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Latest News

Breaking news and information from the antique market's news leader!

Ashleigh returns to AC Oct. 20- 21

Noah Fleisher – Editor

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. – When the Oct. 20-21 edition of Atlantique City comes in a couple weeks, Caroline Ashleigh – Antiques Roadshow personality, expert appraiser and owner of her own business, Appraise Your Art – will be back for her third year to add some more shine the show's appraisal area.

"I hope there are many years to follow," Ashleigh said. "It's a great time and it allows me to connect with dealers, auction houses, and the buying public."

There are not a lot of people in the antiques business whose name is widely and almost instantly recognizable, but Ashleigh's certainly is.

Her notoriety has little to do with luck. Ashleigh brings a lifetime of antiquing, and an encyclopedic knowledge of those antiques and art, to her appraisal business. And her ever-positive demeanor won her friends and fans as a star appraiser on PBS's Antiques Roadshow.



Such success, however, hasn't sated Ashleigh's desire to find great material, nor has it slaked her thirst to increase her antiques wisdom. It is her constant vigilance, and a great eye, that keeps her on top of the



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business.

"This is such a humbling profession," she said. "The more you know, the more you realize that you don't know anything. Staying on top of my game is something I really try to do."

Raised in an antiquing family, Ashleigh quickly realized her talent when her parents opened an antique shop called Noah's Ark in an old church in Michigan. There, working during summers and holiday breaks, her sense of value began to form, culminating with her graduate thesis at NYU. For that study, Ashleigh researched and appraised a rare tin-plate miniature carousel. She valued it in the \$90,000 range. Today, the same piece would sell for upwards of \$250,000.

Clearly, she had a talent. That talent has led to her most recently completed job, a \$90 million appraisal for an arts institution in the Midwest. While not at liberty yet to say where the appraisal was done, the size and value of it does speak to the level of her skills, as well.

"A lot goes into creating an appraisal," she said, "and a lot more goes into creating a really good appraisal. There are a lot of new laws that have gone into place in the last couple of months to ensure certain standards ... but you also have to have a bit of divining skills, too."

Besides bringing those prodigious skills to the Atlantique City appraisal area on Oct. 20-21, Ashleigh will also be adding to the show's special Vintage Fashion exhibition, with a recently acquired collection of rare Hollywood cowboy hats, including ones worn by Jimmy Stewart, Henry Fonda and Clark Gable, and a hat once worn by John Wayne that brought \$86,000 at auction. The collection mirrors a trend in vintage fashion right now, says Ashleigh, where vintage western wear is all the rage.

"I'm going to try to bring not only cowboy hats," she said, "but also signed cowboy boots and other western wear."

There's no doubt that there will be as many people bringing antiques to be appraised by Ashleigh as there will be people simply wanting to meet their favorite Roadshow personality. For her part, Ashleigh is happy to meet both.

What, then, is the thing that she most looks forward to at Atlantique City? Besides the people and the great antiques?

"The fun answer?" she asked. "It would have to be the salt-water taffy."

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