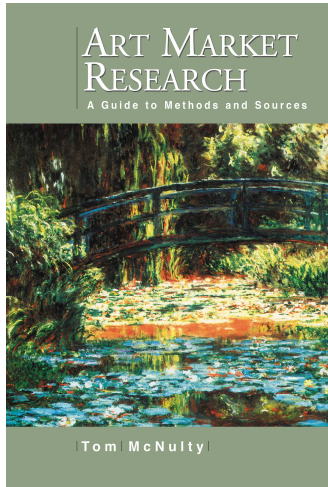


**Art Market Research: A Guide to Methods and Sources** / Tom McNulty.—Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2006.—278 p.: ill.—ISBN 0-7864-2372-2 (pa., alk. paper): \$35.00.



Much as the art market has evolved in recent years to include a broader spectrum of the population, art information resources have become more numerous, diverse and readily available than ever before. While enhanced access to information is a good thing, having a native guide to the terrain can make all the difference in the outcome of any research experience. Tom McNulty, Fine Arts Librarian at Bobst Library, New York University and research consultant for O'Toole-Ewald Art Associates, Inc., is just such an expert. His recent book, *Art Market Research: A Guide to Methods and Sources*, comprises not only a select bibliographic reference, but a comprehensive roadmap to the often complex process of researching works of fine and decorative art. While intended primarily for collectors and dealers interested in establishing provenance and value, anyone engaged in art research would do well to keep this deceptively small book within easy reach. McNulty's treatment of the subject is thorough, orderly and clear in the best reference tradition; at the same time his reassuring voice of experience and engaging manner make the book quite readable as a narrative.

Topics are organized logically, opening with a discussion of art markets and the history of collecting, factors affecting market value, the appraisal process, and the physical analysis of a work of art. The author provides an excellent general introduction to finding information, stressing the importance of library research for access to indispensable sources such as catalogues raisonnés, exhibition catalogs and online subscription indexes to periodical literature. The accompanying index list includes sources in the fine and decorative arts, business, economics, and other related subjects. Also worthwhile are informed discussions of the advantages and limitations of Internet research, and how and when to find and work with an art expert.

Moving from the general to the particular, McNulty looks at research methodologies, online search strategies and a myriad of specific tools for researching paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints and photographs, furniture, ceramics, glass, metal and textiles, as well as artists and exhibitions. These detailed, annotated listings are well-organized by medium, resource type, and geographic area where appropriate. Also addressed are the special problems of provenance research, legal aspects of art ownership, and the process of establishing value through auction and other market records. A final section focuses on resources – primarily print and microform, and somewhat more obscure in nature – that include fine art market information prior to 1960. Appendices to the text include annotated listings of major art market periodicals, and online sources of auction and other sales information.

This is a unique resource that will benefit art collectors, dealers, scholars, librarians – anyone with an interest in art research. The broad range of information it brings together will serve popular and professional audiences alike. Designed to steer readers to sources most appropriate to their needs, it provides a good starting point for novice researchers and a timely refresher for those with more experience. It is highly recommended for academic, museum, and public libraries with collections in fine and decorative arts.

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