

THE MUSIC LESSON

BY KATHARINE WEBER

After Weber's promising debut novel, she offers here a complete, but equally delightful, change of pace in this emotionally involving thriller that is propelled by psychological intensity. New York art historian Patricia Dolan is so swept away by the distant Irish cousin, Michael O'Driscoll, who seeks her out for her expertise but quickly becomes her lover, that in no time she is living in a remote cottage on the west coast of Ireland and is part of an IRA-inspired plot to kidnap a Vermeer painting (titled *The Music Lesson*) from the British royal collection and hold it for ransom. Patricia, alone in a wet winter with no company but the cherished Vermeer, keeps a journal that is the basis of the novel. She is by turns sprightly and funny about her Irish neighbors, reflective on the nature of art and of Vermeer's supreme genius, ecstatic about the sexual awakening Michael has given her and anxious about the odd position in which she finds herself. Is she being watched? Did her old neighbor lady see the picture by accident? Where is Michael? The situation is eventually resolved with brutal suddenness, and though it is difficult to see how else Weber could have ended the book, the final paragraph seems rather facile after all the warm and civilized writing, and the convincing creation of a winsomely offbeat heroine, that precedes it. But Weber remains a writer to be cherished, with the added, and quite rare, virtue of never writing a word too much.

Available at Wayne in Fiction



LOOT

BY AARON ELKINS

April 1945: the German war machine is collapsing, and the Nazis are frantically crowding their stolen art treasures into a secret salt mine in Altaussee, Austria. In the chaos, a truck from one of the convoys disappears. The driver has deserted, hoping to negotiate asylum with the advancing American forces. But a blizzard sets him off course, and he and his loot are captured by a brutal Russian patrol instead. Boston, 50 years later: a gorgeous painting by the Spanish master Velazquez turns up in the pawnshop of the surprisingly prim Simeon Pawlovsky. Suspicious of the thug who brought it in, Simeon calls his friend Ben Revere, a retired art historian and curator who occasionally moonlights for the police. The next day, Simeon is murdered during an attempt to steal the painting. Motivated by guilt and encouraged by Simeon's fiery niece, Revere goes on a whirlwind search for the provenance of the Velazquez and the whereabouts of the rest of the art aboard the missing truck. In the process, Revere is hired by a wealthy, aging count in Vienna, implicated in the murder of an underworld figure in Budapest and chased by a Russian mafia assassin all over Europe. Revere's combination of high intellect and low pretense makes him an engaging sleuth, and Elkin's cultural and historical details add savor to this engaging, fast-paced novel.

Available at Wayne in Fiction and Large Print



Wayne Public Library

461 Valley Road, Wayne, NJ 07470

Phone: 973-694-4272

Preakness Branch Library

1006 Hamburg Tpke, Wayne, NJ 07470

Phone: 973-694-7110

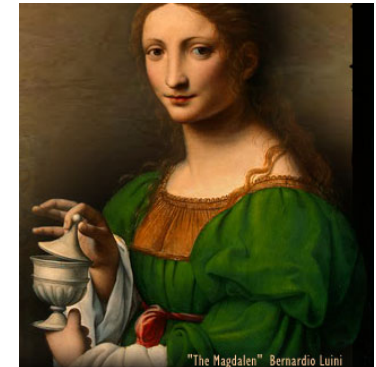
www.waynepubliclibrary.org

IF YOU

LIKE

The Da Vinci

Code ... 4



HERE ARE MORE
FAST-PACED,
PUZZLING THRILLERS
WITH INTRIGUING
DETAILS FROM THE
WORLDS OF ART,
RELIGION, POLITICS,
SCIENCE AND THE
OCCULT!



ENIGMA

BY ROBERT HARRIS

In 1943, a group of Britain's finest mathematicians and cryptologists gathered secretly in pastoral Bletchley Park with the sole aim of decoding the incomprehensible German cipher, Enigma. Its use had confounded both British and American intelligence, because new, highly classified mechanical improvements within the cipher machine made it superior to any Allied instruments. Enter Tom Jericho, master cryptologist and code-breaker, recently recalled from a nervous breakdown and fractured romantic relationship, to troubleshoot British efforts to crack the code. Jericho is a meek and sympathetic anti-hero, stinging from an unrequited relationship, still hopeful of reconciliation, who reluctantly realizes the possibility of his lover's betrayal of classified information. This novel's singular strength is Harris's ability to take a technologically complex concept and make it lucid and riveting reading.

