

Unit 3:

ART CRIME

WARM-UP ACTIVITY

1. What is art crime?
2. Is it a widespread kind of crime?
3. Who can take the risk of stealing well-protected pieces of artwork?
4. Why do such criminals go in for this particular sort of criminal activity?
5. How can they be successful?
6. What can be done to prevent this?
7. Are there any other types of art crime except stealing precious pieces of art from museums and galleries? Can you give some frequent examples from everyday life?

There has always been art crime. All art lovers are aware of the fact and try to protect art treasures whenever possible. But insurance costs an arm and a leg. Whatever its worth, no artwork or antique is absolutely safe today. Its loss or destruction may be due to a lack of knowledge on the part of the officials in charge. For instance, we now witness the pillaging of architectural heritage from old tiled stoves and fireplaces to 18th or 19th century old doorframes and public statues. The value of the loss is incalculable. It has often happened that a historically important public building is found to have been stripped of its interior – panelling, staircases, even plasterwork. Some of the property may eventually reappear listed for sale in a dealer's catalogue, but much of it will never be seen again by its original owners.

This is an international issue as some precious pieces of art have unfortunately been stolen over and over again. One remarkable example of this sort is the world's most stolen picture, a small portrait by Rembrandt of a Dutch burgher. It has been lifted four times since 1967 from a London picture gallery only to be recovered again and again. But many other famous works of art have never resurfaced. For instance, a portrait of Francis Bacon was stolen in 1988 from Berlin's National Gallery, where it was on loan from London's Tate Gallery. Insured for £ 150,000, a fraction of its value, it vanished without trace. Such disappearances sometimes lead to speculation of syndicates that steal to order. Some may argue that it is not the case as most art thefts are small scale. But is it really so?!

There are some pieces of art that can never ever be restored again, like destroyed relics and frescoes in ancient monasteries, for example. Their

Stevanovich R.I.

worth is incalculable, but the loss is actually even greater. Such destruction means a tremendous loss to the overall culture of a nation. And a nation deprived of its culture loses its identity. Having realized that, people do their best to protect art treasures as symbols of their culture for the generations to come. How successfully they manage to do it, remains to be seen.

VOCABULARY

Artwork – витвір мистецтва
Depressed – бути в пригніченому стані
Deprived of one's culture – позбавлений культури
Endangered – підвернений небезпеці
Heritage – спадщина
Immemorial – незапам'ятний
Incalculable loss – незліченна втрата
It costs an arm and a leg – дорого коштує
Lifted – вкрадений
Over and over again – знову і знову
Plasterwork – робота з гіпсу
Pillaging – грабіж, здобич
Precautionary – попереджувальний
Precious – дорогоцінний
Recover – відновлювати
Relic – реліквія
Resurface – змінювати покриття (фарбу)
Steal to order – вкрасти за замовленням
Strip – пограбувати
Vanish without trace – зникнути без сліду
Whatever its worth – скільки б не коштувало, якої б цінності не було

PHRASES TO REMEMBER

Incalculable loss	
It costs an arm and a leg!	
Whatever its worth,...	
To vanish without trace	
Over and over again	
To be deprived of one's culture	
To be lifted	
To steal to order	

Can you think of similar phrases in your language?

GRAMMAR NOTES

Having realized that = After/When/As/Because they realized that they did something else.

The Perfect Participle is used to denote an activity that happened in the past before another action took place. It may have either a temporal or casual meaning. It is often used not only in written, but also in spoken English. Its main function is to shorten the sentence.

