American Society of Appraisers

BECOMING AN ASA FINE ARTS APPRAISER

By Caroline Seigel, ASA

An M.A. in Art History, an M.L.S., and several years of museum experience seemed to me to be great credentials for a fine arts appraiser. I also thought that a few continuing education classes on Appraisal Studies would be interesting and would not take very long to complete. So far, I was right.

• Truly knowing the subject is a prerequisite for being a good appraiser and having an M.A. in Art History helps solidify the credentials for being what the IRS terms a “qualified appraiser.”

• The ASA courses on the Principles of Valuation are indeed interesting, short, and I would say that they are fun, albeit a little intense because of the amount of material covered in each 3-day class.

But what I learned after taking these classes is that there is a lot more to becoming an ASA fine arts appraiser than having an M.A. in Art History, having worked in the art field, and then taking a series of classes. What is key to becoming an art appraiser is understanding the dynamics of the art market, demonstrating an ability to analyze and explain the reasons for a conclusion of value, and doing so in compliance with the standards of ethics and competency required by the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice. It took much longer than I had expected to acquire the knowledge and develop the skills to do this, and I now realize why ASA’s credential of Accredited Senior Appraiser is so widely respected.
To become accredited, here is what ASA requires:

Personal Property Guide to Professional Accreditation
(Updated September 2018) / Personal Property (PP) Guidelines

Prerequisites

Before applying for a designation in PP, please be sure you meet the following prerequisites:

1. You are an approved Candidate and your USPAP continuing education requirements are up-to-date;
2. You have met the PP discipline education requirements;
3. You passed the 4-hour exam in your chosen specialty;
4. You have met the college education requirement (or its equivalent); and
5. You have two (2) years of full-time appraisal experience for the Accredited Member (AM) designation or five (5) years of full-time appraisal experience for the Accredited Senior Appraiser (ASA) designation (1,800 hours = one (1) year of work experience).

Applying for the AM or ASA Designation

To apply for the AM or ASA designation, Candidates need to:

1. Complete the online accreditation application;
2. Pay the online accreditation application fee;
3. Provide proof of higher education (copy of degree/transcript or College Degree Equivalency Form);
4. Submit an Advancement Experience Log - For appraisers with extensive appraisal experience, please contact your accreditation specialist for other options;
5. Submit two (2) appraisal reports prepared for an actual client (within two (2) years of submitting their accreditation application) in the specialty for which the Candidate is applying for a designation; and
6. Submit a completed PP Appraisal Report Checklist to accompany each submitted report. Submitted appraisal reports should include a report concluding fair market value and a report concluding replacement value. The two (2) reports should cover a minimum of five (5) total properties between them in a variety of media, types of properties, and artists or makers (depending on specialization). Restricted Appraisal Reports are not acceptable.

“But what I learned after taking these classes is that there is a lot more to becoming an ASA fine arts appraiser than having an M.A. in Art History...”

appraisers.org | (800) 272-8258