

@ just collecting Magazine

ISSUE 3 MAY 2023



KNOWLEDGE & NEWS FOR INFORMED COLLECTORS

AUTOGRAPHS | RARE STAMPS | MEMORABILIA
MARKET NEWS | FEATURES | HOW-TO GUIDES

"Regrets, I've had a few..."

Everyone has moments in their lives they look back on and think: "I wish I'd done things differently."

You remember the opportunities you let slip by. The great ideas you had, but didn't act on.

And you wonder how different your life would be today if you'd taken another path...

But you should never dwell on the past. You just need to learn from it. So as you look to the future, you can spot the next great opportunity and get ahead of the game.

I believe now is one of those moments.

After 45 years in the industry, I've never been more optimistic about the future than I am today.

Because the rare collectibles market is primed for the big time. The conditions are perfect.

On the financial front, inflation has peaked, and interest rates are close to peak. And the natural supply / demand curve for these rare items is being squeezed harder than ever.

When that happens, there's only one way prices can go. Just look at the top end of the market.

Ultra high net worth individuals are not fazed by the general malaise and cost of living crisis. They're getting significantly richer by the day.

They're investing more and more of their money in rare collectibles, and enjoying every minute of it.

As Warren Buffett, the greatest investor of all time, says: "Be greedy when others are fearful".

\$195 million on a Warhol?

\$142 million on a vintage Mercedes?

Today's collectors are happy to spend seven-figure sums on everything from baseball rookie cards to rock and roll memorabilia. Why?

Because they confidently believe these rare items are a safe, secure and enjoyable place to store their wealth. And they're absolutely right.

As the concept of 'passion investing' takes hold in the mainstream, this confidence is trickling down to the next level of collectors.

The exponential growth of the global middle class is fuelling the demand for rare collectibles.

And the almost-daily opening of new museums around the world is pushing competition for the finest pieces even further.

That's why auction results are hitting record highs in every category - with no sign of slowing down.

So don't let this moment slip by. Grab this opportunity to enjoy your money, and invest in one of the world's most dynamic and rewarding markets.

Investing in rare collectibles could change your life. It certainly changed mine for the better.

And hopefully I can pass on some of the things I've learned over the years, to help you achieve your goals of passion and profit.

So get in touch today, and let's get started. I look forward to hearing from you.

Paul Fraser. Chairman, Just Collecting.



Auction News



Image: Heritage Auctions

The greatest auction of TV history comes to Heritage

Heritage Auctions is set to host an incredible auction of television history next month.

The June sale will offer almost 1,000 lots from the world-renowned collection of James Comisar, who has spent more than 30 years acquiring costumes and props from some of TV's best-loved shows.

The collection spans seven decades, featuring classics such as Gunsmoke, The Adventures of Superman, Batman, Star Trek, M*A*S*H, Hogan's Heroes, All in the Family, Cheers, The Sopranos, E.R, The Office, Mad Men and Breaking Bad.

In addition to iconic costumes and props, the auction also includes entire sets which Comisar has preserved in their original condition.

They include The Tonight Show set which Johnny Carson used for 30 years; David Letterman's Late Night desk and New York City skyline; the complete wooden bar from Cheers; and Archie Bunker's living room from All in the Family.

"After 30 years of saving and sacrificing to acquire and protect this collection, I have come to accept that I won't be able to establish the museum for TV fans I always dreamed of," said Comisar. "I am extremely proud to have done my part in assembling and safeguarding this collection. Now, it's up to others to take over this cultural mission."

"When acquiring items like these... you're getting so much more than the object. You're buying American history."

Joshua Benesh, Heritage Auctions



Image: Heritage Auctions

Amongst the most famous props up for grabs are the 'hometown' army base signpost from M*A*S*H (\$100,000+); Archie and Edith Bunker's living room chairs (\$100,000+); the only surviving Bat-Shield (\$100,000+); the original 'U.S. Marshal, Dodge City, Kansas' sign from Gunsmoke (\$20,000+); and Herve Villechaize's 'Tattoo' golf cart from Fantasy Island (\$15,000+).

