**Haunted Gallery**

Pitch: House of Leaves meetings paintings meets a website.

1. Man Proposes, God Disposes

1 Landseer was a Victorian painter, perhaps best known for his painting “The Monarch of the Glen” a beautiful picture of a stag which has become a national symbol of Scotland. Many of his previous paintings were of dogs and had a light tone.

2 The painting depicts a grisly scene. Two polar bears gnawing on the remains of a ship. One has a blood red sail in its jaws while the other stands next to a human ribcage. A ship’s telescope lies in the snow. The title is a translation of the Latin phrase “Homo proponit, sed Deus disponit”. Today we would say “the best laid plans of mice and men.”

3 The painting is based on the ill-fated Franklin Expedition of 1845. There were two vessels, the HMS Erebus and the HMS Terror. They set off with a crew of 129 men in an attempt to chart the North Western passage which would link the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. After they entered the Artic they were never heard from again.

4 An expedition ten years later found only scant wreckage, frozen bodies and terrible rumors. A study of the bones showed signs of cannibalism among the crew. When the story reached England it was met with fierce denial. How could civilized Englishmen ever stoop so low? The event was a blow to the confidence of the British Empire which was near its zenith at the time.

Many of Landseer’s previous paintings were of cute dogs, so there were some who wondered if he had lost his mind.

5 Today it hangs in Royal Holloway, University of London, where is has gained its cursed reputation. Legend has it that a student who was facing the painting during an exam killed himself by shoving a pencil in his eye. He wrote the words “the polar bears made me do it” on his exam paper. Since the 70’s it has been covered with a Union Jack during exams. Students believe that anyone who sits next to the uncovered painting will fail their exam. Not surprising considering it depicts one of Britain’s greatest failures.

2. The Hands Resist Him

Link to ebay auction: <https://i.kym-cdn.com/photos/images/original/001/307/384/ff8.png>

3. The Crying Boy

The Crying Boy is a mass produced painting originally by Giovanni Bragolin, a pseudonym of Bruno Amadio. Amadio painted 20-30 crying child pictures after training in Venice in 1945. It was distributed from 1950 onwards. Prints of the picture were sold in department stores throughout the seventies. /The picture gained its cursed status in the 80’s in Britain when members of the fire brigade reported finding the painting unscathed in houses that had been gutted by fire.

On September 4, 1985, British tabloid The Sun published “Blazing Curse of the Crying Boy Picture!” In 1985 The Sun told readers to send in their crying boy pictures so they could be destroyed. They were soon inundated with the pictures.

Journal David Clark researched the Crying Boy for Fortean Times. He found that the paintings were treated with a flame-retardant varnish and printed on compressed board, which doesn’t burn easily. During a house fire, the string holding the painting would burn and it would fall to ground, which would protect the picture face, thus explaining why they were found unscathed.

4. The Anguished Man

Artist Unknown

Mixed the paint with his own blood and then committed suicide

Owned by Sean Robinson from Cumbria, England who inherited it from his Grandmother