

QUESTIONS REGARDING AUTHENTICATION FORMULATED
BY THE ART COMMITTEE OF THE BAR OF THE
CITY OF NEW YORK

A. PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS

The following check-list may help elicit critical data for authentication.

1. The name of the artist and basic biographical data.
2. A description of the painting (including its title, its dimensions, the medium used, and a statement of its conditions and any special physical characteristics).
3. The date of its execution. If the painting is said to be old, have any tests been made with respect to its age?
4. Are there historical records relating to the picture, such as a chain of ownership (provenance) which traces the picture to the present owner?
5. What collateral evidence of authenticity is available (catalogues, advertisements, museum and gallery records, etc.)? What steps has the dealer taken to establish the authenticity of the painting?
6. What evidence is available to prove that the artist's signature is genuine? If the artist is alive, will he corroborate the authenticity of the painting? Will the dealer represent that the artist's signature is genuine.
7. What rights, if any, has the artist reserved in the painting, whether by copyright protection or otherwise?
8. Are there any available records of cleaning, restoration or other treatment?
9. Is it possible to obtain from the artist or his representative a certificate of authenticity?

B. PRINTS

Against this summary of the problems in the area of prints, the following check-list may be helpful:

1. The name of the artist and basic biographical data.
2. A description of the print (including the size of the total edition, the serial number, and the condition and state of the print).

3. The date of the execution of the plate (or stone, or wood block, etc.), the date of the impression, and the date of the artist's signature.
4. The process used in making the print (woodcut, etching, lithography, silk screen, etc.)
5. Has the seller represented that the product is not a reproduction, that it meets the tests of an "original print" as defined by the Print Council of America, and the artist's signature is genuine?
6. How many editions of the print were made? Have editions been made in different colours? How many prints in each edition? Are there any outstanding prints, such as artist's proofs, which have not been included in any edition?
7. Was the artist also the printer? If not, was the print made under the artist's supervision? Who besides the artist participated or collaborated in the production of the plate and the print?
8. Who has possession of the plate (or stone, or wood block, etc.) from which the print was made? Has the plate been marked or cancelled to show that the original edition has been completed? Has the plate ever been substantially reworked?
9. Did the print ever serve as a book illustration or was it ever a page or an insert in a magazine?
10. What rights, if any, has the artist reserved in the print, whether by copyright protection or otherwise?
11. Is it possible to obtain from the artist or his representative a certification as to any of the foregoing items which the purchaser deemed relevant?
12. Are there historical records relating to the print to establish a provenance?
13. What collateral evidence of authenticity is available, such as catalogues, advertisements, museum and gallery records, etc.?
14. Are there any available records of cleaning, restoration or other treatment?

C. SCULPTURE

The following check-list for the purchaser of sculpture may help disclose factors relevant to aesthetic and monetary values:

1. The name of the artist and basic biographical data.
2. A description of the sculpture (including the title of the piece, its dimensions and its material, and the total number of casts made). If cast, the manner of its construction.

3. The date of the execution of the cast and the prototype. Has there been more than one edition of the sculpture?
4. Was the cast made by the artist or by a foundry? Who authorised the making of the cast (the artist, his heirs, a dealer, etc.)? Was the cast done posthumously? If made by a foundry, will the founder certify the total number of casts made by him?
5. Who has possession of the prototype (the artist, his heirs, a dealer, etc.)? Have extra casts been made by the possessor of the prototype? What is the condition of the prototype? Are there any limitations on its use?
6. Have enlargements or reductions of the prototype been made or authorised? Have casts been made in any other media? Have reproductions been made or authorised?
7. Has the seller represented that the artist's signature on the cast or on a certificate of authentication (see below) is genuine and that all other data inscribed on the cast is accurate? Does the seller have any knowledge of unauthorised casts?
8. What rights, if any, has the artist reserved in the sculpture, whether by copyright protection or otherwise?
9. Will the artist furnish a certificate of authenticity (to be attached to a photograph of a sculpture) stating that the sculpture was cast under his supervision, and containing the title of the piece, its dimensions, the date it was cast, the material used, the serial number, and the total number of casts?
10. What collateral evidence of authenticity is available such as catalogues, advertisements, museums and gallery records, etc.?
11. Are there historical records relating to the sculpture to establish a provenance?
12. Are there any available records of cleaning, restoration or other treatment?

D. ANTIQUES

1. The name of the civilisation, tribe, culture or group which produced the work.
2. The stylistic identity of the work: this may be the name of a specific region, people, or sub-culture, dynasty, or the like: "Chou Dynasty"; "Benin"; "Navaho"; "Luristan", etc.
3. A description of the work: dimensions, materials, condition, use, and other identifying characteristics.

4. The approximate date of execution.
5. Are there historical records relating to the work to establish a provenance?
6. What collateral evidence of authenticity is available, such as catalogues, advertisements, museum and gallery records, etc.?
7. Are there any available records of cleaning, restoration or other treatment?