Available at Wayne & Preakness in Fiction

NAME OF THE ROSE

BY UMBERTO ECO

In seven days of apocalyptic terror, a killer strikes seven times—and seven monks die. The year is 1327. The place is a wealthy abbey in Italy. And the crimes committed there are beyond the wildest imaginings. It will be the task of English Brother William of Baskerville to decipher secret symbols and dig into the eerie labyrinth of abbey life to solve the mystery.

Available at Wayne in Fiction and on Audio Cassette

GIOTTO'S HAND

BY IAIN PEARS

Fledgling art dealer Jonathan Argyll and Flavia di Stefano of Rome's Art Theft Department (of Pears's *The Last Judgement*) turn their full-time energies to tracking down stolen Italian masters. But this time the secrets come to them. First there's a tearful confession from Maria Fancelli that 30 years ago she helped her seducer, shadowy English dealer Geoffrey Forster, steal an Uccello; then, after Jonathan flies to England and phones Forster, there's a grudging invitation to discuss the painting, which has to be canceled when Jonathan finds Forster dead; finally, there are statements by two independent witnesses that finger Forster for unsolved thefts of paintings by Fra Angelico and Pollaiuolo—and strongly suggest he may have been the wily master thief Flavia's boss, General Taddeo Bottando, has dubbed Giotto. Can Jonathan, short of documentation when somebody breaks the police seals on Forster's house and burns his papers, tie Forster in to all of Giotto's 31 suspected thefts—and Pears's trademark, another sensational centuries-old art find—in time to save Bottando from the officious bureaucrat who's baying for his resignation? As a final twist makes clear, collecting all that evidence is easy compared to the climactic challenge Jonathan will have to meet.

Available at Wayne in Fiction

THE ASSASSINI

BY THOMAS GIFFORD

Gifford's novel takes place as the Catholic Church prepares to elect a new pope and an ancient and deadly secret society, its roots deep in Church history, takes murderous action. An ambitious monsignor and a well-connected lay power broker are executed in New York City; hours later, a radical activist nun writing a book on the Church's role in WW II is killed in Princeton, N.J. The nun's brother, lawyer Ben Driskill, a cynical ex-Catholic and former Jesuit seminarian, determines to avenge her murder. He must track down the meaning of the tattered WW II photo his sister left behind, featuring one of the two likeliest candidates for the papacy, and discover why she was investigating the suicide in Princeton of a visiting priest 50 years earlier. Driskill's perilous journey takes him to Egypt, Paris, Ireland and Rome, where another American nun is asking similar questions. As their paths converge, dark secrets from the Church's history in WW II are revealed.

Available at Preakness in Fiction



PLAGUE TALES

BY ANN BENSON

Benson tells a parallel tale of 14th- and 21st-century England, centered on the ever-fascinating Bubonic Plague. Alejandro Canches, a 14th-century Spanish physician, becomes the Papal appointment to the English court of Edward III. He is consigned the task of keeping the court alive during the Plague years beginning in 1348. The descriptions of treatments, daily life, and death during these terrible times are fascinating. Alternating chapters take place in 2005, a few years after the "Outbreak" and the end of antibiotic effectiveness against microbes. This is a world of biocops who shoot to kill if the infected try to escape, where transatlantic travel must be done in sterile gowns and masks, and "body printing" eliminates any semblance of privacy. Physician Janie Crow, in England for mandatory retraining since the drastic drop in population has rendered her surgical skills obsolete, accidentally unleashes the 14th-century plague bacillus on an ill-prepared London.

Available at Wayne & Preakness in Fiction



ENGLISH ASSASSIN

BY DANIEL SILVA

In his fifth thriller, Silva enters the intrigues of the Swiss bankers who helped Nazi collectors acquire impressionist paintings owned by Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Fans will recognize hero Gabriel Allon, an art restorer who doubles as an Israeli spy. This time around, his adversary is a rogue Englishman whom Gabriel himself once trained in the deadly craft of killing on command. Adding to the spine-tingling plot is a lovely and renowned violinist, the grown daughter of a banker whose war years put him at the heart of the predatory scheme. The murder of this banker sets the hares after the rabbit. Fueled by intense, fast, and unrelenting action, Silva's latest follows spies, sellers, lovers, and historians to a chilling climax.

Available at Wayne & Preakness in Fiction, Large Print, and on Audio CD