

• **READ MORE: LA fire death toll rises to 25 with another 84,800 placed**

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The **devastating Los Angeles wildfires** have put billions of dollars worth of fine art at risk as experts warn it could be 'one of the most impactful art losses ever in America.'

Wealthy collectors and renowned artists alike have watched helplessly as their priceless works go up in flames.

At least 90 artists have lost homes or studios in devastating **Los Angeles** wildfires.

Wealthy art collector Ron Rivlin lost over 200 artworks including more than 24 Andy Warhols.

Rivlin managed to save just three Andy Warhol pieces as he fled his Pacific Palisades home with flames bearing down.

'I grabbed those, and as I was leaving, I saw the fire ahead of me on the hill,' Rivlin told the **New York Times**.

When he returned days later, he found his home reduced to dust - along with more than 200 artworks including dozens of Warhols, Keith Harings, and Damien Hirsts valued at millions of dollars.

He stood ankle-deep in twisted metal and concrete where his pink Warhol print of Queen Elizabeth once hung.

'It's dust at this point,' Rivlin said.



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The devastating Los Angeles wildfires have put billions of dollars worth of fine art at risk as experts warn could be 'one of the most impactful art losses ever in America' (The Getty Villa art museum is threatened by the flames of the wind-driven Palisades Fire, Jan. 7, 2025)

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Simon de Burgh Codrington, fine arts insurance specialist at Risk Strategies said this could be the most devastating art loss ever in the country.

'This is going to be substantial and possibly one of the most impactful art losses ever in America,' de Burgh Codrington told [ARTnews](#).

'It's expected to be 'much more impactful than Sandy was to the art world.'

The fires have ravaged artists' communities, as multimedia artist Kathryn Andrews tracks over 90 fellow artists who have lost homes or studios.

Among them is Alec Egan, who lost his home, studio and two years of work meant for an upcoming gallery show, as reported by [Cultured Magazine](#).

'When I got to my front door, it was gone,' Egan told the outlet.

Painter Tara Walters, who was in New York when disaster struck, lost generations of family heirlooms along with her work.

'I had so many heirlooms in my house that my great-grandmothers and grandfathers hand built—their furniture, rugs, and photos of my family from the 1800s,' she wrote.



Art collector Ron Rivlin lost over 200 artworks including 24+ Andy Warhols. Rivlin managed to save just three Andy Warhol pieces as he fled his Pacific Palisades home with flames bearing down



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**When Rivlin returned days later, he found his specially-designed home reduced to dust - along with more than 200 artworks including dozens of Warhols, Keith Harings, and Damien Hirsts valued at millions of dollars(His pink Warhol print of Queen Elizabeth was destroyed in the fire)**

'The last thing my grandfather gave me before he passed were these two art deco glass flower vases. Everything has now turned to ash. We were in New York when it happened and were unable to grab anything. So many memories, paintings, music equipment, our entire town - it's been so difficult to come to the realization that this is our new reality.'

Painter Salomon Huerta said he lost his whole collection.

'On Wednesday the 8th, I was painting in my studio when my wife called that the fire was visible from our house. I rushed out to help her evacuate.'

'The wind was so dramatic, it felt like the end of the world. We got what was essential but I lost my art collection, art books, archives, and our home. I'm happy we are safe.'

For many artists, the losses go beyond monetary value.

Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio, a multimedia artist, escaped with just mismatched socks, as reported by Cultured Magazine.

'I left my house with one mismatched pair of socks—functioning but made of two wholes torn apart and forced together,' he said.

'Never to re-wear an old outfit to an art event again. The suitcase I never unpacked from [the New Orleans exhibition] Prospect. The bad art that was gifted to me no longer hidden in the bathrooms. Home + ADHD + fire = 100 unfinished projects and tasks I'm freed from.'



**Vice president of Risk Strategies, Christopher Wise, called the destruction 'devastating' to the art world and predicted billions in losses**



**Internationally renowned artist Paul McCarthy has been forced to postpone his upcoming London exhibition at Hauser & Wirth after losing his Altadena home and studio**

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Artist Seth Bogart emphasized the uncertainty regarding his future.

'I've spent the last few days not knowing if my house and studio have burnt, while getting the news of countless friends who have lost their homes,' he said.

In addition to private collection and work losses, beloved art museums and cultural landmarks across Los Angeles have been ravaged by the fires.

Many institutions have been damaged or destroyed completely with some forced to close their doors indefinitely.

The historic Zorthian Ranch artist colony, founded by sculptor Jirayr Zorthian, burned to the ground while parts of the Getty Villa scorched, and dozens of smaller galleries and museums were forced to shutter their doors as flames tear through the city's art districts.

Major galleries including Marian Goodman and David Zwirner remain closed.



