

# Death in the sculptor's studio

Boca's oldest cold case: 1948 double murder  
haunts famous artist's family



JIM AVAGLIANO/COURTESY

The murders of sculptor Leno Lazzari and his wife, Louise, in their home stunned what was then the small town of Boca Raton and made international headlines at the time.

BY ANNE GEGGIS | Staff writer

Boca Raton's oldest cold case started with a Palm Beach society sculptor and his wife lying lifeless in their bedroom. Both had been shot at close range, their corpses on the floor next to their bed.

Who cut short the flamboyant lives of famed sculptor Leno Lazzari, 48, and his wife, Louise, 40, is a mystery that has endured for 66 years. The case is cold enough that death has likely put the perpetrator far from the reach of the justice system.

But getting a satisfying answer for why the Lazzaris were slain, and finding the sculptor's remaining art, has his family on a quest. Lazzari's great-grandson Danilo Lazzari, 37, recently traveled from his home in Munich, Germany, to South Florida. He reviewed police records and even put himself at the spot where his great-grandfather was found dead in his studio off North Federal Highway in Boca Raton all those years ago.

The murders have haunted his family, Lazzari says, to the point his relatives want to know the information as he gets it.

"All my relatives want to know, 'What are you doing? What's going on?'" he said, ex-

plaining the ding from the cellphone in his pocket during last month's visit. "Each one of us has our own stories, a piece of the puzzle. But we need to see the whole picture."

Danilo Lazzari's travels in search of his great-grandfather's artwork have unearthed a painting in Vermont, which he found and bought on eBay.

Back in the day, the murders made a big enough splash that news of them hit the front page of the *New York Times* on Nov. 15, 1948, underneath the announcement that England's Crown Prince Charles had been

See LAZZARI, T1A