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**GUILTY PLEA FOR ONE DEFENDANT IN CONNECTION
WITH COUNTERFEIT ART SALES**

Defendant Admits to Selling Counterfeit Clementine Hunter Paintings

Lafayette, La.: William Toye, age 79, of Baton Rouge, pleaded guilty today to conspiracy to sell non-authentic paintings falsely attributed to Clementine Hunter, United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced.

William Toye, his wife Beryl Ann Toye, 69, and Robert E. Lucky, Jr., 63, of New Orleans, were named in a four-count indictment charging all three defendants with mail fraud and conspiracy to commit mail fraud.

William Toye admitted to conspiring to defraud collectors of Clementine Hunter paintings by misrepresenting the authenticity and origin of the paintings. Mr. Toye further admitted that he in fact painted many of the fraudulent paintings. The maximum possible penalty in this case is five years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, or both, and three years supervised release. He will also be required to pay restitution to the victims in this case. **Sentencing is scheduled for September 7, 2011 in Alexandria, La.**

Clementine Hunter was an African American self-taught folk artist born on December 4, 1886/1887 at Hidden Hill Plantation, near Cloutierville in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana. She is one of the most well-known artists in the country who is credited as being a social historian capturing portrayals of various scenes of plantation life. Ms. Hunter began painting in the late 1930s and continued to paint until a few days before her death on January 1, 1988. The value of Ms. Hunter's paintings vary and are actively sold on the open art market.

U.S. Attorney Finley stated “ Ms. Hunter was a gem not only for the state of Louisiana but for the art world of this country. This case is extremely unfortunate in that this defendant preyed upon the best of what our art community has to offer. It was all motivated by greed. We hope that this case sends a message of the importance of protecting our artists and those who are patrons of the art.”

The case was investigated by the Special Agent Randolph J. Deaton, III, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Alexandria Resident Agency, and is being prosecuted by First Assistant United States Attorney Alexander C. Van Hook and Assistant United States Attorney Cytheria D. Jernigan.

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