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The Scientist and the Forger:Insights into the Scientific Detection of Forgery in Paintings

Jehane Ragai

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Jehane Ragai : The Scientist and the Forger:Insights into the Scientific Detection of Forgery in Paintings before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Scientist and the Forger:Insights into the Scientific Detection of Forgery in Paintings:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. AThrillingly Exciting Scientific Book!By CustomerAre you like me an admirer of Leonardo da Vinci ? Do you want to know more about the existence and authenticity of two other Mona Lisa? Did you know that his Salvatore Mundi, lost for decades, reappeared in 1900, to be first declared a fake, then hailed as genuine in 2005 ? Were you aware that Van Gogh's Still Life With Meadow-Flowers And Roses was

painted over muscled wrestlers mentioned by the artist in a letter to his brother Theo? Had you realized that Manet's admiration of Velasquez prompted him to produce an *Infanta* that fooled everybody for a century? Then, like me, you will be kept breathless reading *The Scientist and the Forger*. However Dr. Ragai's book is not only an impressively well documented thriller, summarizing the exciting events that in the past century have occurred on the International Art Scene ; it is a scientific book describing the latest and most up to date techniques used in authenticating art works . It also provides the reader with an insight on the psychological set up of viewers and that of forgers and introduces us to the back and front stage of courts of law where decisions affecting the Art History of the world are being decided. Most important it reflects on moral issues that concern us all: the dilemma of conscientious, but unspecialized judges, of impartially meticulous, scientists, of knowledgeable, but sometimes emotionally involved connoisseurs, having to decide whether they are confronted with the hitherto unknown work of a great master or with that of an unscrupulous, brilliant forger. Shahira Mehrez, Researcher, collector and Promoter of Traditional Arts and Crafts found the following review helpful. A thought provoking book for art lovers which merges the crossroads of art and science in detecting forgeries. By Yasmin This book is fascinating, authoritative and scientific in its discussion of some of the most recent and newsworthy forgeries which rocked the art world. It cleverly delves into the mind of the forger to uncover the elusive answer to the question of what motivates and drives a forger, and illustrates the great lengths to which these forgers will go to perpetrate their deception. It masterfully navigates the intersection between art and science, highlighting the rapidly growing role of science in the authentication process, while at the same time acknowledging the importance of, and need for ongoing collaboration between scientists, art connoisseurs and art historians. If you, like me, are an art lover who is fascinated by the scandalous headlines in the art world, and are curious about the state of the art techniques used to uncover the fraud and preserve the integrity of the art market and art world, then this book is for you! It is very well written and thought provoking. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The techniques discussed are introduced on a need to know basis and in language that is easily accessible to a non-specialist. By Tamer Shoeib This very well written book provided me with several hours of very pleasurable reading in the world of art and the scientific techniques used to detect forgeries. The techniques discussed are introduced on a need to know basis and in language that is easily accessible to a non-specialist. Interestingly, this book provides the reader with a glimpse into the psychology of the art forger, the art collector and connoisseur highlighting the impact of art forgery on the art milieu. Rich with its many intriguing examples of forgeries, some of well-known works and involving a wide variety of different styles of painting, this book was a true joy to read.

Over the last few decades there has been a disconcerting increase in the number of forged paintings. In retaliation, there has been a rise in the use, efficiency and ability of scientific techniques to detect these forgeries. The scientist has waged war on the forger. *The Scientist and the Forger* describes the cutting-edge and traditional weapons in this battle, showing how they have been applied to the most notorious cases. The book also provides fresh insights into the psychology of both the viewer and the forger, shedding light on why the discovery that a work of art is a forgery makes us view it so differently and providing a gripping analysis of the myriad motivations behind the most egregious incursions into deception. The book concludes by discussing the pressing problems faced by the art world today, stressing the importance of using appropriate tools for a valid verdict on authenticity. Written in an approachable and amenable style, the book will make fascinating reading for non-specialists, art historians, curators and scientists alike.

"Most books related to art forgery focus on the techniques of forgers and of 'art forensic' investigators. Jehane Ragai evidently discloses these aspects with fresh insights and with the required sophistication in her excellent book; but previous authors on the subject rarely developed so crisp analyses of the psychological facets of art forgery from the perspective of the forger and more interestingly from the owner of a forged art piece." -- Christian Amatore, Member of the French and Chinese Academies of Science "This timely, splendidly researched and very readable book provides the educated layman with illuminating insights into the many social, technical and psychological factors associated with both the act of forgery and the process of authenticating a genuine original vision." -- David L Carpanini, Past President of the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers "(Jehane Ragai) has explored, again on the basis of scientific investigations, the psychology of both those forging and those viewing such works of art. The result is a highly original and informative volume that is not only impossible to put down but also makes one think in a new way about how we view the world around us." -- Chris Dobson, John Humphrey Plummer Professor of Chemical and Structural Biology and Master of St John's College Cambridge "Dr. Ragai's book is a delight for all those who have an interest in both fine arts and science ... The book provides fascinating examples of forgeries, some which are well known, and some which are less known to the general public." -- Krister Holmberg, President of the Royal Society of Arts and Sciences in Gothenberg and Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences "In an elegant and engaging style, Professor Jehane Ragai provides us with an exceptional expose; of art, science, and business. Her description of the state-of-the-art scientific techniques is pedagogical and overarching, from microscopy to spectroscopy and from mass spectrometry to chromatography. And, the psychology of the viewer and forger is dealt with to highlight the

impact of art forgery on the business industry. This book is a must-read for those who are interested in the science and business of art." Ahmed Zewail, Nobel Laureate in Chemistry (1999) "... your book has given me enormous pleasure! It really is outstandingly good in all respects: authoritative, a joy to read and attractively produced. I very much like the overall format and the meticulous attention to detail ndash; including the excellent glossary. Of course, it will be of particular value to the art historian, but in addition will appeal to everyone interested in the visual arts. I greatly admire the rare combination of artistic appraisal and scientific discipline." -- Professor K S W Sing, Former Chairman of the IUPAC Commission I.6 on Colloid and Surface Chemistry "Dr Ragai is a clear and engaging writer. She takes a subject that could be a cure for insomnia and makes it interesting and, crucially, easy for laypeople to understand. The book's full of illustrations, including reproductions of the paintings that star in the case studies ... There's also a comprehensive glossary, wide-ranging sources noted at the end of each chapter, and an index that's actually useful. It s also a good pick if you re into art crime, forensic science, or just seeing scientists doing the damnedest things." -- Criminal Element

From the Inside Flap

Over the last few decades there has been a scandalous increase in the number of forged paintings in tandem with a steep rise in the price of artworks. This also comes with an enhanced awareness on the part of professional forgers that their paintings might undergo scientific investigation. *The Scientist and the Forger* describes both innovative and long-held approaches to the detection of forgery and authentication of paintings with special focus on ground-breaking scientific techniques introduced in the last decade. It provides both the layperson and the scientist with a description of these new methods while relating them to both the most notorious cases where these methods have been applied. Fresh insights into the psychology of the viewer are provided and attempts to shed new light on the long-sought answer to the question: Why does the revelation that a work of art is forged make us view it differently? are discussed. The psychology of the forger is also explored as are the myriad motivations behind the most egregious incursions into deception. The book concludes by discussing some of the pressing problems faced by the art world today, stressing the importance of using appropriate tools for a valid verdict on authenticity, and making a case for the imperative necessity of integrating honest connoisseurship and competent science.