

Antiquities dealer Jerome Eisenberg returns Roman and Etruscan artefacts to Italy

The works had been illegally exported or excavated

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Jerome Eisenberg, the owner of Royal-Athena Galleries in New York and the publisher of the antiquities journal *Minerva*, has returned eight Roman and Etruscan objects to Italy, it emerged last month.

A spokesman for the cultural patrimony unit of the Carabinieri (Italy's militarised police) announced that the restitutions include a first-century Roman statue of a reclining woman, three bronze figurines, and four painted vases, collectively valued at \$510,000.

The bronzes were stolen from Italian collections in the 1970s, while the other pieces have been illegally excavated and exported. Mr Eisenberg acquired some of the works at auction in London in the 1980s. He will not be compensated for their return.

In his blog, Mr Eisenberg says that in 49 years he has sold around 40,000 antiquities, of which fewer than 20 have had to be returned—some to Italy, Greece and Egypt.

Italy has made restitution agreements with the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the Getty Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Princeton University Art Museum—which in late October agreed to return to Italy four objects and title to four more. Some of the items returned by museums will be exhibited this month in the presidential palace in Rome.

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