Classic shows from more recent television history are also well-represented in the auction.

Collectors can redecorate with the stylish furniture from Frasier Crane's apartment, and the mid-century bar where Don Draper mixed his cocktails in Mad Men.

Further modern highlights include the silk suits worn by Tony Soprano and his crew; a section of the plane wreckage from Lost; and the tools used by Walter White and Jesse Pinkman to cook meth in Breaking Bad.

"This history can't spend forever in a warehouse," said Comisar. "These pieces are part of our shared experience. And they need to go back out into the world."

The Comisar Collection live sale takes place at Heritage Auctions on June 2 - 4.

Leading the auction are the original Batman and Robin costumes worn by Adam West and Burt Ward in the 1960s show, which are expected to sell for in excess of \$500,000.

Further iconic costumes include William Shatner's gold Starfleet Captain's Tunic from the first season of Star Trek, valued at \$90,000+; Barbara Eden's Jeannie costume from I Dream of Jeannie, estimated at \$50,000+; and Bob Crane's signature brown leather bomber jacket from Hogan's Heroes, estimated at \$40,000+.

Collectors can also bid on George Reeve's muscle-padded Superman tunic (\$80,000+); Bob Denver's bucket hat from Gilligan's Island (\$15,000+); Guy Williams' dashing black sombrero and mask from Zorro (\$10,000+); and even Pamela Anderson's red swimsuit from Baywatch.



