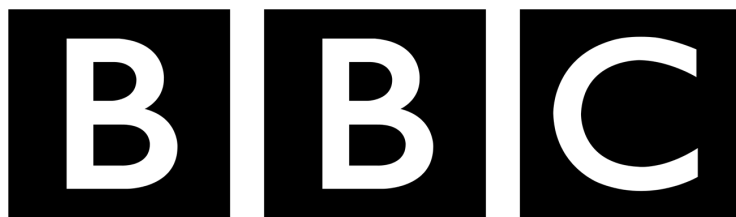


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Rembrandt theft foiled at Dulwich Picture Gallery



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An "audacious" attempt to steal two valuable paintings by Rembrandt from a south London gallery has been thwarted, police say.

An intruder broke into Dulwich Picture Gallery on Wednesday night but the paintings were "secured at the scene", it was confirmed on Thursday. Neither of the art works, by the Dutch golden age painter, left the grounds. The gallery praised their "robust security" and "the swift response of the Metropolitan Police." The **Rembrandt's Light exhibition** and gallery will remain closed for now, while a "full investigation" takes place.

'Planned in advance'

The police said an intruder used a canister to spray an officer in the face with an unknown substance, and as a result was able to get away. The officer did not suffer serious injuries and quickly recovered both paintings, with the help of security staff, "This was an audacious attempted burglary and was clearly planned in advance," **said detective inspector Jason Barber** from the Flying Squad.

"Two paintings in the exhibition were targeted and it was only down to the prompt response of gallery security staff and the courage and swift intervention of officers that these two works of art were not stolen. Thankfully both the paintings were quickly recovered and secured."

The exhibition on "one of the greatest painters who ever lived" opened last month and focused on 35 of his paintings, etchings and drawings, including those owned by the gallery and others on loan from The Louvre and Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum.