

## **WPA Painting, “Flowers” Recovered by GSA OIG**

On March 6, 2009, a Works Projects Administration (WPA) painting, titled “Flowers” by William Hazelton, was surrendered to GSA OIG investigators in New York.

On May 22, 2008, a search of eBay's website disclosed a painting being offered for sale by an individual as being a WPA painting. The eBay listing titled the painting "William Hazelton listed WPA Painting, Rockport, WPA Label." The seller of the painting was contacted by a GSA OIG investigator on May 23, 2008, during which time the seller stated he would need extensive documentation before relinquishing the painting to the government, and added he may take it to court if the government did in fact want to recover the painting. The seller stated he purchased the painting sometime in 2008 at the Brimfield Antique Show, Brimfield, MA, and that he did not believe the painting was a legitimate WPA painting. GSA OIG obtained documents from the National Archives, College Park, MD, and forwarded them to GSA's Fine Arts Specialist in the Fine Arts Program Office of the Office of The Chief Architect for review. That review determined that the painting was an authentic WPA produced painting. Copies of the documentation were also forwarded to the seller at his request. The seller reluctantly agreed to surrender the painting to the GSA OIG. GSA OIG investigators in New York and Washington, DC assisted in the recovery of the painting.

