

Gardner publishes its own book on heist

In the 28 years since two men posing as police officers pulled off the brazen heist, stealing 13 works of art from the **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum**, a lot of ink has been spilled about the unhappy episode.

The art has never been recovered despite countless turn-of-the-screw news stories about the investigation and at least four books, including “The Gardner Heist” by **Ulrich Boser**, “Priceless” by **Robert K. Wittman**, “Stealing Rembrandts” by **Anthony M. Amore** and **Tom Mashberg**, and our personal favorite, “Master Thieves: The Boston Gangsters Who Pulled Off the World’s Greatest Art Heist” by longtime Globe reporter **Stephen Kurkjian**.

While others have made money on the museum’s monumental blunder, the Gardner itself hasn’t capitalized on the scandal. Until now, that is.

Teaming with Carlisle-based Applewood Books, the Gardner has published “Stolen,” a slender volume that’s the first book authorized by the museum about the theft, which included three works by **Rembrandt** and **Vermeer**’s “The Concert.”

Why now, you say? In the book’s foreword, Gardner Museum director **Peggy Fogelman** explains the impetus thusly: “When thieves robbed the

Gardner of some of its greatest masterpieces, they deprived all of us of the chance to be part of this ongoing conversation. They relegated these objects to the past, to memory, far from the everyday encounters that keep them vital and connect them to our lives today. . . . Our intention for this book,

with its images of the stolen art, is to help keep these masterworks present until we can celebrate their return — and the conversations can begin again.”

The book includes an essay by Amore, the museum’s security director and chief investigator, describing the theft and the timelines — hint: the essay’s titled “81 Minutes” — as well as a chapter by curator **Christina Nielsen** on the cultural and artistic significance of the long-gone antiquities.

“Isabella Stewart Gardner’s gallery installations —

the careful arrangements of decorative arts, furniture, paintings, and sculpture throughout her Museum — were, themselves, total works of art,” Nielsen writes. “Gardner’s original intention in placing each of her treasures just so, and our ability to be inspired by them, has been sadly interrupted.”

“Stolen” is available at the museum and from all the usual online retailers. And at \$24.95, it’s a steal.



“Christ in the Storm on the Sea of Galilee” is one of three Rembrandts stolen from the Gardner Museum in 1990.