Image: Heritage Auctions

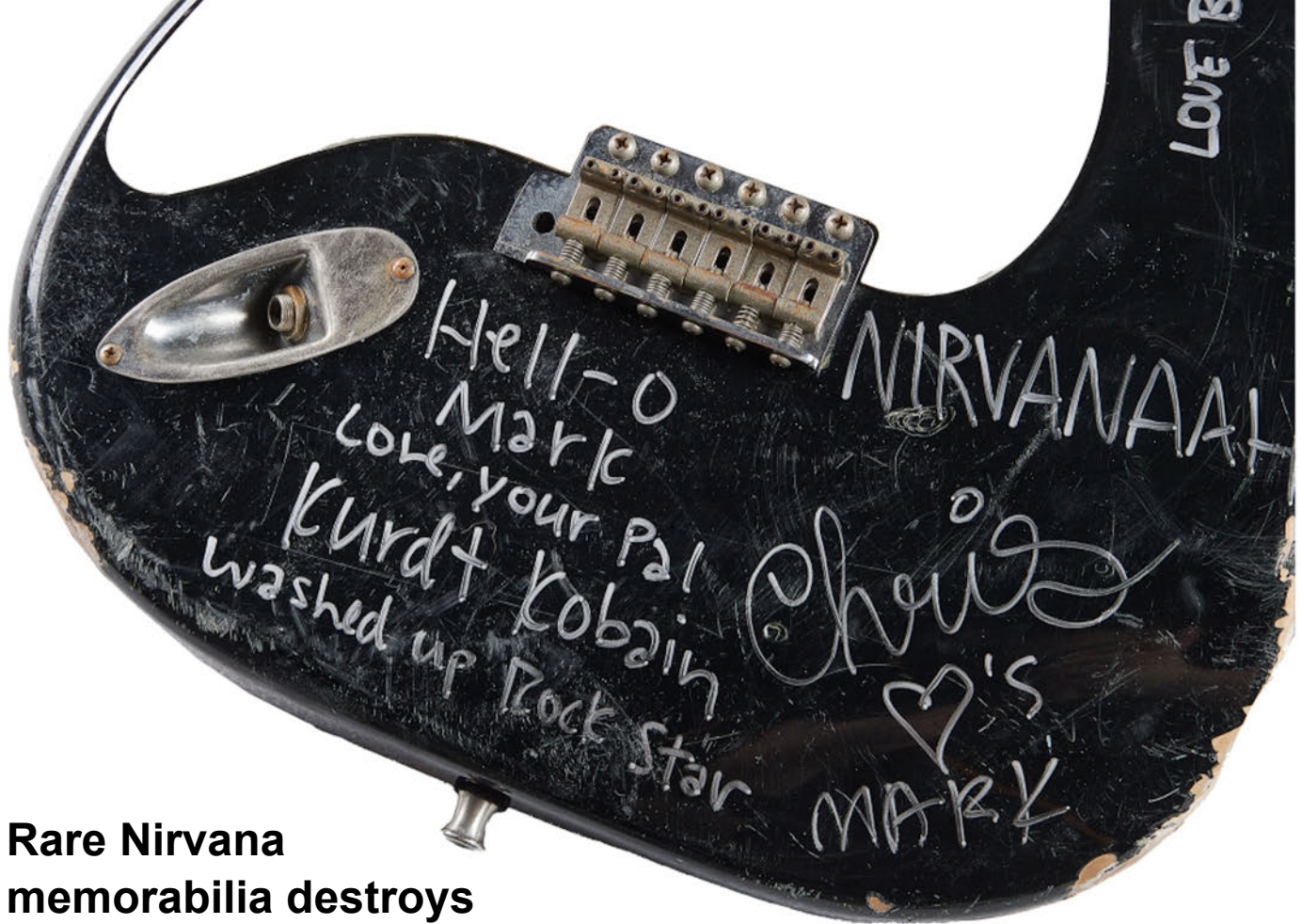


Image: Julien's Auctions

Rare Nirvana memorabilia destroys estimates in New York

A guitar played, destroyed and then signed by Nirvana frontman Kurt Cobain has sold for almost \$600,000 at Julien's Auctions in New York.

The Fender Stratocaster was used by Cobain circa 1992 during the Nevermind era, which saw Nirvana become the biggest band in the world.

The guitar crossed the block valued at \$60,000 - \$80,000, but it soared to a final price of \$597,000, almost 10 times its low estimate.

It was originally signed and gifted to Cobain's close friend and collaborator Mark Lanegan of the band Screaming Trees.

The guitar was fully signed by the band and included Cobain's inscription: "Hell-o Mark! Love, Your Pal, Kurt Kobain / Washed up rockstar."

In November 2022 Julien's sold another of Cobain's smashed and signed guitars, with equally good provenance from a fellow musician, for \$486,400. But this most recent sale shows how the market has increased even further in the space of just six months.

The sale also included another major piece of Nirvana history in the form of an original setlist.

The setlist was used during Nirvana's performance at the OK Hotel in Seattle on April 17, 1991.

That highly significant date in the band's history marked the first-ever live performance of their seminal hit 'Smells Like Teen Spirit'.

The band went on to record the song in May 1991, and in September it was released as the first single from their album Nevermind.

It was the song which catapulted them to global fame, and is regarded today as one of the most significant rock songs ever recorded.

The 17-song setlist was written by drummer Dave Grohl on the back of a flyer advertising "Guitar Lessons with Tommy Rose. Acquire knowledge in theory, chords, and today's hot chops!"

Valued at \$4,000 - \$6,000, the historic setlist sparked a bidding war and eventually sold for \$50,800 - a strong price for an unsigned piece.



Image: Sotheby's

World's oldest complete Hebrew Bible sells for \$38.1 million at Sotheby's

The world's earliest and most complete Hebrew Bible, known as the Codex Sassoon, sold for \$38.1 million at Sotheby's in New York on May 17.

The ancient text, which is regarded as "one of the world's greatest treasures", dates back more than 1,100 years to the ninth century.

After being hidden in private collections for centuries, the Bible has now become the third most expensive book ever sold at auction.

It also set a new record as the most valuable religious text, surpassing the original printer's manuscript copy of The Book of Mormon which sold in 2017 for \$35 million.

The Codex Sassoon contains all 24 books of the Hebrew Bible, and importantly links the original Dead Sea Scrolls to today's modern Bible.

The manuscript is named after collector David Solomon Sassoon, who acquired it in 1929 whilst assembling the world's largest collection of Hebrew texts.

