

## Esther Hunt Chalkware Busts

**\$10.00/2**  
Paid  
From: Garage sale



**Antique Esther Hunt CHERRYBLOOM Chinese Girl Chalk Bust**

### Description:

This is one of two Esther Hunt busts I bought from a neighbor. I hadn't heard of the artist before but was intrigued by the beauty of these chalk sculptures. From the appearance of this bust, I believe it is from the 1920s or a little earlier. The impressed © Esther Hunt mark appears on the back. The name Cherry Blossom is handwritten on the bottom. I don't know if this was added when the item was first sold or later.

**Winning Bids:**

**\$510.09/2**

Ended: 7/19/07

History: 22 bids

Starting Bid: \$9.99/each

Winner: CA, WA

**Viewed**

**000412 X**

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### Carol's Story (eBay id: wanderingcreekantiques)

I previewed the downsizing sale of a neighbor who was at one time an antique dealer. She had many gorgeous things inside her beautiful home, but most were priced far higher than I could pay for resale. I bought just a few things from inside the house. In the garage were some older things that caught my eye, including 2 chalkware busts that looked like Chinese children or young women. They were signed Esther Hunt, and I was sure that they were no newer than the 1920s.

I've had chalkware from that era previously that sold quite high on ebay, so I had no qualms about paying the \$5 each that the owner wanted for them.

When I researched the artist on ebay and Google, I found some excellent information which I included in the auctions -

(1875-1951). Esther Hunt was a painter and sculptor who lived 1875 - 1951. She was born in Grand Island, Nebraska on August 30, 1875 and moved to a ranch near San Diego in 1881. From 1896-1900 she worked as an artist in Los Angeles and then moved to San Francisco, where she studied art at the Mark Hopkins Institute (1901). To finance her art studies, she began

painting Chinatown subjects which she sent to a New York dealer who readily sold them. She later lived and worked in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Greenwich Village. Her oils, watercolors, etchings, and colored ceramic figurines depicting children were very popular with the general public.

Because chalkware is almost always damaged, I wasn't put off by the paint chips and rubs. I knew that collectors would expect damage in this type of item. I made sure to explain the condition in the description and include pictures from all angles. I mentioned that the appearance could be improved by touching up but that I hadn't done that and didn't find any indication that anyone else had previously touched up either piece.

I started the auctions at \$9.95. In my experience highly collectible items like these will find their own price regardless of the opening bid. I wanted to encourage bidders by starting them low and was certainly happy with the outcome.

