

Since the end of World War II, art theft has continued apace. Interpol set up a dedicated department in 1947 and the list of stolen artworks now contains over 30,000 items, the 50 most valuable of which include works by Rembrandt, Vermeer, Caravaggio, Rubens, Picasso, Renoir, van Gogh and Monet. The London-based *Art Loss Register* lists over 180,000 missing items including 182 Warhols and 569 Picassos. The ALR calculates that at any one time three per cent of works on the art market have been stolen.

The subject of loot and stolen art is on-going, continues to make headlines, and symbolizes man's turbulent history. Some works of art such as the famous *Horses of St Mark's*, now back in Venice, have been looted several times. Some, like the Elgin Marbles in the British Museum, are today still subject to claims and counter claims. Again, it is the status that ownership of artworks confers which is most highly valued. While hiding behind legalities, the real reason the British Museum resists returning the *Elgin Marbles* to Athens is almost certainly the loss of prestige that their removal would cause London.

With 200 colour illustrations and 50 black and white archive photographs.

THE AUTHOR



Photograph: Sophie Lindsay Photography

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American soldiers loading a truck with a painting of Adam and Eve and various pieces of sculpture discovered in a cave at Wintersheim, Germany in May 1945.

A network of intrigues and dirty deals in which the most redoubtable leaders of National Socialism squabbled and defied each other in a sordid, stubborn struggle for the possession of famous paintings or valuable pieces of sculpture.

Jean Cassou, a curator at the Louvre and member of the French Resistance, describing Nazi wartime collecting.

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**Loot and  
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FROM  
ANTIQUITY  
UNTIL THE  
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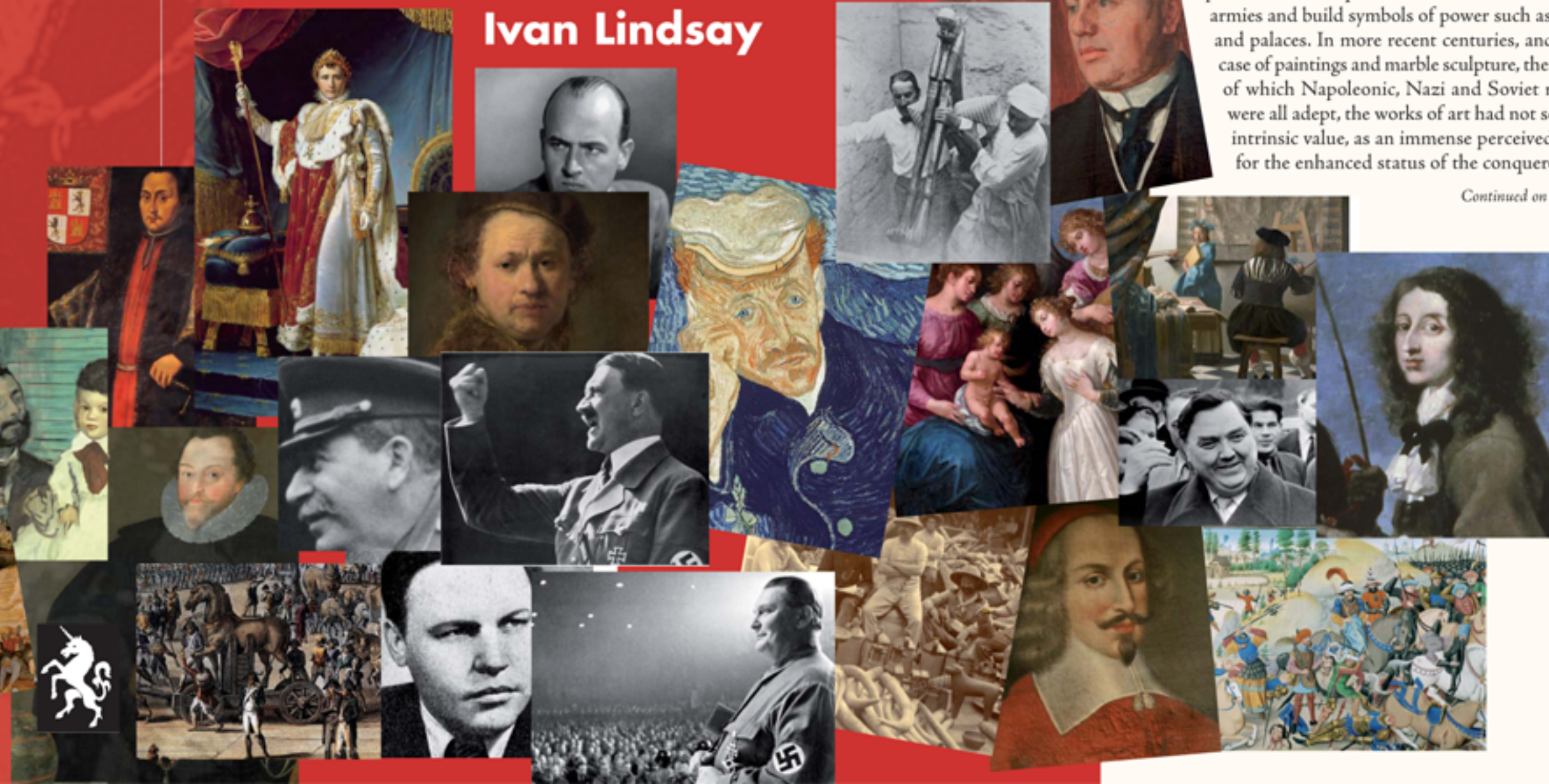
IVAN LINDSAY

# HISTORY OF Loot and Stolen Art

## FROM ANTIQUITY UNTIL THE PRESENT DAY



Ivan Lindsay



### HISTORY OF LOOT AND STOLEN ART

**T**he author of this enthralling book aims to present a well-illustrated and documented alternative history of the Western World through graphic accounts of looting and art theft from the time of Sargon, ruler of Syria in 720 BC to the present day. Almost all the 40 principal players included appear on the stage of World history and many of them are known as conquerors, confiscators (the old-fashioned word for looters) and ruthless administrators of the regions they created as a result of their conquests. Featured here are emperors, kings, queens, popes, adventurers, explorers and those whose energies and expertise supported the greed and acquisitive ambitions of their masters. The different motivation of the greatest looters in history is a recurrent theme which is examined throughout.

In ancient times most booty or loot consisted of what we now call treasure: that is to say articles made from gold, silver and precious stones whose removal both diminished the status of the vanquished and provided the conqueror with the wealth to employ armies and build symbols of power such as castles and palaces. In more recent centuries, and in the case of paintings and marble sculpture, the looting of which Napoleonic, Nazi and Soviet regimes were all adept, the works of art had not so much intrinsic value, as an immense perceived worth for the enhanced status of the conquerors.

Continued on back flap

Book jacket features a montage of leading players and artworks featured in 'History of Loot and Stolen Art'