

Art Adventure I Sam Dalkilic-Miestowski



Tips for buying and selling

Leslie Hindman is one of the country's foremost authorities on the buying and selling of antiques, fine art, and collectibles. In 1982, Leslie founded Leslie Hindman Auctioneers in Chicago. Within a few years it grew to be the largest auction house in the Midwest and the fifth largest in the country. The company conducted many significant and highly publicized auctions, including memorabilia from the historic Comiskey Park, the Chicago Stadium, and the Schwinn Family Bicycle Collection.

Leslie was the host of two popular television shows on the Home & Garden Television Network (HGTV): At the Auction with Leslie Hindman, and The Appraisal Fair, which were viewed from 1994-2001 in more than 80 million homes across the United States. I met Leslie for the first time when she interviewed me for "At the Auction."

Leslie also wrote a weekly syndicated column for the Chicago Tribune called "What's It Worth?" In February 2001, her critically acclaimed book, *Adventures at the Auction*, was published by Clarkson Potter, a division of Random House. The following are excerpts from her book: *Leslie Hindman Shares Tips for Buying and Selling at Auction*

Authenticity

Is it real? Is it what the catalogue says it is? Without an accurate identification there is no way to value anything properly. The difference between real and fake can be the difference between one dollar and a million.

Condition

What kind of shape is your object in? This category affects some property more than others. A settee with torn fabric can be reupholstered; a tear in the canvas of a very rare painting is not

as easily fixed.

Rarity

Rarity is often the overriding factor in determining any item's value. There must be demand for supply to matter. Rarity requires that few copies or examples of an object were made in the first place, but helps if even fewer survive.

Provenance

Think of the Jackie Onassis auction. The success of this estate sale was largely the result of Provenance. In fact, this is what celebrity auctions are all about. Knowing where an object has been can make a huge difference in its value. For example, our firm handled the sale of the Schwinn family bicycle collection. Needless to say the documented ownership of the property by the family of the famed bicycle maker contributed to the success of the sale and the standing room only crowd that filled our gallery.

Historical Significance

This criterion is self descriptive. This sounds like provenance but it's actually quite different. Historical Significance refers to the importance of the object rather than the importance of its owners. For example, The Magna Carta was up for sale last December at Sotheby's. This important document from 1215 that first established rule of law brought \$21.3 million.

Size

Bigger is not always better. Fabulous oriental rugs that are unusually large often go unsold at auction. After all, how many buyers have the space necessary to accommodate a 27 by 8 foot floor covering?

Medium

Is the work that you are interested in selling a painting? A print? A drawing? Our firm recently handled the sale of several works by the French artist Jean Dufy. One oil painting, Paris, Rue

Laffitte brought \$72,000.00 in December 2006. Another work by Dufy was sold that same year at Sotheby's in New York. The scene was similar but the work was a gouache rather than an oil painting. This work brought only \$7,200.00 at auction. Medium matters.

Subject Matter

Pretty sells, period. If your mother maintains two paintings in her collection by the same artist, one featuring a young girl on the sea shore and another of an old man on his deathbed which do you suppose is more desirable? Attractive subject matter increases the value of property in nearly every situation.

Fashion

Just as hemlines and heels go up and down over the years so too do trends in collecting. Tiffany lamps were for many decades so out of fashion with collectors you could barely give them away at a garage sale. Now, the very wealthy can barely afford them at auction. Taste changes.

Quality

This is really the catchall for the entire group of ten criteria, a reminder that value is a combination of all things. Knowing quality when you see it is something that over time develops. After a while, good things look good. They look right. And they are right.

Visit **Leslie Hindman Auctioneers** at their new 1338 West Lake Street location in Chicago's West Loop neighborhood. Upcoming auction schedules and additional information are available online at www.lesliehindman.com or call 312-280-1212. I want to express my thanks to Leslie Hindman for her wonderful assistance and cooperation with the Steeple Gallery over the past 5 years.

Sam Dalkilic-Miestowski owns the **Steeple Gallery** in St. John, Indiana 11107 Thiel St. in St. John. You can email your comments at samowner@sbcglobal.net



Top: This Jean Dufy painting entitled Paris, Rue Laffitte was sold by Leslie Hindman Auctioneers and brought \$72,000.00 in December 2006.

Center: Tiffany Geometric Favrite Glass and Bronze Lamp sold for \$198,400.00 in February 2007.

Bottom: 1889 Rudge tandem tricycle, England. Sold for \$19,550 when Hindman's firm handled the Schwinn family collection in 1997. Individual bricks from the famous bicycle factory sold for \$362.00 apiece.

Cars

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conditional offers of employment to the two top candidates for Firefighter/EMT or Firefighter/Paramedic.

These two positions are existing vacancies covered by the 2007 budget.

DeLor also received permission to promote Firefighter/ Paramedic Mike Parks to the rank of Lieutenant on the B-Shift.

Park's promotion fills the vacancy created by DeLor's move to chief.

DeLor said, "Mike Parks scored the highest on both the written exam and

overall ranking." The promotion will be effective with the next pay period beginning March 23.

The remainder of the promotion list was also certified by the BOW for future promotions through Dec. 31, 2009.

There was a contingent of firemen at the board meeting waiting for DeLor to see how they rank on the promotions list.

Due to new privacy regulations, the police and fire departments can no longer post promotion lists. Each person taking the test has to be informed individually.

Hanover

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In the past 20 years Richie has coached basketball, baseball, football, track and field, golf, and cross country.

He is the current principal of Bellmont High School in Decatur, Ind. The school has 936 students in ninth through twelfth grades. He has been with that school since July of 2000 and has been principal for the past six years.

His previous administrative position was at Lake Central High School, where he was an assistant principal. Lake Central.

The previous years have been spent as a

teacher, coach and counselor at three small Indiana high schools.

Richie was at Mississinewa for five years, Shenandoah for two years, and Union High (Modoc) for his first year back in Indiana.

Immediately after receiving his master's degree Richie was a teacher and coach at Cypress Creek High School in Houston TX. This was his biggest school with 3,138 students in 4 grades and one of 5 high schools in that district in Houston.