**The death toll is expected to continue to rise as authorities gain access to the smoldering sites ravaged by the fires**

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Internationally renowned artist Paul McCarthy has been forced to postpone his upcoming London exhibition at Hauser & Wirth after losing his Altadena home and studio, ArtNews reported.

Even the Getty Center, despite its fire-resistant construction, was temporarily placed under mandatory evacuation orders as the Palisades fire expanded.

Miraculously though, the Getty Museum stood strong against the raging wildfires, with 45 dedicated staff members working in shifts to protect billions of dollars worth of masterpieces including Van Gogh's 'Irises.'

The flames came dangerously close to the museum on January 7, reaching within six feet of the Getty Villa's eastern walls.

Yet thanks to years of meticulous planning and a \$9.1 billion endowment that funded extensive fire prevention measures, both the Getty Villa and Getty Center have remained safe during the fires, as reported by the Wall Street Journal.

'We're holding up well, but it's been totally wild,' Katherine Fleming, president and chief executive of the Getty Trust, told the outlet.

While the museum remains 'safe and stable,' the surrounding grounds have sustained damage.

## Southern California wildfire burns near iconic Getty Villa



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Insurance experts warn the disaster's full impact is yet to be realized.

Vice president of Risk Strategies, Christopher Wise, called the destruction 'devastating' to the art world and predicted billions in losses.

'There are huge amounts of fine art value under threat at the current moment. Many, many billions of fine art,' he told ArtNews.

Risk Strategies insures 'many collectors, museums, galleries, artists, and warehouses throughout Los Angeles,' Wise confirmed.

Still many artists decided to move their artworks into safer locations following evacuation offers.

'Our hearts break to hear of the scale of the losses,' Wise told the outlet. 'We have also been actively reaching out to try and help ... As the fires continue to expand and new areas are affected, we continue to communicate and act vigilantly on behalf of our clients.'

Grace Aretsky of HUB International called the scale of loss 'catastrophic and calamitous.'

She emphasized the 'exceedingly high aggregation' of fine art in the Los Angeles area.

She warned that insurance rates are likely to rise across the board.

'There is no doubt that insurance companies are bracing themselves for massive fine art claims, but the implications for the broader art ecosystem are unprecedented,' Aretsky told ArtNews.



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Authorities warned anybody in the vicinity of the blazes to be prepared to flee at a moment's notice, amid concerns that increasing winds will whip up new fires and fan the flames of those already burning



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Some 12,300 structures have been wiped out in the carnage



## Residents who live behind the Getty Villa share devastating videos



With roads blocked and the National Guard deployed to prevent looting, many artists and collectors can only wait to learn the fate of their life's work.

George Lacovara, Los Angeles director of art storage company Gander & White, said safety remains the priority.

'Our top priority remains the safety of our team and their families during this unprecedented natural disaster,' Lacovara told ArtNews.

'We are providing support to our clients and have undertaken several successful emergency art extractions, responding swiftly to the threat posed by these fires, drawing on our extensive experience in managing such challenges.'

But for many, help came too late.

As art logistics veteran Jonathan Schwartz told ArtNews that 'the call for help is never early enough.'

'I've been at this line of work nearly four decades and I don't recall it ever being this catastrophic so close to central LA,' he said.

'We've made ourselves available to clients who need emergency assistance but in most cases the roads are not accessible. It's this way in the east with hurricanes. The call for help is never early enough.'

The human toll of the wildfires has been devastating, with at least 25 dead and over 88,000 residents placed under a new evacuation alert and warned to brace for more dangerous fire weather.



A fire crew drives through a mobile home park that was destroyed by the Palisades Fire



On Tuesday, the National Weather Service said 'we are not out of the woods yet' despite winds not reaching the predicted intensity

LAFD shares the damage done in Malibu by the Palisades Fire

 Watch the full video

Governor Gavin Newsom has already declared it one of the worst natural disasters in US history.

Authorities warned anybody in the vicinity of the blazes to be prepared to flee at a moment's notice, amid concerns that increasing winds will whip up new fires and fan the flames of those already burning.

On Tuesday, the National Weather Service said 'we are not out of the woods yet' despite winds not reaching the predicted intensity.

'The winds underperformed today, but one more enhancement could happen tonight-tomorrow,' NWS said in a statement.

This round of Santa Ana winds was not expected to be as strong as last week, but they could carry **fire-sparking embers** for miles and stoke new outbreaks in a decimated region where at least 25 people have already been killed.

The **death toll is expected to continue to rise** as authorities gain access to the smoldering sites ravaged by the fires.

The coroner initially said two new bodies were discovered on Tuesday - one in the vicinity of the Palisades fire which tore through the **celebrity enclaves of Malibu and the Pacific Palisades** - and another near the Eaton fire in Pasadena and Altadena.

But the death toll only went up by one after the coroner revealed the remains from the Eaton fire were not human.

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