



Allen Lea, '06, Art History Major, now at Christie's, London

Christie's masters program is a one year masters in Fine and Decorative Arts from the Renaissance to 1960. The course is made up of a core lecture series every weekday morning and extra lectures at many of London's museums. We get to engage with the art first-hand. As Christie's students, we are able to go to the auction houses and even the storage warehouses to handle any object we wish. We take many trips in England and take 2 major trips to Rome and Paris. We are taught how to catalogue to auction house and museum standards. The level of art that I am immersed in here is unbelievable and sometimes unbearable. Being able to hold and inspect any piece in which I have interest is an awesome experience. Sotheby's also has a masters program but they lean more toward the strictly business aspect of the art world. With Christie's, you get the Art History and learn about how the art market works. Like Baylor, it is a rather small program, which makes the people there just like family. There are only 12 other masters students in my program. There is a good range of backgrounds (two from England, three from America, three from Canada, and one each from Asia, Germany, Russia, and Spain).

I was watching a Christie's Auction one night with my father about their Star Trek Auction, which brought in a little over \$7 million. Even though I am not a Star Trek fan, this sparked my interest and I logged onto Christie's website and found that they had a graduate program. I knew right then that Christie's was where I wanted to go. They have masters programs in New York and London, but London would be the best choice for anyone because of the art here.

I sent my application in, flew to New York for an interview, and the next week I was in London (I was accepted partly because of an awesome recommendation letter, I think). There are many people pursuing masters' degrees at Christie's who received B.A.s in some other liberal art; I am glad to have already a strong background in art history. The scene in Europe, as I had heard, is more "laid back," mostly due to our hands-on learning. It is strange to move from a university where drinking is not allowed to a school where professors buy students drinks after class. I appreciate my Baylor background—it taught me how to manage time, how to study and prepare for my future.

I changed my major twice at Baylor, from Chemistry to Business and then to Art History. The first two have come in very handy in the Christie's program. So when people ask, "When are we ever going to need to know this," I can answer. The chemistry and other sciences come in very handy when talking about restoration of art objects (i.e. the chemical makeup of paints and what types of pigments were used). Chemistry helps in all areas of art and I feel that art history students should take more chemistry. The business aspect helps me grasp concepts that I otherwise would have found unfamiliar. Christie's is really the one place where all of the areas come into contact with one another.

