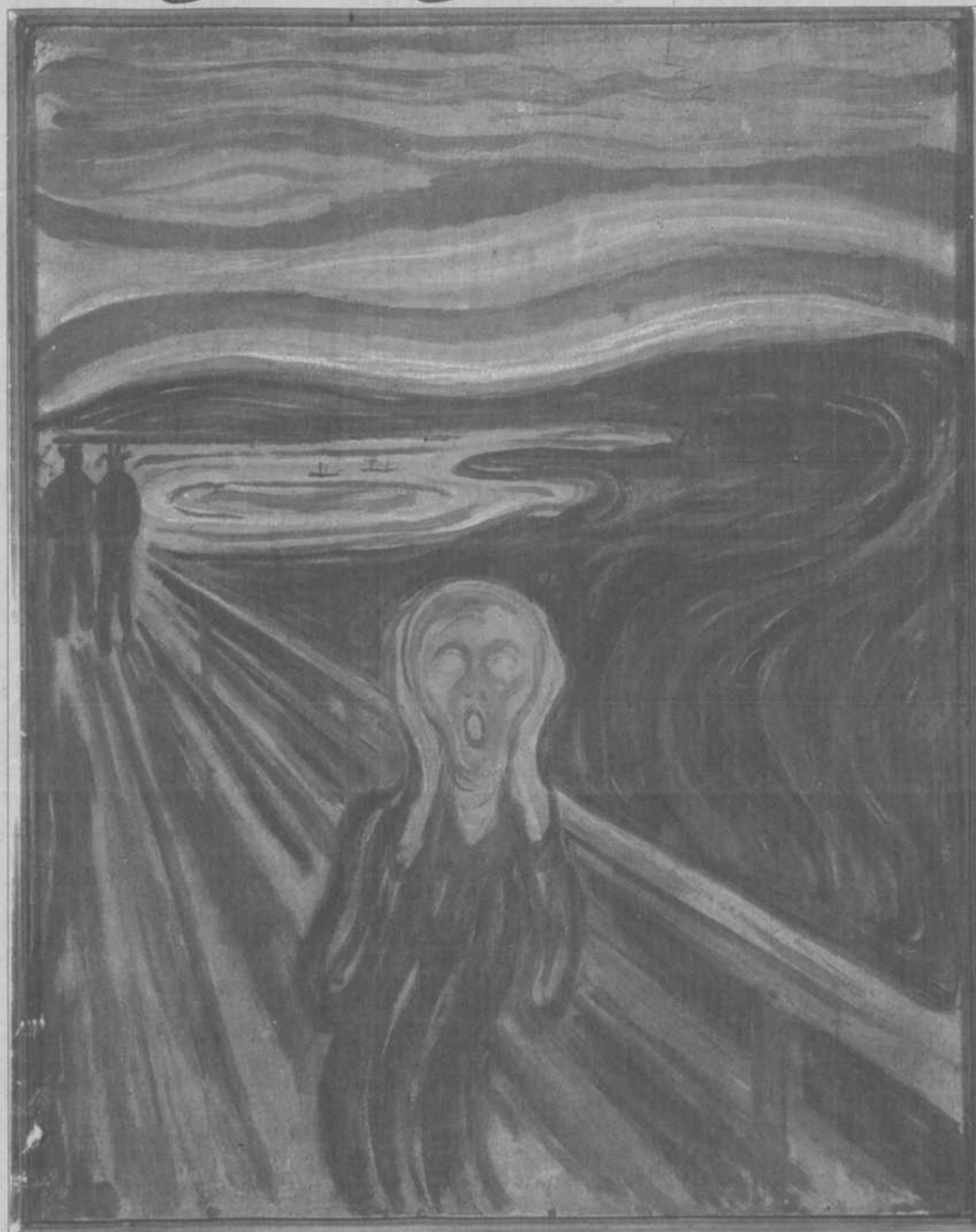


# 'Scream' search ongoing in Oslo



## ■ Theft stirs debate regarding museum's security

**OSLO, NORWAY** — The brazen daylight theft of Edvard Munch's renowned masterpiece "The Scream" left Norway's police scrambling for clues and stirred a debate across Europe over how to protect art if thieves are willing to use deadly force to take it.

Some expressed fears that works of art are in increasing danger from violent raids — unless, as Norway's deputy culture minister put it, "we lock them in a mountain bunker."

Armed, masked robbers stormed into Oslo's Munch Museum in broad daylight Sunday, threatening an employee with a gun and terrifying patrons before they made off with a version of Munch's famous painting "The Scream" and another of his masterpieces, "Madonna."

A day after the theft and despite many tips, police said they have no suspects, no trace of the paintings and no theory on a motive.

The getaway car and the picture frames were found by police in Oslo hours after the robbery. The car's interior had been sprayed with a fire extinguisher to cover up any clues, and Inspector Iver Stensrud of the Oslo police said it could take days to clean up enough to find forensic evidence.

The most likely motives, according to the Norwegian news media, are a ransom or to impress other criminals, since the paintings are so famous that they would be all but impossible to sell.

Whatever the motive, Munch Museum director Gunnar Soerensen appealed to the robbers to "please take care of the paintings, no matter what else you do with them."

Another of the four versions of "The Scream" was stolen from the National Gallery in Oslo on the opening day of the 1994 Winter Olympics in Norway. Its thieves demanded a ransom but were caught in a sting and the work was recovered after about three months.

"The Scream," an icon of modern alienation, depicts an anguished figure who appears to be screaming or shielding his ears against a scream. "Madonna" depicts the virgin as eroticized and mysterious, with a blood-red halo.