It had been described as "one of the most important and singular texts in human history".

The winning bid was made by Alfred H. Moses, president of the American Jewish Committee, who will now donate it to the ANU Museum of the Jewish People in Tel Aviv, Israel.

The current world record for a rare book or historic document was set in 2021, when a first edition printing of the U.S. Constitution sold at Sotheby's for \$43.2 million.

Ancient Greek coin sets new \$6 million world record at auction

An “extraordinarily rare” 2000-year-old Greek gold coin has soared to a world-record price in Zurich.

Known as a 'Panticapaeum stater', the coin sold at Numismatica Ars Classica for \$6 million – making it the most expensive ancient coin ever auctioned.

The coin was minted circa 340–25 B.C.E. and featured a depiction of a satyr, a mischievous woodland god renowned in Greek mythology.

It had been described as “one of the most important and desirable coins of the entire Greek World”, and was the finest-known example remaining in private hands.

“I am extremely pleased with the phenomenal result the sale of the Panticapaeum stater achieved at our latest auction in Zurich,” said Arturo Russo, co-director at Numismatica Ars Classica.

“This is a sign the whole market for numismatics is flourishing, and is especially strong for ancients at the moment.”

The coin originated from Panticapaeum, an ancient Greek city situated in modern-day Crimea.

The image of the satyr was believed to reference king Satyros I, who ruled over an empire in eastern Crimea from 432 until 389 B.C.E.

According to the auction house, the coin was the work of a "master engraver" who depicted the Satyr in three-quarter profile, rather than the usual full profile found on most Panticapaeum staters.

The previous record for an ancient coin was set in 2020, when an 'Ides of March' coins minted in 42 B.C.E. to commemorate the assassination of Julius Caesar sold for \$4.2 million.

Controversy surrounded that sale, as the coin was later discovered to have been offered with falsified provenance.

The Panticapaeum stater, however, came with impeccable provenance, having previously been part of the State Hermitage Museum collection in Russia.

But in 1934 it was amongst the treasured works of art sold off by Joseph Stalin, as he sought to raise funds to support domestic industrial growth.



Image: Numismatica Ars Classica



Teenage Kicks to Classic Rock

From autographs and classic vinyl to handwritten lyrics and iconic guitars, collecting music memorabilia is bigger than ever.

But it's not just about recapturing the rock and roll years of your youth. The right pieces could also become valuable assets for your future.

In today's buoyant, fast-moving market, collectors will pay seven-figure sums to hang historic guitars on their wall.

A watch owned by Elvis can sell for \$1.8 million. And the value of Kurt Cobain's cardigan can increase by 142% in the space of just four years.

The term "passion investing" has hit the mainstream in the past couple of years. In uncertain times, joy of ownership has become a much more important factor for investors.

Collecting rare music memorabilia is a superb example. It's an increasingly trusted way to store your wealth and connect to the music you love at the same time.

You just have to make sure you hit the right notes.

Start Me Up

Before you start building an investment-worthy collection, there are a few important factors to consider.

The first is simple: which artists to collect?

To have real investment potential, they need to have played an influential role in music history and have a back catalogue of classic songs.

Nostalgia plays a huge role in the music memorabilia market, but you're ideally looking for those iconic artists whose music transcends the generations.



Image: Heritage Auctions



So names to consider include Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Bob Dylan, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Doors, Jimi Hendrix, Grateful Dead, Led Zeppelin, David Bowie, The Sex Pistols, Queen, Madonna, Prince, and Nirvana.

It may sound obvious, but look for artists who've been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. The icons. The multi-platinum album sellers.

The rare collectibles market is traditionally a medium-to-long-term investment.

And by choosing artists with long-lasting musical legacies, you can be confident there will still be a strong fan base of passionate collectors for years to come.

"Choose rock and roll icons with timeless classic songs. They're the artists who will still be collectible decades into the future."

Knockin' on Heaven's Door

Artists that die young don't have time to sign many autographs or perform many concerts, and this greatly reduces the memorabilia they leave behind.

