

MOM'S JOY ROOM

2964 Fairmont Road, Morgantown, WV 26501 | (304) 282-3671

CERTIFICATE OF DESCRIPTION & VALUATION

Wax Character Portrait Doll — Adult Lady — Signed by the Artist

JOSEPHINE

by Lewis Sorensen (1910–1985) — Charter Member, NIADA



MARKET VALUE

\$275–450

Labeled Sorensen lady character — light hand damage reflected in lower range

ESTIMATED WORTH

\$450–700

Specialty collector ceiling for a signed Sorensen lady in period bonnet costume



"Josephine" — 15+ " Wax Character Lady

by Lewis Sorensen

Paisley print gown, burgundy sash

Gray lace-trimmed bonnet

Light damage to one hand

"Josephine" — Wax Character Lady Portrait Doll, 15+"

Hand-Sculpted Wax Head & Hands — Cloth Body — Period Bonnet Costume

Labeled Lewis Sorensen — NIADA Charter Member Artist

DESCRIPTION & HISTORY

Lewis Sorensen (1910–1985) was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, and left school in the eighth grade to pursue his exceptional talent for wax sculpture. He became one of America's most celebrated wax doll and portrait artists — a Charter Member of NIADA (National Institute of American Doll Artists) and notably the only man among its original founding group — a distinction that speaks to both the rarity of his talent and his standing in the doll art world.

Sorensen's career included some of the most prestigious commissions in American doll artistry: Eleanor Roosevelt commissioned him to create an entire Presidential Doll Collection depicting U.S. presidents and first ladies; his wax figures were exhibited in museums, theme parks, and multiple Ripley's Believe It or Not! installations across the country. He

worked in wax throughout his career because he believed — correctly — that no other medium could match its lifelike translucency and warmth. His character dolls were celebrated precisely because they read not as toys but as portrait sculpture: individualized, expressive, deeply human.

"Josephine" is a 15+" wax character lady — an adult female figure rendered with Sorensen's characteristic precision in facial modeling and expression. She wears a rich **paisley print gown** with a **burgundy sash** at the waist, and a **gray lace-trimmed bonnet** tied beneath the chin — a costume with careful period detail evoking the mid-to-late Victorian era. Her wax head and hands are hand-sculpted, with the softly painted complexion and delicate facial features that are the hallmark of Sorensen's best work. She carries the artist's label confirming her as a genuine Sorensen original.

Sorensen's adult female character dolls — ladies, grandmothers, historical figures — are among his most collected subjects. A bonnet-wearing lady of this type, in period dress, represents one of the core character types he returned to throughout his career, making "Josephine" a representative and desirable example of his craft.

◆ *"Sorensen's character dolls are celebrated for a level of realism rarely matched in wax doll artistry — deeply expressive, individualized faces that read almost as portrait sculpture rather than playthings."* ◆

NOTABLE INFORMATION

- ◆ Name: "Josephine" — Lewis Sorensen wax character lady
- ◆ Artist: Lewis Sorensen (1910–1985), Charter Member of NIADA — only male founding member
- ◆ Size: 15+" (measured with ruler in photo)
- ◆ Subject: Adult lady character portrait — period bonnet and gown
- ◆ Construction: Hand-sculpted wax head & hands, cloth body
- ◆ Costume: Paisley print gown, burgundy sash, gray lace-trimmed bonnet
- ◆ Marking: Labeled "Lewis Sorensen" — confirmed artist original
- ◆ Notable: Eleanor Roosevelt commissioned Sorensen's Presidential Doll Collection; work displayed in museums &

Ripley's Believe It or Not!

◆ Condition: Light damage to one hand — noted in valuation

Condition note: Light damage is present on one hand. Wax is a delicate medium — minor hand damage is common on Sorensen dolls of this age and does not significantly diminish the overall presentation of the piece, as the face (the primary artistic focus) remains intact and undamaged. The valuation Market Value range reflects this condition factor; the Estimated Worth reflects what a dedicated Sorensen or NIADA collector would pay for a piece with an intact face and full original costume despite the hand condition.

Collector's note: Lewis Sorensen wax character dolls are collected within both the broader antique doll market and the more specialized NIADA artist doll category. His work is confirmed as collectible by the National Institute of American Doll Artists, and his historical commissions give his pieces an institutional provenance rare among studio doll artists. The presence of the artist's label is the primary authentication factor. Adult lady characters in period bonnet and gown are among the most desirable Sorensen subjects for collectors seeking display-quality Victorian-themed wax portrait figures.

"She has the face of a woman who has seen a great deal and remembered all of it."

Mom's Joy Room | Morgantown, WV
Certificate Issued: July 2026

Sandy Wade, Proprietor

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