How do I find information about a past sale or the value and authenticity of a work of art, book, map, or collectible?

- Research current and past sales of works by checking sales indexes, price guides, and dealers’ inventories.
- Library resources, such as price indexes, may be helpful in estimating the approximate monetary value of works of art and other materials. Entries may be arranged by artist’s last name, medium, or date of sale.

**DISCLAIMER:** The Libraries at the Metropolitan Museum of Art do not provide, endorse, recommend, or guarantee appraisal services. The Research Library is not affiliated with public Web sites referenced here nor is it responsible for their content.

**Online Auction Resources** - Please note some online resources require a subscription.

- **Art Sales Catalogues Online (1600–1900)**
  - Access to bibliographic citations and a growing number of auction catalogs in full-text, covering European and American auctions from 1600–1900. This resource incorporates Frits Lugt’s Répertoire des Catalogues de Ventes Publiques (also a part of Lugt’s Répertoire online database).

- **ArtNet**
  - ArtNet’s price database contains information on artworks offered for sale since 1985 from over 500 major auction houses worldwide. The works range from Old Masters to Contemporary Art and are mostly from all periods and cultures. ArtNet covers auctions for fine arts and design. **Please note, this resource can only be used by Museum staff (On-site use only).**

- **AskART (1986–present)**
  - In so far as American artists are concerned, AskArt defines the scope as spanning from pre-Columbus settlers through modern art expressionists, and they index sales of American art from 1986 to the present. Sales of international artists only go back to 2007.

- **Blouin Art Sales Index (1970–present)**
  - This database includes broad international coverage of over 500 auction houses. It indexes auctions back to 1970 for paintings, prints, photographs, sculpture, works on paper, and miniatures and is updated not only with the latest catalogues, but also with a selective collection of catalogues for Christie’s and Sotheby’s dating back to 1920.

- **Getty Provenance Index**
  - A free internet resource that contains close to one million records of indexed transcriptions from auction catalogs and archival inventories. The sales catalog portion of the database includes information from catalogs from the UK, France, Belgium, Germany, Scandinavia, and the Netherlands from 1650–1840.
Invaluable
Contains pre-sale and post-sale information for sale houses across United Kingdom, Europe, North America and Canada.

SCIPIO: Art and Rare Books Sales Catalogs
Database of over 300,000 auction catalog records of sales covering art objects and rare books from the late 16th century to present, mostly from North American and European houses. Twenty-five art organizations, including the Met, contribute auction catalog records to the database.

Price Resources
Works of art
ArtValue.com
Replaces the paper edition of Guide Mayer, which ceased production in 2005. Offers free and unlimited online access to auction results, illustrated with pictures from auction houses around the world. Sales from 1987 to present.

Auktionspreise im Kunstpreis Jahrbuch. Munich: Weltkunst Verlag. (annual)
International sales from 1939 to the present; fine and decorative arts.

Davenport’s Art Reference & Price Guide. Phoenix: Gordon’s Art Reference, 1986 –.
Sales from 1986 to the present; paintings, watercolors, drawings, engravings, lithographs, sculpture.

Gordon’s Print Price Annual/Gordon’s Print Price Annual Online. Phoenix: LTB Gordonsart. (annual)
Sales from 1978 to the present; prints, posters, graphics, Picasso ceramics (excludes photographs).

Hislop’s Art Sales Index. Egham, Eng.: Art Sales Index. (annual)
International sales from 1968 to the present; paintings, works of art, miniatures, sculpture, prints, photographs.

Photographs
Gordon’s Photography Price Online. *Onsite access only.
International sales from 1997 to the present.

Photographic Art Market. Langhorne, PA: Photograph Collector. (annual)
Sales held from 1980 to the present.

Books, ephemera, and maps
American Book Prices Current, Online. *Onsite access only.
Includes foreign titles.

Book Auction Records
International book auctions up to the end of the 1997 season

Bookfinder
Used and rare book search service with over 70 million titles.
Your Old Books
Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) of the Association of College and Research Libraries has provided a guide that addresses some frequently asked questions about rare and older books and their values.

Collectibles
Check nearby public libraries for collectibles price guides, for example, Kovels’ Antiques and Collectibles Price List and Warman’s Antiques and Collectibles Price Guide.

Contact an Appraiser
An appraiser is a professional who determines the value or authenticity of a work of art or other materials. Before hiring, you may wish to inquire about the appraiser’s qualifications and fees.

American Society of Appraisers
Antiquarian Booksellers’ Association of America
Antiques Roadshow (Public Broadcasting System television show) Online Appraiser Index with contact information of experts that have been featured on the show.

Appraisers Association of America, Inc.
Search online database for association members.

Bonhams
This auction house also features valuation days when patrons can bring in a limited number of artworks for a brief appraisal.

Christie’s Appraisals, Inc.

Doyle New York
Founded in 1963, concentrating on fine art, jewelry, furniture, decoration and a variety of other categories.

International Foundation for Art Research (IFAR)
Provides authentication services (Telephone 212-391-6234). IFAR charges an initial, non-refundable $250 deposit at the inquiry stage. This will be applied to the basic $2,000 cost if IFAR is able to undertake the research and the client and IFAR agree to proceed.

International Society of Appraisers

Lofty
An expert-reviewed, online marketplace for valuable fine and decorative arts. Provides free appraisals for items over $1,000.

Sotheby’s

Have a question?
Reach a reference librarian at watson.library@metmuseum.org or use our virtual chat service, Ask a Librarian, Monday-Friday, 10am-5pm.

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