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**Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of California

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, December 10, 2021

## **Escondido Resident Sentenced to Three Years in Prison for Selling \$1.1 Million of Forged Art**

**Assistant U. S. Attorney Andrew J. Galvin (619) 546-9721**

### **NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY – December 10, 2021**

SAN DIEGO – Jason Harrington was sentenced in federal court today to 36 months in prison for selling \$1.1 million of forged art he claimed was created by Richard Hambleton, a New York City artist who rose to fame in the 1980s.

When he pleaded guilty in August 2021, Harrington admitted selling forged art to at least 15 galleries and individuals between 2018 and 2020. The forged art included paintings of a black-silhouetted figure known as the Shadowman, which was a recurring motif in Hambleton's works.

To make the forged art appear authentic, Harrington lied to prospective buyers regarding the provenance of the art. To support these false statements, Harrington provided prospective buyers with a fake letter purportedly signed by the individual who obtained the art and, on one occasion, instructed an individual to speak with a prospective buyer and falsely claim to have obtained the art from Hambleton. According to court records, Harrington altered images, using publicly available photographs of Hambleton, to make it appear that the individual who purportedly obtained the art knew Hambleton.

Harrington also admitted to attempting to sell at least one forged painting purporting to be from the noted portraitist Barkley Hendricks. According to court records, Harrington falsely claimed to the owner of an art gallery that he inherited the painting from his uncle. The art gallery, however, refused to purchase the painting after Hendricks' widow viewed the painting and determined it was a forgery.

"This is a fitting sentence for a defendant who harmed investors, corrupted the integrity of the art market, and damaged the historical-cultural record," said Acting U.S. Attorney Randy Grossman. Grossman thanked the prosecution team and the FBI for their excellent work on this case.

"Today's sentence demonstrates the FBI's commitment in pursuing those who make a living victimizing others," said FBI Special Agent in Charge Suzanne Turner. "Mr. Harrington knowingly and willfully operated in the world of forged art and today found out the cost for those criminal acts. These types of crimes not only

hurt the victims who purchased the artwork, they cast a shadow over the art community as a whole - particularly those forged artists' names he used to further his scheme.”

Harrington will appear for a restitution hearing on February 11, 2022 before U.S. District Judge Janis L. Sammartino.

**DEFENDANT****Case Number 21-CR-1184-JLS**

Jason Harrington

Age: 38

Escondido, CA

**SUMMARY OF CHARGES**

Wire Fraud – Title 18, U.S.C., Section 1343

Maximum penalty: Twenty years in prison and \$250,000 fine

**AGENCY**

Federal Bureau of Investigation

**Topic(s):**

Financial Fraud

**Component(s):**USAO - California, Southern**Press Release Number:**

CAS21-1210-Harrington

Updated December 10, 2021