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In the late 1970s, Robert Brunk discovered the world of auctioneering. Drawn to the unique mountain culture and the history of fine art in and around Asheville, North Carolina, Bob started a business, Brunk Auctions, that became part of a bustling network of commerce. America's passion for collecting, buying, and selling reached remarkable heights in the following decades. Auction houses and antiques stores thrived; people paid hundreds of dollars for a humble country basket and thousands for a rare piece of folk art. In this collection of compelling, compassionate essays, Bob considers specific items and remarkable situations he encountered in his long and successful work as an auctioneer and appraiser. He

presents objects as invitations to consider personal and collective histories often related to unresolved social inequities.
Bob also describes how, as his business grew to offer the finest examples of American and European art, his career often conflicted with his Mennonite background and the complexities of ownership and value. The result is a portrait that reflects
the best and worst of us as we search for ways to live with objects and then decide what to do when it's time to let them go.
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Sommaire
Étape 1 -
Commentaires
Matériaux Outils

Matériaux	Outils
Étape 1 -	