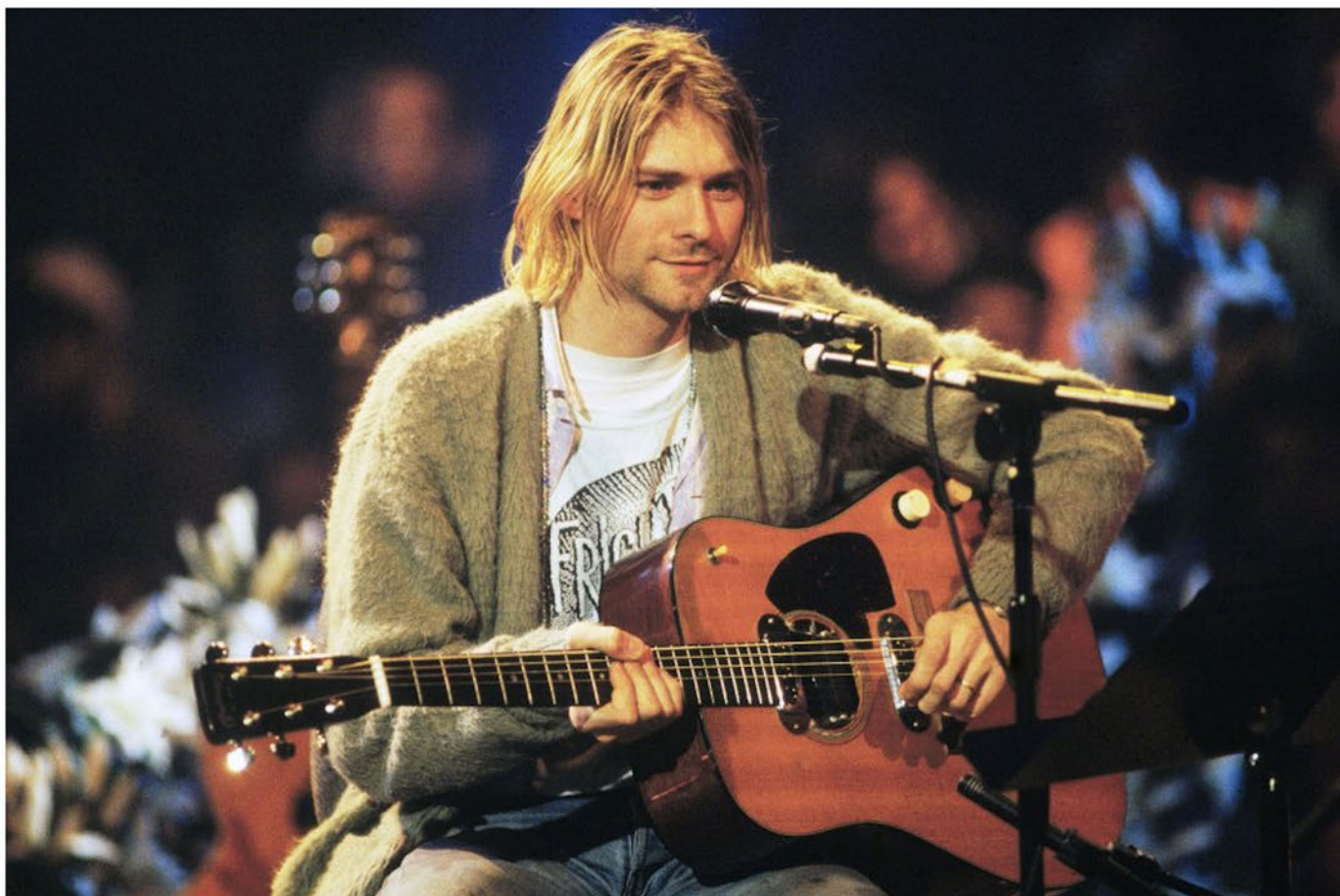
But they also take on a more iconic status. They don't have time to release a string of bad records, disappoint their fans or fade away into obscurity.

