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## What's it Worth? Appraisal Event Held at Orinda Theater

By Andrea A. Firth



Michaan's Appraiser, Jane Alexiadis, with Lafayette resident Lisa Albert Photo A. Firth

Lafayette resident Lisa Albert turned up at the appraisal event held in Orinda's Theater last week with a large painting of farmers working in a rice paddy. "It's not quite the style of our home, but I was curious to find out more about it," Albert said of the painting that had been hanging in her home for years.

As she presented the painting to Jane Alexiadis, an appraiser with Michaan's Auctions, Albert shared some interesting background, or provenance in antique terms. Albert and her husband received the painting from her husband's parents. Albert's in-laws had lived in the Philippines during World War II and were both POWs. They survived the War but lost all their possessions and home and returned to the States to settle and rebuild their lives. The couple went back to the Philippines in the late 1940's to try to revive their shipping company and purchased this painting by the well-known Philippine artist Fernando Amorsolo. Alexiadis was familiar with Amorsolo's work and had done some research in advance, so she was able to provide Albert with background on the artist, examples of his work, and an approximation of the painting's value.

"Ideally we are provided with some information about the painting or item we are trying to appraise," explained Alexiadis, "but there are many different ways to solve the mysteries that surround the pieces we evaluate." As an example, Alexiadis explained that she sometimes consults with a horticulturist or botanist to

identify the plants in a painting to help her to pinpoint the location and period of the scene depicted. Michaan's appraisers can often provide an evaluation on the spot or will follow up via email or phone after getting further information.

Michaan's Auctions holds weekly appraisal events at their showroom in Alameda. This was the first time that they hosted an appraisal event in Orinda, and several area residents made appointments in advance for evaluations of decorative art including an old violin, a set of silverware, cocktail shakers, and Asian fine art and prints. The appraisals are free, and Michaan's can facilitate the sale of items through their monthly Estate and Annex Auctions. Michaan's will hold their next appraisal event at the Orinda Theater on Thursday, April 23rd from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information got to [www.michaans.com](http://www.michaans.com).

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