

MOM'S JOY ROOM

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

CERTIFICATE OF DESCRIPTION & VALUATION

Original Wax Kewpie-Style Head — Made & Dressed by Lewis Sorensen — Original Label Intact



MARKET VALUE

\$125–275

Labeled Sorensen wax pieces, private/shop market

ESTIMATED WORTH

\$300–500

NIADA artist label + rare Kewpie subject ceiling for specialists



*Lewis Sorensen original wax Kewpie-style head
Approx. 5–6" — poured wax face, blue velvet bonnet
Pink satin bow, pom-pom & rose trim
"Wax Doll Made and Dressed by Lewis Sorensen" — original
label intact*

Lewis Sorensen — Original Wax Kewpie Head

Handmade Wax Portrait Doll — NIADA Charter Member — c.1950s–1970s

ORIGINAL LABEL

Label reads: "Wax Doll / Made and Dressed / by / LEWIS SORENSEN" — affixed to the reverse of the blue velvet bonnet. The presence of this original paper label is a critical authentication marker for Sorensen pieces, which are frequently found without provenance documentation. This label confirms the piece as a genuine, hand-finished Sorensen original.

HISTORY

Lewis Sorensen (1910–1985) was one of the most celebrated American wax doll artists of the 20th century and a charter member of the National Institute of American Doll Artists (NIADA) — the most prestigious organization in the American doll art world, whose membership was (and remains) strictly limited to artists of demonstrated exceptional skill and originality. Sorensen was widely regarded as the finest wax portrait artist working in America during his lifetime, mastering the demanding techniques of poured and modeled wax to create character dolls of extraordinary expressiveness and personality —

faces that seem to glow with an inner warmth that no other medium quite replicates.

Working from his studio over several decades from the 1940s through the 1980s, Sorensen produced a diverse range of wax character subjects — historical figures, folk types, storybook characters, and whimsical originals — all entirely hand-fabricated, from the poured wax heads to the hand-sewn, hand-dressed costumes. His pieces were collected during his lifetime by museums, serious doll collectors, and private enthusiasts, and they continue to appreciate in the collector market today as examples of genuine American folk and fine art doll-making.

This piece takes the form of a **Kewpie-style character head** — a chubby-cheeked, wide-eyed, slightly mischievous baby face in the tradition of Rose O'Neill's beloved Kewpie design, first introduced in 1909 and one of the most enduring character types in doll history. Sorensen's interpretation renders the Kewpie spirit entirely in his own hand: the face is poured wax with hand-painted features, including fine lash detail, rosy cheek coloring, and a sly, knowing smile. The head is dressed by Sorensen himself in a blue velvet pointed bonnet trimmed with silver glitter braid, a white wax or fabric rose, pink pom-pom accents, and a soft pink satin ribbon bow at the chin — the meticulous hand-finishing that distinguishes a Sorensen original from any reproduction. At approximately 5–6 inches (confirmed by the tape measure in the seller's photograph), it is a compact but fully realized character piece.

Labeled Sorensen pieces are meaningfully rarer than unlabeled ones — many of his works have lost their original paper labels over the decades — making the intact "Wax Doll Made and Dressed by Lewis Sorensen" label on the reverse of this bonnet a significant authentication and provenance advantage.

NOTABLE INFORMATION

- ♦ Artist: Lewis Sorensen (1910–1985) — NIADA Charter Member, premier American wax doll artist
- ♦ Subject: Kewpie-style character baby head — poured wax with hand-painted features
- ♦ Size: Approximately 5–6 inches (head only, bonnet included)
- ♦ Costume: Blue velvet pointed bonnet, silver glitter trim, white rose, pink pom-poms, pink satin bow — hand-dressed by Sorensen

- ◆ Label: Original paper label intact — "Wax Doll Made and Dressed by Lewis Sorensen"
- ◆ Condition: Wax face bright and undamaged; costume clean and intact
- ◆ Rarity: Labeled Sorensen pieces are less commonly found than unlabeled examples

Collector's note: Lewis Sorensen's NIADA charter membership places him in the first tier of American doll artists — his pieces are collected as fine art as much as folk art, and labeled examples with intact costumes are among the most desirable items in the American wax doll collector market. The Kewpie subject adds an additional layer of cross-collector appeal, attracting both Sorensen specialists and dedicated Kewpie collectors. Market Value reflects realistic shop/private-sale pricing for a labeled, costumed Sorensen wax head; Estimated Worth reflects what a Sorensen specialist or NIADA-artist collector would likely pay for a piece of this rarity and condition.

"Poured in wax and dressed by hand — a tiny Kewpie face wearing a century of charm, and the name of a master still on its bonnet."

Mom's Joy Room | Morgantown, WV
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Sandy Wade, Proprietor

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