This applies particularly to members of the infamous '27 Club': stars who all died tragically at the age of 27.

They include the likes of Brian Jones, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison, Janice Joplin, Kurt Cobain and Amy Winehouse.

All of them created remarkable music. But they're equally as famous for their "rock and roll" lifestyles.

Everyone wants to own a piece of their legend, but there just aren't that many to go around. And that's why today they're amongst the most valuable names in the hobby.



The most impressive example of this demand is Nirvana frontman Kurt Cobain, who died in 1994.

In 2015 the green sweater he wore during the iconic Nirvana MTV Unplugged performance sold at auction for \$137,500.

When it went up for sale again four years later it had more than doubled in value - selling for a record \$334,000.

And then in 2020 the collecting world was stunned when the Martin guitar Cobain played during the same performance sold at auction.

The price? \$6 million.

It's currently the world's most valuable piece of music memorabilia, far outselling guitars owned by John Lennon, Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton and David Gilmour.

The sudden death of more established artists can also cause a surge in the market.

Prince is the perfect example. His death in 2016 stunned the music world. And the value of his memorabilia soared almost overnight.

In 2013 one of Prince's signature yellow 'cloud' guitars sold at auction for \$30,000. In June 2016, just two months after his death, it sold again at Heritage Auctions for \$137,500.

That same month, a jacket and shirt Prince wore on-screen in his 1984 film *Purple Rain* went up for sale valued at \$3,000 – and sold for \$100,000.

And in 2017 another of his stage-played cloud guitars sold at auction – this time for a world-record \$700,000.

Some of the biggest memorabilia sales from modern artists of the past 25 years are those who passed away before their time.

That's why a crown worn in a famous photo shoot by rapper Biggie Smalls, who was shot and killed in 1997, sold at Sotheby's in 2020 for \$595,000 – a record for any item of hip-hop memorabilia.

And the dress worn by Amy Winehouse during her final performance in June 2011, just one month before her death at the age of 27, sold in November 2021 for \$243,000 – 16 times its original estimate.

"As morbid as it may seem, when it comes to rock stars it's often better to invest in the dead than the living."



Image: Heritage Auctions

(What's the Story) Morning Glory?

The next factor for you to consider is the history and provenance of the item.

Everybody loves a good story, and collectors will pay a premium for memorabilia with a significant history. So consider this when you're choosing items for their future investment potential.

For instruments, were they played during famous gigs or used to record classic records?

For outfits, were they worn on-stage, on album covers or in famous photo shoots?

For autographs, knowing the details of how, when and where they were originally acquired can make them far more attractive to collectors.

A great back-story, a documented history of ownership and photo-matching all add value to a piece. And if the piece is linked to a major moment in music history, you're really on to a winner.

For example: in 1994, a collector paid \$44,000 at Sotheby's for one of Ringo Starr's drum skins featuring the classic Beatles 'Drop T' logo.

He then spent eight years researching its history, and proved it was the same one used by Ringo during the band's landmark first appearance on the Ed Sullivan show in February 1964.

The next time it sold was at Julien's Auctions in 2015 – this time for \$2.19 million. That's the power of owning a piece of musical folklore.



Image: Julien's Auctions

Simply the Best

Then you need to consider quality. Collectors compete for the finest items, and that's what drives their value up over the years. So always buy the best pieces you can afford.

This particularly applies to music autographs. Focus on pieces with bold clear signatures and a strong visual appeal that makes them attractive display pieces.

For bands, you ideally want every signature on the same page. If an album has two signatures on the front and two on the back, its value will be lower than one with four autographs on the front cover.

The most valuable music autographs are those signed "in period", as it gives them the authenticity that collectors crave. So an album released *and* signed in 1974 will usually be worth more than the same copy signed 20 years later.



Image: RR Auction

Won't Get Fooled Again

The final major factor in any rare item's value is authenticity. You'd be amazed how many John Lennon signatures I've been offered on records or pressings produced after he died!

If it's a set of band autographs, you'll need to ensure each one is genuine. Forgers often find an authentic, partially-signed item and add in the missing names to bump up the value.