The lightly guarded Munch Museum has silent alarms and security staff. However, in a country where even police do not routinely carry weapons, there would be little that unarmed museum guards could do to stop at least three robbers that seemed ready to use their weapons.

"It is food for thought that the spiral of violence has now reached the art world," Deputy Culture



Norwegian police said Monday they were working on several tips in their search for Munch's "Madonna," left, and a version of his "The Scream," above, after a bold daytime theft from an Oslo museum Sunday in front of stunned visitors.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Minister Yngve Slettholm told The Associated Press. "This is a first for Norway, and we can only be glad that no one was hurt."

Armed robbery is rare in Norway.

Slettholm cited a bank robbery in Stavanger in April in which heavily armed criminals shot and killed a police officer, a rare occurrence in a country where fewer than 10 officers have been killed on the job since 1945.

So, he said, the only way to totally protect great art would be to lock it away in a bunker out of public view.

Officials said there were no immediate plans to improve security at the Munch Museum.

"We can't see that any mistakes were made. We also can't see that the evaluation we had ahead of this has been wrong," said Lise Mjoes, director of the Oslo Municipal art collections. "If we only thought about security, then we would have to place the pictures in a vault, but then they aren't accessible."

The dilemma is shared by many museums in Norway and abroad.

"We cannot lock up our pieces of art because we want to show them to a large audience," said Sune Nordgren, director of the National Museum of Art in Oslo. He said having armed guards would only result in thieves outgunning them.

In 2001, thieves raided Sweden's national museum and cut down a self portrait by Rembrandt and two paintings by Renoir. Those paintings were hanging from steel wires, like the paintings in the Munch museum.

Jan Birkehorn, head of security at the National Museum in Sweden, said it's almost impossible to make paintings theft-proof without ruining the experience for visitors.

"Should you put them inside security monitors with thick glass? I

think the experience of looking at them would be lost," he said.

He also said he does not believe in having automatic metal bars that would close to keep thieves inside the museum because thieves "may take a hostage."

"We are very aware of the changing world and the threats that face us, and therefore we have recently renewed all our security measures," said Soili Sinisalo, director of the Finnish National Gallery's main art museum, Ateneum. "Security must be airtight. That's the only way to make sure that nothing is stolen."

Sinisalo said the museum is retraining all its approximately 100 staffers in security and has placed cameras in each exhibit room.

In general, museums are very tightlipped about security, saying secrecy is one of their greatest defenses.

"We can't talk about our security system because that would be like giving an instruction manual to someone who wanted to steal something," said Clemence Goldberger, spokesman for the Rodin Museum in Paris.

Spain's main museums have armed guards and metal detectors. "We had a series of measures that are visible to the public but others that are secret," said spokesman Jose Maria Ambrona for Spain's Prado museum.

France's Musee d'Orsay has extensive and largely secret security systems, in addition to guards and metal detectors.

But even that would not stop a violent robbery such as the one in Oslo.

"Museums are never completely safe from such a theft. If an armed gang came into the museum with machine guns, there's not a lot that can be done," said museum spokeswoman Nicole Richy.

## NO BOYS ALLOWED



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Kristielle Pedraza poses outside the Irma Rangel Young Women's Leadership School in Dallas. Kristielle, 13, says she won't miss boys as she attends Dallas' first all-girls public school and one of a growing number of such schools nationally.

# Same-sex schools to open in 6 states including S.C.

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**DALLAS** — For an increasing number of public schools, the formula for a better education requires a little arithmetic: divide the girls from the boys.

That's just fine with Kristielle Pedraza, a 13-year-old who says she will not miss the boys while she attends the Irma Rangel Young Women's Leadership School, Dallas' first all-girls public school and one of a growing number of such schools nationally.

"They're usually the class clowns," said Kristielle, who entered the seventh grade last week. "With no guys in the school, I can know we will really get busy without much distraction."

At least 11 single-sex public schools will open this fall in six states: Texas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, South Carolina and Oregon. Advocates say separating the sexes can improve learning by easing the peer pressure that can lead to misbehavior as well as low self-esteem among girls.

"John Kerry, George W. Bush, his father and Al Gore all went to all-boys schools. We don't think that's a coincidence," said Dr. Leonard Sax, a Maryland physician and psychologist who founded a nonprofit group that advocates single-sex public education. "We think single-sex education really empowers girls and boys from very diverse backgrounds to achieve."

Some women's groups say segregation of any kind is wrong. "We think segregation has historically always resulted in second-class citizens," said Terry O'Neill, a National Organization for Women vice president.

The number of U.S. public schools offering single-sex classes jumped from four to 140 in the past eight years, Sax said. At 36 of those schools, at least one grade will have only single-sex classes this year.

Advocates said they expect the number to increase now that the U.S. Education Department has announced plans to change its enforcement of the landmark

discrimination law Title IX, which bars sex discrimination in schools.

"Many school districts wanted to offer this option, but they feared being sued by interest groups," said Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, who fought for an amendment in the No Child Left Behind Act that encouraged districts to experiment with single-sex education.

The 126 seventh- and eighth-graders at the Dallas school will take pre-honors classes with a heavy emphasis on math, science and technology courses, which traditionally enroll few girls.

Sax said separating the sexes allows teachers and administrators to focus on the different ways boys and girls learn. Girls, he said, learn better in quiet classrooms and intimate schools where they are on a first-name basis with their teachers. Boys learn better when teachers challenge them to answer rapid-fire questions and address them by their last names.

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