

THURSDAY CAREERS CHATS

Date of Session: 10/20/11 Title of Session: Careers in Art Administration

Alumni Presenter: Emily Kodama Class Year: 2005

Title: Russian Art Specialist Employer: Sotheby's

Notes from Session:

Background

- Graduated in 2005 with a Russian language major and music performance minor.
- She didn't have a job, so she took an unpaid internship at Kimmel Center for Performing Arts. While interning she was conducting a job search, interviewing mostly in DC at nonprofits and NGOs. She found a job at Sotheby's that needed a Russian speaker and applied on a whim. Was hired because of her language ability and because of Dickinson's reputation.
- She started as administrator, after 2 years she was promoted to Cataloguer, and then she was promoted a year and a half ago to Specialist.*

Her Job

- Her duties vary from day-to-day.
- She loves client interaction and business-getting the most.
- Spends time at the NY Public Library, Frick Library, sometimes college libraries, and has contacts in Moscow and St. Petersburg...researching the history of a painting is like a detective's search.

The Industry

- There are different departments that focus on different types of art (Impressionist, Russian, Folk, American, etc.), --Multiple auctions per year for each department
- Various Positions within the company* - Needed skills: Communication skills very important (it's a client service related field), Professionalism, Language skills helpful

Opportunities for students and recent grads

- Paid summer internships (very competitive, placed with a specialist department)
- Sotheby's auctions locations are in NY, London, Hong Kong, Geneva, Paris but there are smaller offices all over America, Europe, South America, and China

Advice

- Take a chance and apply to things that seem risky, go outside your comfort zone (may end up loving something that you didn't initially think you'd enjoy.)
- She highly recommends internships if you can't get a job after graduation.
- Start entry-level, like an Administrative Assistant (front lines)

*Feel free to contact Emily for more information on each of these roles. Email Laura Kilko at kilkol@dickinson.edu for Emily's contact information.