



# Department of Justice

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## NANTUCKET SCRIMSHAW ARTIST GUILTY OF SMUGGLING SPERM WHALE AND ELEPHANT IVORY, CONSPIRACY, AND LYING TO FEDERAL AGENTS

BOSTON, MA - A Nantucket man was convicted today in federal court of multiple felony counts resulting from his participation in an international conspiracy to smuggle wildlife parts, specifically sperm whale teeth and elephant ivory, into the United States.

United States Attorney Carmen M. Ortiz; Andrew Cohen, Special Agent in Charge of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office for Law Enforcement, Northeast Enforcement Division; Salvatore Amato, Special Agent in Charge, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement; and Bruce M. Foucart, Special Agent in Charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of Investigation in Boston, announced today that **CHARLES MANGHIS**, age 54, of 44 Somerset Lane, Nantucket, Massachusetts was convicted by U.S. District Judge Nancy Gertner of one count of conspiracy to smuggle wildlife, six substantive counts of smuggling wildlife and two counts of making false statements to federal agents. He was acquitted of one count of smuggling and one count of making a false statement.

Evidence presented during the four day bench day trial proved that **MANGHIS** was a commercial scrimshaw artist living and working on Nantucket. He was in the business of making and selling scrimshaw – ivory pieces that are artistically etched -- for forty years. His wares were offered for sale at a well known antique shop on Nantucket and also displayed on his website. Evidence showed that **MANGHIS** bought ivory from persons outside the United States using the internet auction site, EBAY, to use for his scrimshaw items. Additionally, evidence showed that he conspired with a Ukrainian national and others to smuggle large amounts of sperm whale ivory into the United States. Importation of sperm whale ivory into the United States has been banned since the early 1970's.

In June of 2005, Federal agents seized a large quantity of ivory pieces – many with Russian writing and pictures – from **MANGHIS's** home and a well known antique shop in Nantucket. Previously, during a prior search, **MANGHIS's** computer was also seized from his home. A NOAA Special Agent, trained in computer forensics, testified that he located numerous emails on **MANGHIS's** computer between the Ukrainian national and **MANGHIS** which detailed **MANGHIS's** multiple purchases of sperm whale ivory. During the trial, forensic scientists from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service forensic laboratory testified that the items

located in **MANGHIS's** home were, in fact, sperm whale teeth. Additionally, they provided the court with photographs which showed that **MANGHIS** had removed the prior carvings from the pieces, carvings which had included Russian writing and pictures.

During the course of the investigation, **MANGHIS** lied to federal agents by claiming that he purchased the sperm whale ivory from a person in California and not from anyone located outside the United States. When federal agents questioned him about having Russian origin teeth in his home, he falsely claimed that he had none.

**MANGHIS** was indicted and arrested at his home on Nantucket in April of 2008.

After the verdict, Acting U.S. Attorney Jack Pirrozolo commented that “unfortunately the United States is a significant marketplace for the exploitation of illegal wildlife. It is important that we take every step to eliminate the illegal commercial trade in these endangered and protected species. This is a fine example of multi-agency cooperation focused on the reduction and elimination of this illegal trafficking.”

Judge Gertner scheduled sentencing for May 6, 2010. **MANGHIS** faces up to five years imprisonment on each of the nine felony counts, to be followed by three years of supervised release, and a \$ 250,000 fine on each count.

The case was investigated by NOAA, Office of Law Enforcement, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Also providing support was the Nantucket Police Department and the Massachusetts Environmental Police. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Nadine Pellegrini, Chief of Ortiz's Major Crimes Unit.

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