EXERCISES

I. Decide if the statements are true or false and correct the false ones

- 1. There hasn't been so much art crime before T/F
- 2. People aren't aware that pieces of artwork should be insured T/F
- 3. Historically important public buildings cannot be destroyed T/F
- 4. Some of the stolen artwork may eventually reappear listed for sale in a dealer's catalogue T/F
- 5. Art crime is merely a national issue T/F
- 6. The world's most stolen picture, a small portrait by Rembrandt of a Dutch burgher, has been lifted four times since 1967 T/F
- 7. Some people argue that there are syndicates that steal artwork to order T/F
- 8. If a nation's significant cultural remains get stolen, it will have consequences on the whole nation T/F

II. Find the phrases in the text that mean the same as these ones

- repeatedly
- It is very expensive
- to be stolen
- to disappear without any clue as to where it's been taken to
- to lift something at someone's request
- a loss that cannot be expressed in terms of money
- to have one's culture taken away
- No matter what its value may be

III. Practicing phrasal verbs

Fill in the gaps with suitable particles:

away with; for; into; off; off with; out; up; up for

There were several highly unusual art crimes in Britain in 1990. No matter how unreal the cases may sound, they weren't made _____ but they actually happened. On one occasion a \$ 200,000 17th century Japanese

Stevanovich R.I.

statuette disappeared from its display just before opening time at the British Museum. The thieves managed to make _____ it. On another occasion a neat hole was made in the wall of a famous jewellery shop in London. No one could make _____ what was going on. In the meantime thieves made _____ the big display case with a \$1.5 million diamond necklace. They lifted it, and made _____ with the precious necklace in their hands. One even more unusual theft took place in a country house garden in western England when thieves had to use special equipment to get hold of two 18th century limestone urns worth \$ 20,000. How come that all these crimes took place in 1990, a year that saw the theft of fine art rise to new heights?! How could so many people have been made highly skilled fine art thieves in just one year? However, whatever the case may be, such high losses will never be made _____ even if the objects had been insured. Insurance companies always try to cover the visible loss to the insured, but it isn't possible to make _____ the invisible loss to the nation's culture.

VI. Pair work: How can we protect the precious, yet endangered, artwork?

Together with your partner discuss what to do in these cases:

1. Safety equipment in museums and art galleries costs an arm and a leg.
2. More staff in galleries and big museums can prevent art crime.
3. Insurance of all pieces of art should be higher.

V. Group work

Together with other students in your group discuss precautionary measures to be taken to protect organized art crime (safety equipment, more guards, stronger and safer cases where precious exhibits are kept...).

The chairperson you choose will take notes and then put them up on the board and report on the best discussion giving his/her reasons for the choice.

VI. Topics for discussion:

1. Art crime has existed from time immemorial: it was rather developed as early as Ancient Roman times.
2. Wars inevitably lead to the devastation of cultural remains and artwork of the defeated nation.
3. The defeated should not be deprived of their culture.
4. Cultural devastation has taken place in several instances in this country.
5. A nation defeated on the battlefield is not destroyed, but if it is stripped of its historical and cultural remains, it may be.

VII. Translate from English into Ukrainian

NEW ART VENUES ENTER THE FRAME

Sculptures by Sir Jacob Epstein and other contemporary art are on show at two remarkable galleries in the English Midlands, one new and the other refurbished. The New Art Gallery, Walsall, is a modernistic building with a tower rising five storeys above the canal and the red-bricked industrial town centre. A short ride away in Birmingham is the new-look Icon Gallery, a former Victorian school transformed into a three-storey «house within a house» (pictured) devoted to contemporary art, and with an education centre and tapes bar. It opened in 1998 and is now attracting 75,000 visitors annually. Together, the galleries focus the international art world's attention on a rapidly regenerating industrial region keen to promote its cultural heritage and artistic development.

VIII. Translate from Ukrainian into English

Інженери Об'єднаного Королівства проектують найбільшу в світі бронзову статую Будди, котра знаходиться у стадії завершення і стане сучасним чудом світу. Інженери Шеффілда, Північної Англії уже почали втілювати проект у життя, висота якого сягає 50-поверхового будинку.

150-ти метрова статуя, на яку запланували витратити 100 млн фунтів стерлінгів, буде являти собою надзвичайний витвір мистецтва.