, although his adversaries in this inquiry are fairly pedestrian. While the path to the painting's retrieval is relatively straightforward once some shady characters put the word out that they can get their hands on it, the narrative's frequent detours to other crimes and engaging escapades from Hill's past elevate this work above last year's similar *The Irish Game* by Matthew Hart. 16 pages of bw and 8 pages of color photos not seen by PW. Copyright © 2005; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From School Library Journal Adult/High School; A compelling account of the 1994 theft of one of the world's most famous paintings, *The Scream*. Dolnick focuses on the hero of the case, Scotland Yard's Art Squad specialist Charley Hill. Because of Hill's earlier success in retrieving stolen art treasures, he was charged with the difficult job of locating the painting and successfully retrieving it in its original condition. While the author keeps readers in suspense as he digresses frequently to tell the story of other notorious art thefts and art thieves, diligent readers will be treated to a nail-biting, edge-of-your-seat account of the painting's rescue. Along the way, Dolnick imparts a great deal of information not only about Edvard Munch, but also about the art world's surprisingly lax security measures and the lack of motivation on the part of authorities charged with retrieving art treasures. In spite of the asides, this is a tightly woven, fast-paced story. Teens interested in art and/or investigative journalism will enjoy this real-life whodunit. —Catherine Gilbride, Fairfax County Public Library, VA Copyright © 2005; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Dolnick attempts to disabuse readers of the notion that art thieves are glamorous, yet he can't help but contribute to our fascination with art crime because the stories he tells are so full of daring, bizarre twists, and unsolved mysteries. His lively and episodic tour of the art underworld covers some of the same terrain as Matthew Hart's *The Irish Game: A True History of Crime and Art* (2004) until he veers off to profile art sleuth Charley Hill, an intriguing man who loves the adrenalin rush of

undercover work. The amazing story of Hill's recovery of Edvard Munch's *The Scream*, brazenly snatched from Norway's National Gallery on the day the 1994 Olympic Winter Games opened in a nearby city, is a movie waiting to be shot. Dolnick is equally engaging in his discussion of why art crime is a "thriving industry" and in his chronicle of Munch's life, how *The Scream* became a pop icon, and the theft of another version of the painting 10 years later. Where there's art, there are thieves and electrifying stories to tell. Donna Seaman  
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