

[WPA Painting Recovered in Minnesota](#)

On June 17, 2009, GSA OIG investigators were notified by GSA's Fine Arts Program Office (FAP) that the transfer of custody of a Works Progress Administration (WPA) painting, Duchess Apple Blossom by artist Reathal Keppen had been completed. The painting was turned over to the Minnesota Historical Society by the possessor after he was contacted by GSA-OIG. FAP has entered into a loan agreement with the Minnesota Historical Society, giving the Society permission to display the painting for an indefinite period of time. The painting valued at approximately \$5,000 has significant historical value.

BACKGROUND

On January 28, 2008, GSA OIG investigators received notice of an online auction of a Works Progress Administration (WPA) painting. The notice was received from GSA's Fine Arts Program Office (FAP) in relation to the ongoing proactive investigation to recover lost and stolen WPA artwork.

A painting was listed on the auction web site of eBay with the title "PAINTING MINNESOTA FEDERAL ART PROJECT R KEPPEN". The item description on eBay included the following wording:

"at the top of the paper label are the words 'Federal Works Progress' but some of the words are missing. At the bottom of the label are the words 'property of the' but again some of the words are missing. To this end, nearly half of the paper label is no longer present."

The listing also contained photos of the label as well as photos of a brass plate on the front of the frame which read "WPA FEDERAL ART PROJECT".

GSA OIG investigators obtained the seller information from eBay and contacted the possessor of the painting. The possessor brought the painting to the Minnesota Historical Society. The FAP worked with the Minnesota Historical Society to document the painting and finalize its loan.

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