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**U.S. Immigration
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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

News Releases

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ICE recovers Egyptian artifacts stolen from a museum in the Netherlands

NEW YORK - U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement recovered seven artifacts of Egyptian origin that were found at a Manhattan auction house. The cultural heritage items were stolen from the Bijbels Museum in Amsterdam on July 29, 2007 in the middle of the afternoon. Dutch police contacted ICE to assist in the recovery of the artifacts on their behalf.

The investigation received significant help from the Art Loss Register (ALR) of New York, an organization that maintains a database of stolen works of art. The ALR discovered the artifacts at the Manhattan auction house, which turned the artifacts over to the Register and ICE agents.

One of the pieces recovered is a 7-inch-high depiction of a mummy with arms folded over the chest and hoes in each hand. It dates to between 1307 and 1070 B.C. The other recovered artifacts were an bronze figure of Imhotep, architect of the first pyramid, and one of Hapokrates, and an Egyptian painted Wood Osiris, all dating as far back as 712 B.C.

"The recovery of these artifacts sends a strong message to thieves that the market to sell stolen antiquities in the United States is freezing up," said Peter J. Smith, special agent in charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in New York. "ICE is committed to working closely with foreign governments and organizations like the ALR to recover priceless works of art and antiquities so they can be returned to their rightful owners."

ICE, the largest investigative agency of the Department of Homeland Security, handles investigations into cultural artifacts that show up on the world market.

For more about ICE's cultural heritage investigations, please go to:

<http://www.ice.gov/pi/news/factsheets/index.htm>

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.

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