This is common for musicians who've passed away, making their signature far scarcer than their surviving bandmates (such as Queen's Freddie Mercury, or The Sex Pistols bassist Sid Vicious).

It's also important to be aware how an artist's signature can develop over the years.

A Frank Sinatra autograph signed in 1945 will look very different to one from 1985, although they're both genuine and from the same hand.

And then you have the issue of 'secretarial' autographs signed by assistants, tour managers, roadies and fan club employees...

Unless you're an expert, authenticating items is a minefield. So my advice is simple: always buy from a trusted source, such as a well-established dealer or auction house. Use their experience, and learn from it yourself.

And if a deal seems too good to be true – it almost certainly is. At the end of the day you want the headline act, not a tribute band.

**"It's time to enjoy your money a little more.
Reconnect with the music you love.
And own a piece of your heroes."**

WOODSTOCK MUSIC & ART FAIR presents **AN AQUARIAN EXPOSITION**
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Joan Baez Arlo Guthrie Tim Hardin Richie Havens Incredible String Band Ravi Shankar Sly & The Family Stone Bert Sommer Sweetwater	Canned Heat Creedence Clearwater Grateful Dead Keef Hartley Janis Joplin Jefferson Airplane Mountain Quill Santana The Who	The Band Jeff Beck Group Blood, Sweat and Tears Joe Cocker Crosby, Stills and Nash Jimi Hendrix Iron Butterfly Ten Years After Johnny Winter

All programs subject to change without notice.

Image: Heritage Auctions

Hello, Goodbye

When the superb Beatles documentary *Get Back* was released in 2021, I had a surge in calls from new clients seeking their autographs.

But most of these enquiries came from collectors who were born after the band split up in 1970.

That's one of the music memorabilia market's biggest strengths. Classic songs are timeless. And the greatest artists can live forever through their music.

As each new generation of fans discover them, the demand for their memorabilia increases. But the supply remains the same – and this creates a healthy environment for items to grow in value in the long-term.

Of course you can never predict the future. Just ask Dick Rowe. In 1962 he famously turned down The Beatles because everyone thought guitar bands were a passing craze.

But he also learned quickly from his mistake. He did his research. And a few months later he signed the Rolling Stones, which also paid off pretty handsomely in the end.

So if you're building a portfolio for the future, a blast from the past could be the perfect way to enjoy your money and profit at the same time.

Because building a collection of music memorabilia can be hugely rewarding - in every sense of the word.

From retiring Baby Boomers to investment-savvy Millennials, this category has never been more popular with collectors. It's a multi-million dollar market - and you could be part of it.

In the meantime, slap on your favourite album and turn the volume up to '11'. **It might only be rock and roll... but we like it.**



2023 Market Update:

Marilyn Monroe

Background

Monroe's sensuality, humour and vulnerability enraptured millions, and 60 years on from her death at the age of just 36, Marilyn Monroe remains a huge cultural icon.

In the past 23 years of Forbes' list of top-earning dead celebrities, Monroe has ranked top in 16 of them, with revenues ranging from \$4m to \$27m.

Values for her collectibles are at an all-time high, with film-worn dresses, photographs and autographs from the star all highly desirable.

Recommendation:

Strong Buy

Key figures:

