



Tuesday 28 February 2023

**Lecturer – Dr Tom Flynn
Art Crime in the Cinema**

Whenever a major museum is robbed of its treasures, the BBC website reports the event under the heading 'Entertainment'. The implications of this are more interesting than they at first seem. Art thefts have been a constant presence in the news media since the early decades of the twentieth century and Hollywood and international cinema were not slow to catch on to the general public's fascination with these dark developments. This talk seeks to draw connections between three strands — the rise of the international art market from 1900, the theft of major works of art from museums and private houses in the twentieth century, and the emergence of cinema as an art form in the early twentieth century. All three can be seen to feed off one another. Criminals noticed the extraordinary prices being paid for masterpieces and responded accordingly, while cinema latched on to these real-life thriller crime narratives, turning art thieves into glamorous anti-heroes such as Thomas Crown. More recently, art collectors have sought ever more secure locations in which to store

their art, with freeport warehouses now holding billions of dollars of the world's masterpieces. This talk traces the connections between some of the most popular art heist movies and the reality of the art market and reveals one or two little-known examples of early 'art crime cinema



Dr Tom Flynn



1931 Film – Der Raub der Mona Lisa



Empty Frame at Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum



**Cary Grant
Famous Auction Scene - North by North West**