

# Anatomy of a heist

On March 18, 1990, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum was robbed of 13 valuable works of art by two thieves dressed as police officers.

## Minute by minute:

Reconstruction based on alarm times and eyewitness accounts.



"La Sortie du Pelage" by Degas



"The Concert" by Vermeer



"The Storm on the Sea of Galilee," by Rembrandt



"Chez Tortoni," by Edouard Manet

### SHORT GALLERY

Six items stolen:

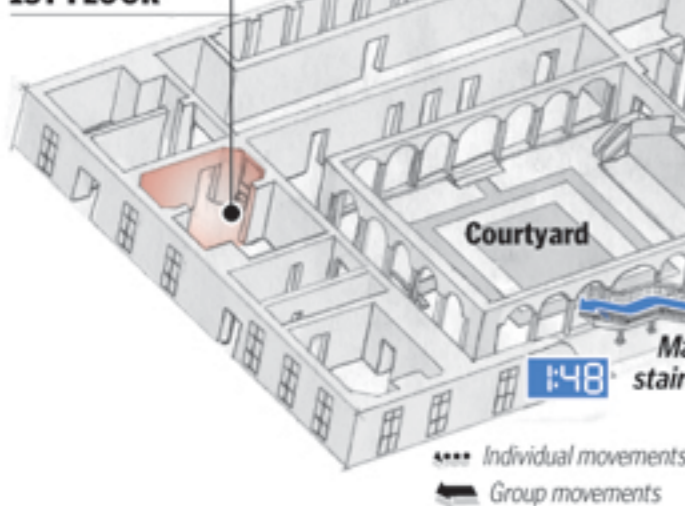
- Degas, "La Sortie du Pelage," pencil and water color on paper
- Degas, "Cortège Aux Environs de Florence," pencil, wash on paper
- Degas, "Three Mounted Jockeys," black ink, washes, oil on paper
- Degas, "Program for an Artistic Soiree," charcoal on paper
- Degas, "Program for an Artistic Soiree," unfinished, charcoal on paper
- Gilded finial atop a Napoleonic banner

### BLUE ROOM

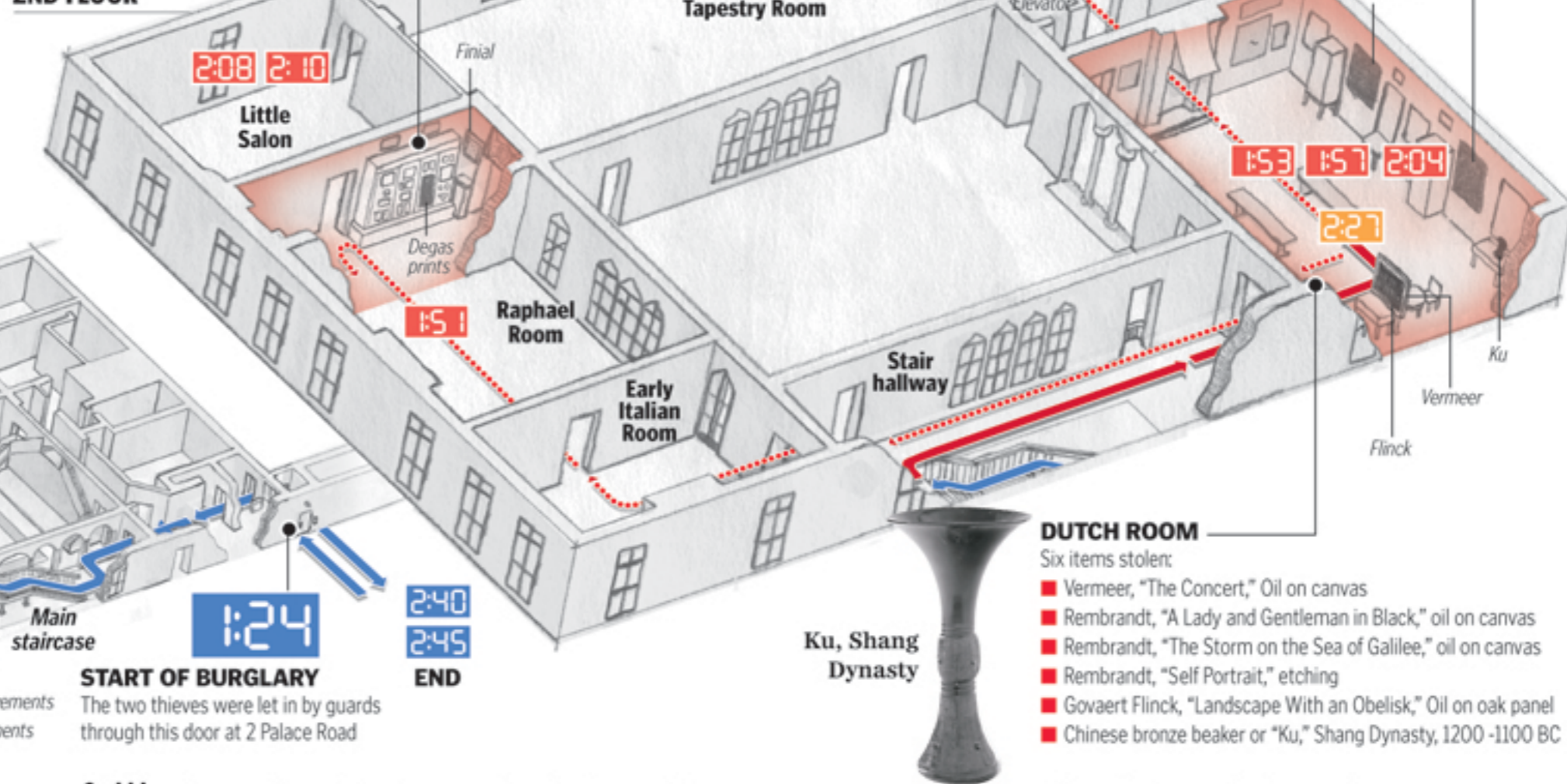
One item stolen:

