



The Fate of the Masterpiece: How the Monuments Men Rescued the Mystic Lamb from the Nazis

Noah Charney

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This short e-book, adapted from Noah Charney's book *Stealing the Mystic Lamb*, tells the dramatic story of the rescue of The Ghent Altarpiece from Nazi pillagers.

As the Nazis stormed across Europe during the Second World War, hundreds of thousands of artworks disappeared in their wake. A group of Allied officers set off on the trail of Europe's vanished art treasures—they were known as the Monuments Men. The investigations of the Monuments Men combined old-fashioned detective work, personal bravery, ingenuity, and a dose of good fortune. This is perhaps best exemplified in the story of the race to save the 12,000 stolen masterpieces that were kept in a secret art warehouse hidden deep inside a converted salt mine in the Austrian Alps. There awaited the treasures destined for Hitler's planned "super museum," which would contain every important artwork in the world. The prize of the collection, and the painting most desired by the Nazis, was Jan van Eyck's 1432 masterwork, *The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb*, also known as *The Ghent Altarpiece*. This massive masterpiece is considered the most influential painting ever made, and it is also the most-frequently stolen.

This e-book single is adapted from Noah Charney's acclaimed book *Stealing the Mystic Lamb: the True Story of the World's Most Coveted Masterpiece*. It contains all of the material from that book on the Monuments Men and Nazi art theft during the Second World War, as told through the story of two Monuments Men, Robert Posey and Lincoln Kirstein, as they raced to save the Mystic Lamb and the other works in the salt mine from an SS officer who was determined to destroy all 12,000 masterpieces.

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