



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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**ISRAELI MAN ARRESTED IN FRANCE
ON U.S. ART THEFT CHARGES**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and PETER J. SMITH, the Special Agent-in-Charge of the Department of Homeland Security's United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), announced the unsealing today of an Indictment against SOLLY SINAI, a/k/a "Soley Sinay," a/k/a "Sollyme Sinay," for the sale and attempted sale of several items of stolen art and antiques in New York. SINAI, 53, was arrested on or about January 30, 2008, in Paris on a provisional arrest warrant issued in connection with the charges filed in the United States. According to the six-count Indictment filed in Manhattan federal court in May 2005:

SINAI possessed and sold, or attempted to sell, several items previously stolen during three burglaries committed in Paris. In the spring of 1997, approximately 200 pieces of valuable Japanese antique miniature sculptures were stolen from a Paris antiques shop. A second burglary took place in May 1998 when more than 50 items of art and antiques -- including four pairs of antique, Napoleonic-era pistols, hand-carved and historically unique, valued in total at approximately \$500,000, as well as a decorative antique silver bowl -- were stolen from a Paris residence. The total value of the items stolen in this burglary exceeded \$1 million. Approximately one month later, a Paris antiques shop was burglarized of, among other things, a pair of antique candelabra and approximately 104 bronze sculptures, the majority of which were valuable "first casts" by the artist ANTOINE LOUIS BARYE ("Barye Bronzes").

In June 2000, SINAI sold and attempted to sell in New York City and elsewhere various items stolen in the Paris burglaries, including six of the antique pistols, the silver bowl, the candelabra, and several of the Barye Bronzes.

The Indictment charges SINAI with two counts of interstate transportation of stolen property and four counts of receipt and sale of stolen property.

SINAI is currently in the custody of French authorities. The United States is preparing the formal extradition package to bring SINAI to the United States to stand trial.

If convicted, SINAI faces on each count a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine of the greatest of \$250,000, or twice the gross gain or loss resulting from the offense.

Mr. GARCIA thanked ICE for its work in the investigation of this matter.

The case is being prosecuted by the Major Crimes Unit of the United States Attorney's Office. Assistant United States Attorney DAVID SIEGAL is in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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