

Off-duty Italy art cops find looted statue in Belgian shop

April 12 2021



This image released on Monday, April 12, 2021 by the Carabinieri (Italian paramilitary police) art squad's archaeological unit, shows a headless Roman statue wearing a draped toga recovered in Brussels on Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2021. Italian police say they have recovered a 1st century Roman statue that was stolen from an archaeological site in 2011 and found in a Belgian antiques shop by two off-duty Italian art squad police officers. The Carabinieri art squad said Monday that an Italian businessman who used a Spanish pseudonym has been referred to prosecutors for further investigation into allegations he received and then exported the statue abroad. The statue has been valued at 100,000 euro. (Carabinieri via AP)

Italian police say they have recovered a 1st century Roman statue that was stolen from an archaeological site in 2011 and found in a Belgian antiques shop by two off-duty Italian art squad police officers.

An Italian businessman who used a Spanish pseudonym has been referred to prosecutors for further investigation into allegations he received and then exported the statue abroad, the Carabinieri art squad said in a statement Monday.

The "Togatus" statue, featuring a headless Roman wearing a draped toga, has a value of 100,000 euro. It was stolen in November 2011 from the Villa Marini Dettina [archaeological site](#) on the outskirts of the capital, the statement said.

Two members of the art squad's archaeological unit were on assignment in Brussels when they took a walk after work in the Sablon neighborhood that is known for its antiques shops. They spotted a marble statue in a shop that they suspected was from Italy, and confirmed their suspicions when they cross-referenced the work with a database of known stolen antiquities, the statement said.

Italy for decades has worked to recover looted antiquities that have ended up in private collections, famous museums and commercial antique shops around the world.



Carabinieri (Italian paramilitary police) officers of the art squad's archaeological unit pose with a headless Roman statue wearing a draped toga in Brussels on Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2021. Italian police say they have recovered a 1st century Roman statue that was stolen from an archaeological site in 2011 and found in a Belgian antiques shop by two off-duty Italian art squad police officers. The Carabinieri art squad said Monday that an Italian businessman who used a Spanish pseudonym has been referred to prosecutors for further investigation into allegations he received and then exported the statue abroad. The statue has been valued at 100,000 euro. (Carabinieri via AP)

© 2021 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without permission.

Citation: Off-duty Italy art cops find looted statue in Belgian shop (2021, April 12) retrieved 26 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2021-04-off-duty-italy-art-cops-looted.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.