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**RAGO'S SPONSORS BOOK TOUR BY ROBERT K. WITTMAN, THE FOUNDER OF THE FBI'S ART CRIME TEAM**

Miriam Tucker, a Rago Auctions partner, first met Bob Wittman in 2002, when Wittman came unannounced to the Lambertville, NJ auction house and asked to speak to the person in charge.

"It's doesn't matter that you know you've done nothing illegal", said Ms. Tucker. "When the FBI comes knocking, you start to wonder. But Bob was so kind. He quickly assured us that we had unknowingly sold property consigned without the permission of co-owners. After that, we became fast friends. When he asked us to sponsor his tour of PRICELESS we were thrilled and honored."

In PRICELESS, Robert K. Wittman, the founder of the FBI's Art Crime Team, pulls back the curtain on his remarkable career for the first time, offering a real-life international thriller to rival *The Thomas Crown Affair*.

Rising from humble roots as the son of an antique dealer, Wittman built a twenty-year career that was nothing short of extraordinary. He went undercover, usually unarmed, to catch art thieves, scammers, and black market traders in Paris and Philadelphia, Rio and Santa Fe, Miami and Madrid.

In this page-turning memoir, Wittman fascinates with the stories behind his recoveries of priceless art and antiquities: The golden armor of an ancient Peruvian warrior king. The Rodin sculpture that inspired the Impressionist movement. The headdress Geronimo wore at his final Pow-Wow. The rare Civil War battle flag carried into battle by one of the nation's first African-American regiments.

The breadth of Wittman's exploits is unmatched: He traveled the world to rescue paintings by Rockwell and Rembrandt, Pissarro, Monet and Picasso, often working undercover overseas at the whim of foreign governments. Closer to home, he recovered an original copy of the Bill of Rights and cracked the scam that rocked the PBS series *Antiques Roadshow*.

By the FBI's accounting, Wittman saved hundreds of millions of dollars worth of art and antiquities. *The Wall Street Journal* called him "a living legend." *The London Times* dubbed him "the most famous art detective in the world."

## Editorial Reviews:

"I can't think of a better title for a book than this one, PRICELESS. Because this non-fiction story is priceless, a spellbinding narrative of an FBI agent's journey into the crazy murk of what is perhaps the most fascinating criminal activity of all, high-stakes art theft into the millions upon millions."--Buzz Bissinger, New York Times bestselling author of FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS and coauthor of SHOOTING STARS

"A fascinating account of an FBI agent's devotion to the arts, and his globe-trotting cloak-and-dagger exploits to recover masterpieces from a world of eclectic thieves. Part way-cool art education and part hardcore FBI investigative action, PRICELESS is a steadily engrossing read. Bob Wittman deserves our thanks."--William "Billy" Queen, Retired ATF Special Agent and New York Times bestselling author of UNDER AND ALONE

"Wittman's memoir, PRICELESS, is a fast-paced, gripping narrative of stolen national treasures and those who traffic in

them. An undercover lawman armed with wit and adrenalin, Wittman exposes the darkest corners of the art world and brings to justice the dangerous criminals who lurk there."-- Laney Salisbury, co-author of *PROVENANCE: HOW A CON MAN AND A FORGER REWROTE THE HISTORY OF MODERN ART*

"In one riveting sequence after another, Robert Wittman reveals the art world's underbelly as it has never been seen, through the eyes of an undercover agent whose investigative acumen is matched only by his art-history chops. A true page-turner."--Benjamin Wallace, New York Times bestseller author of *THE BILLIONAIRE'S VINEGAR*

"With suspense, intrigue, and candor, FBI agent Robert Wittman takes us inside the secret world of stolen art as he goes undercover to solve some of the most notorious art thefts of our time."—Ronald Kessler, New York Times bestselling author of *THE BUREAU* and *IN THE PRESIDENT'S SECRET SERVICE*

"PRICELESS is a gem of a story, part James Bond, part art history. If Robert Wittman didn't already exist, Dan Brown would have made him up."--George Anastasia, New York Times bestselling author *BLOOD AND HONOR*, *THE LAST GANGSTER* and *THE SUMMER WIND*

**Notes for the Editor**

- High-resolution images available.
- The Rago Arts and Auction Center is a world-renowned venue for auction, private sale and appraisal. Located midway between Philadelphia and New York, it is New Jersey's leading auction house, as well as its largest. The Auction Center holds multi-million dollar sales of 20<sup>th</sup> century decorative arts and furnishings, fine art, jewelry, American, Asian and European estate property for an international clientele. Rago's offers both sellers and buyers a singular blend of global reach and personal service. It is a world-class venue for auction and sale by private treaty. It is also a destination for those who seek to learn and share knowledge about art, antiques and collecting, with free valuations for personal property (from a single piece to collections and estates) and auction exhibitions in house and online.

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