

Articles About Jim Mintz and His Firm

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Super Sleuth

Art is long, life is short—except when your precious art object isn't what you think it is. It's not unusual for disputed pieces to end up in bitter courtroom battles as tracing provenance and proving authenticity require the talents of Scotland Yard. Fortunately, Tony Russell, now with the Mintz Group, spent eight years with the elite Art and Antiquities Squad of Scotland Yard and has helped settle several high-profile art controversies. The Mintz Group, with offices in the United States and London, helps private collectors, dealers, museums and governments identify and prove the origins of disputed pieces, as well as works of art up for sale.

When it comes to Asian antiquities, this is especially important as some experts estimate that roughly half of all the items coming out of China today are frauds. Antique sleuth James Mintz says that faking Chinese porcelain, furniture and artifacts has gone from a back-yard enterprise to factory production. "In effect, we're in a cat-and-mouse game of authentication," says Mintz, whose company traces the origin of each piece it investigates to keep buyers and sellers out of the courtroom and to protect them from financial loss. Collectors often consult the Mintz Group before they commit to buying a work of art. If the investigation shows that the piece is a fake, a looted national treasure or one of the disputed works that can be traced to the Nazi looting of World War II, caveat emptor is the rule—the buyer takes the risk, and there are no guarantees.

For a consultation, call Jim Mintz in New York (ph: 212-489-7100) or Tony Russell in London (ph: +44-207-242-1226).