- Manet, "Chez Tortoni," oil on canvas

### 1ST FLOOR



### 2ND FLOOR



### START OF BURGLARY

The two thieves were let in by guards through this door at 2 Palace Road

### Grabbing the goods

Sometime during the 45-minute spree throughout the second floor, a Manet painting is stolen from the Blue Room. It is unclear when it was taken.

### DUTCH ROOM

Six items stolen:

- Vermeer, "The Concert," Oil on canvas
- Rembrandt, "A Lady and Gentleman in Black," oil on canvas
- Rembrandt, "The Storm on the Sea of Galilee," oil on canvas
- Rembrandt, "Self Portrait," etching
- Govaert Flinck, "Landscape With an Obelisk," Oil on oak panel
- Chinese bronze beaker or "Ku," Shang Dynasty, 1200 -1100 BC

### Getting inside

It takes the thieves 24 minutes to tie up the guards and take them to the basement.

### The Loot

12 minutes to bundle the art and be gone.

### The Escape

**1:24 a.m.** Museum guard lets the two thieves, who are dressed as police officers, in the outside door at the Palace Road entrance and then the inside door. A second guard comes downstairs to the guard room.

**1:48** The thieves head up the main staircase and into the second floor Dutch Room.

**1:51** One thief leaves room, tripping an alarm in the stair hallway. The thief goes through the Early Italian Room and into the Little Salon.\*

**1:53** An alarm is tripped across the building in the Dutch Room, confirming that two thieves are at work in the museum.

**1:56** Alarms show both thieves back in the Dutch Room. An alarm sounds in the Tapestry room, but nothing is later found missing.

**1:57** At least one thief returns to the Dutch Room.

**2:04** Both thieves now in Dutch room.

**2:08** One thief goes to the Early Italian Room and back to the Little Salon.

**2:10** Second thief heads to the Little Salon through the Early Italian Room.

**2:27-2:28** Thieves return to the Dutch Room and then to the hallway.

**2:40** The inside door is opened and allowed to close.

**2:41** The outside door opens and closes.

**2:45** Inside door opens again, followed by the outside door. Investigators say this may indicate that the two thieves left separately within four minutes of one another.

\*Alarm may have been triggered from the thieves entering the Short Gallery where Degas prints were stolen.