

STOLEN ART



ART OR SCRAP?

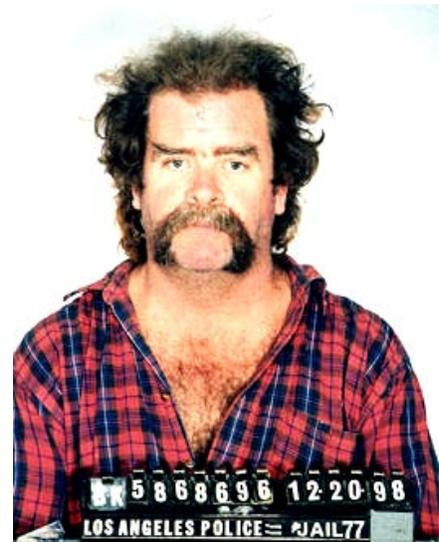


Artist Kewal Soni creates abstract sculptures in San Pedro and stores them in a storage yard attached to his studio. It takes Soni approximately one year to finish each project. In 1998, a Hollywood movie studio featured his sculptures in the motion picture "Star Trek: Insurrection." Shortly after the art was returned, Soni was the victim of three separate thefts of art. The suspects entered the storage yard and removed four unsigned sculptures worth a total of \$29,000. With each theft, the artist upgraded the security of the yard by adding barbed wire and steel cables to secure the sculptures. Despite these

efforts, the thieves climbed a gate and pushed the heavy metal sculptures (some 10 ft. tall) over the gate and loaded them into a utility truck during the early morning hours. The artist is 71 years old and battling cancer.

An investigation by the Art Theft Detail revealed the sculptures were taken to various metal recycling dealers in Wilmington and Carson where the art was sold for scrap for its brass and copper content. One \$10,000 sculpture was sold for \$9.10. With the assistance of the Metal Theft Details of LAPD and the L.A. County Sheriffs Department, three of the sculptures were recovered before they could be shredded and destroyed.

Samuel Westscott Cunningham, 42 years old, has been arrested in the case and his utility truck seized. The District Attorney has filed multiple counts of grand theft and receiving stolen property against Cunningham who is awaiting trial. Detectives are attempting to identify additional suspects in the case.



Samuel Westscott Cunningham

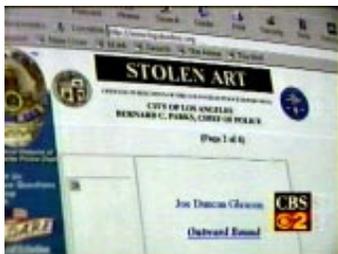
ART THEFT DETAIL WEBSITE

LAPD's Art Theft Detail is now on the web at:

http://www.lapdonline.org/art_theft

The site will provide information on -

- Stolen art
- Wanted suspects
- Local art crime patterns
- Prevention & buying tips
- Past Art Theft Bulletins
- True art cases
- Links to other sites



ADDITIONAL STOLEN ART



99-1411163

2-8/99

French cherub
carved wood sculpture
19th century
approx. 24" tall
reddish tint
supported by black metal rod and base



99-0306583

3-3/99

bronze urn
27" x 26"

Requesting any information on . . .

1. **Edith Head** - pastel sketch of Lucille Ball in a 1930s long flowing evening dress - 24" x 36" - signed. (98-0822652 • 10-4/98)
2. **James Joyce** - first edition book - *Ulysses* - 1922 - Paris: Shakespeare & Co. - on powder blue Verge d'Arches aper - original blue wrappers. (99-0606830 • 2-1/99)
3. **Andy Warhol** - watercolor and collage - *Elvis Portrait* - 1986 - 31 1/2" x 23 3/4" - pink, blue & black - signed in pencil in left border. (99-0607963 • 2-3/99)
4. **Indian dress** - rawhide with beads - upper portion accented with Aztec design made from beads - front adorned with white tassels - all work done on a black fabric background contained in a plexiglass box - 59" x 54". (99-0607963 • 2-3/99)
5. **Charles Bragg** - lithograph - *The Ophthalmologist* - about 12" x 16" - signed & numbered - black & white caricature of a doctor examining a patient's eyes. (99-0705385 • 1-1/99)

ANY INFORMATION,
PLEASE CONTACT:

Detectives Don Hrycyk & Gil Escontrias - LAPD Art Theft Detail
150 N. Los Angeles St., Room 319, L.A., CA 90012 • (213) 485-2524 • fax (213) 628-4823