

Case of handless victim, decorator arrested

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Giuseppe Piccolomo, 58, a painter and decorator from Ispra, originally from Cocquio, is the man who was arrested yesterday afternoon by the police and by the public prosecutors Maurizio Grigo and Luca Petrucci, for the premeditated murder, aggravated by violence and futile causes, of Carla Molinari. He came out of the Varese police headquarters after 7 p.m. Stocky, with grey hair, wearing an orange jacket, and handcuffed, he tried to cover his face with a sheet of paper to hide from the photographers' flashes, while a police car took him to jail. **The turning-point in the investigation came after a day and night of interrogations** in the police headquarters, where the investigators held him until 3.30 a.m. on Thursday. The man's house has been searched. According to leaks, there are scratch marks under his beard. He was officially identified as a police suspect last night, when a court-appointed lawyer came to the police headquarters shortly after midnight.

The evidence collected by flying squad officers from Varese and from the police's Central Operations Service, which, according to the prosecutor, demonstrate the man's guilt, has been defined as "definite". In particular, there were direct connections with the scene of the murder of the retired, 82-year-old typographer, and the suspect was present at the time that experts say the crime was committed. Investigators had been on to him for days, especially after the discovery of cigarette ends; the murderer had placed them in the house where the crime had occurred, in order to confound the investigation. **The man is short, and his foot print is compatible with those found in the house.** These are other details that the investigators are considering. Although his detention is an important step, it is not

evidence of guilt. Over the next few hours, Piccolomo's position will be assessed also by the preliminary investigation magistrate. Apparently, there is strong evidence of the man's guilt; investigations are still continuing, and it is possible that information explaining the motive may be obtained from the decorator's acquaintances.

The murder dates back to 5 November, and it caused alarm because of the ferocious way it was committed. It is necessary to clear up whether Piccolomo was alone that night, and where the victim's hands and the murder weapons (maybe a screwdriver and a knife used to cut her throat) have ended up.

Another detail provides a clearer picture of the suspect. In 2003, his wife was burnt to death in a controversial car accident, in Caravate. On that occasion, Piccolomo negotiated one year and four month sentence, for manslaughter.

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