Geoff Manaugh: How to Rob a Bank [B2]

Per scrivere questo libro dal genere indefinibile, un pluripremiato design blogger con base a Los Angeles — e una grande passione per i film di rapine — si è avventurato in una minuziosa ricerca sulla relazione fra architettura e criminalità, mostrando la città da una prospettiva veramente originale.

In the **mid-19th century**, a criminal **gang** led by George Leonidas Leslie went on a **crime spree**, robbing around 80 per cent of all of the banks in the US. They included the Manhattan Savings Institution, from which $3 million were stolen in 1878. Leslie was, in fact, a **trained architect** who applied his professional status and skills to his clandestine criminal career. He would ask for **floor plan** **blueprints** from bank owners, pretending to be using them for work, and experiment on small replicas of frequently-used **safes** and **vaults** at home. He was never caught, but was eventually murdered by a member of his **gang**.

INGENIOUS ROBBERIES

Leslie is one of the colourful criminals who inspired Geoff Manaugh, a Los Angeles-based design blogger and a big fan of **heist** films, to investigate the

relationship between architecture and crime. The result is A Burglar's Guide to the City, an eloquent and exciting book combining investigative journalism with descriptions of some of the most ingenious robberies in history, as well as the attempts by the law to prevent them.

SECRET ROUTES

In looking at the city from the perspective of a **burglar**, Manaugh reveals the secret routes and spaces **concealed** in the metropolis: the forgotten entrances and exits, the fire escapes and **sewage** systems; the daily routines of workers, residents and police, even the technology designed to protect the city that offer opportunities for the astute, meticulous thief to **strike**.

SALAMI TREACHERY

The author cites incredible examples of skill, but also singular acts of **remarkable** stupidity. Take the notorious diamond **heist** in Antwerp, Belgium, for example, where in 2003, thieves stole jewellery valued at more than $100 million by taking advantage of **weaknesses** in an elaborate security system, only then **to give themselves away** with DNA evidence **retrieved** from a partially-eaten salami sandwich discovered near the crime scene.

Glossary

- **safes** = casseforti
- **sewage** = fognature
- **burglar** = ladro
- **remarkable** = notevole
- **crime spree** = ondata di crimini
- **heist** = rapina
- **strike** = colpire
- **weaknesses** = punti deboli
- **trained architect** = architetto professionista
- **floor plan** = piano di un edificio
- **blueprints** = planimetrie
- **vaults** = camere blindate, caveau
- **concealed** = nascondere, occultare
- **to give themselves away** = tradirsi
- **retrieved** = trovare, reperire
- **mid-19th century** = a metà del XIX secolo
- **gang** = banda