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**FIFTH INDICTED DEFENDANT APPREHENDED AND CHARGED WITH CONSPIRACY  
IN MILLION DOLLAR LUXURY GOODS HEIST FROM JFK AIRPORT IN 2020**

*Crew Allegedly Stole Millions of Dollars in Gucci, Chanel and Prada Merchandise;  
Defendant Faces Up to 25 Years in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, joined by the Port Authority Police Chief Security Officer John Bilich, announced today that Oscar Asencio, 32, has been indicted and arraigned in Queens Supreme Court for his role in assisting the crew that allegedly committed two brazen heists, stealing over \$6 million worth of designer merchandise from John F. Kennedy International Airport last year. The defendant is charged with conspiracy and criminal possession of stolen property for possessing, protecting and selling-off nearly half of the millions of dollars' worth of stolen designer gear from the second heist - including Chanel jewelry and handbags, Gucci sneakers, purses, sunglasses and clothing.

District Attorney Katz said, "On the run since October, this defendant is now in custody and facing very serious charges. The defendant is accused of participating in selling off millions of dollars' worth of stolen merchandise taken from JFK Airport. Our airports are supposed to be secure for both people and the goods imported into our region. One of my top priorities is keeping our airports safe for all travelers, as well as imported merchandise – including the much-needed PPE, vaccines and other medical supplies coming into New York."

Port Authority Chief Security Officer Bilich said, "This multi-agency effort has once again paid dividends and allowed us to continue to protect the public and ensure the safety of those who live and work in the region. We applaud the dedication and commitment of the law enforcement teams at the Port Authority Police Department, FBI and Queens District Attorney's office who have helped bring this case to a successful conclusion."

Asencio, of 21<sup>st</sup> Street in Astoria, Queens, was arraigned late Tuesday afternoon before Queens Supreme Court Justice Gene Lopez on an indictment charging him with criminal possession of stolen property in the first degree and conspiracy in the fourth degree. Justice Lopez remanded the defendant and set his next date for March 25, 2021. If convicted, Asencio faces up to 25 years in prison.

DA Katz said, according to the charges, a crew of men – some of them former airport workers – used their insider knowledge of how shipments are picked up at the airport to gain access to a cargo importer in January and May of 2020. A co-defendant went to the receiving office for the importer and used forged documents to gain access to various shipments of designer goods.

According to the charges, more than \$800,000 in Prada merchandise was stolen in the first heist. In May, more than \$5.3 million in Gucci and Chanel products were taken from the importing business.

The DA said, defendant Asencio allegedly helped protect the merchandise that was stolen in May that was subsequently stashed in a non-operating beauty salon at Guy R. Brewer Boulevard and 147<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Jamaica, Queens. Surveillance video allegedly shows Asencio at the site carrying bags filled with the stolen property in and out of the building. The defendant allegedly also helped sell of the stolen items out of the stash house.

All but approximately \$2.5 million worth of merchandise was sold. Police executing a Court-authorized search warrant seized mountains of boxes stuffed with stolen Gucci bags, clothes and other accoutrements. There were more than 1,000 Chanel purses, jewelry, sunglasses and accessories and Prada items found inside the empty building.

The investigation was conducted by Detectives Nicholas Ciancarelli, Anthony Young, Daniel Tancredo, Joseph Pignataro, Phil Tysowski, Sergio Laboy, Francisco Romero, Katie Lewrey, Luis Santibanez and Tonya McKinley, of the Port Authority Police, under the supervision of Detective Sergeant Thomas Eddings, Sergeant Dewan Maharaj, Detective Lieutenant Jose Alba, Inspector Hugh Johnson, and under the overall supervision of Port Authority Criminal Investigation Bureau Chief Matthew Wilson, PAPD Superintendent Edward Cetnar and Port Authority Police Chief Security Officer John Bilich.

Also assisting in the investigation were members of the District Attorney's Office, specifically Assistant District Attorneys Catherine Kane, Chief of Airport Investigations and Deputy Bureau Chief of the Major Economic Crimes Bureau and Elizabeth Speck of the Major Economic Crimes Bureau and Detective Lieutenant Al Schwartz, of the DA's Detective Bureau.

Assistant District Attorney Catherine Kane, Chief of Airport Investigations and Deputy Bureau Chief of the Major Economic Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Elizabeth Speck, also of the Major Economic Crimes Bureau, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Mary Lowenburg, Bureau Chief of the Major Economic Crimes, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney of Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

*Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.*

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