+23% per annum

Monroe's autograph value 2000-2022

\$5.6m world record

Movie memorabilia auction record for Monroe's Seven Year Itch dress

+16% per annum

Monroe's JFK 'Happy Birthday Mr President' dress at auction

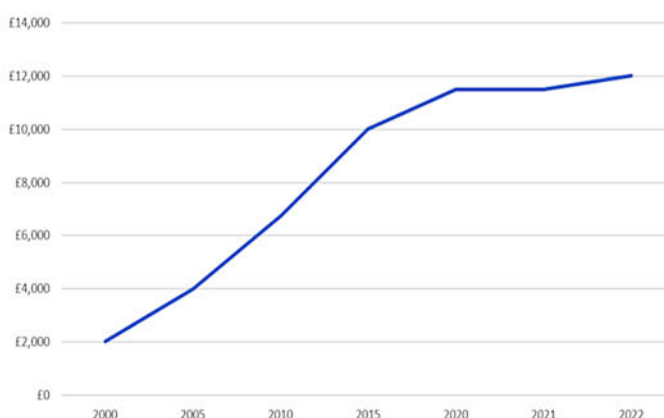
The Paul Fraser Collectibles View

We believe Marilyn Monroe collectibles are among the **best alternative investments** currently available. And the recent strong auction results aren't anomalies. We've been witnessing global desire for Monroe collectibles for years.

The PFC40 Autograph Index reveals the average value of a Monroe autograph increased by **23%** per annum between 2000 and 2022, from **£2,000** to **£12,000**.

We anticipate values for the rarest, most valuable Monroe collectibles to increase markedly over the coming years, as more collectors enter the sector and demand rises for the best pieces. That's why Monroe collectibles are a **STRONG BUY**.

Marilyn Monroe autograph performance 2000 - 2022



The value of Monroe's autograph grew from £2,000 to £12,000 between 2000 and 2022

Market Demographics

We believe baby-boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) will continue to play a key role in boosting demand now and in the future. Many of this wealthy generation remember Monroe from before she died, and feel a great connection with the star.

No Hollywood icon endures like Monroe. She will be forever 36. And each new generation is fascinated by her looks, her story, and her mythology.

In 2022, celebrity Kim Kardashian created a huge buzz when she wore Monroe's Happy Birthday performance dress to the Met Gala.

In recent years Monroe has appeared in an advert for Christian Dior. The 2022 Netflix film *Blonde*, which offered a fictionalised view of her life, has also helped bring her to a new generation of fans.

Monroe's Facebook page has 1.3 million members - evidence of Monroe's enduring popularity in the digital age.



Major Sales

The iconic 'subway' dress Monroe wore in *The Seven Year Itch* sold for **\$5.7 million** in 2011, more than doubling its **\$2 million** high estimate.

In the process it became the most valuable item of movie memorabilia ever sold.

The dress had last changed hands in 1971 for **\$400**, marking a **27% per annum rise** in value over the course of 40 years.



Image: Heritage Auctions

The only-known Marilyn Monroe signed photograph dedicated to her husband Joe DiMaggio sold at Heritage Auctions in 2022 for **\$300,000**.

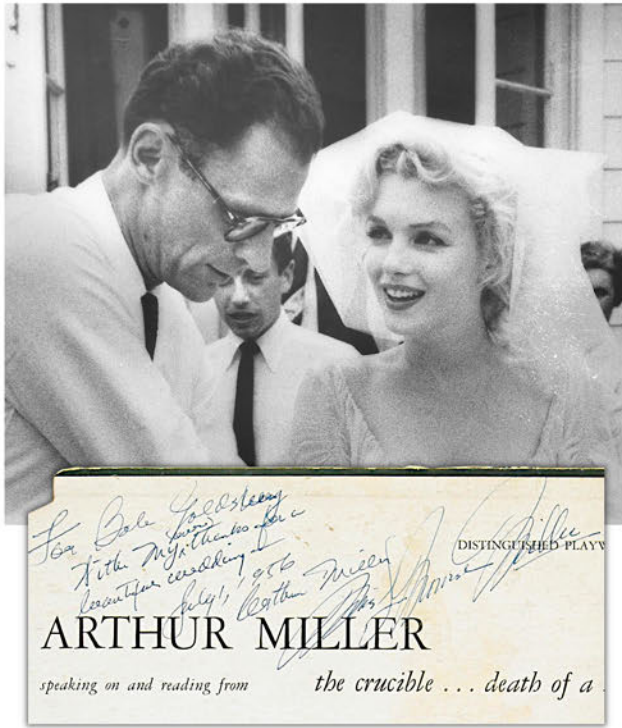
It had previously sold in 2006 for **\$70,000** during the auction of DiMaggio's estate, marking a **186% increase** in value.

The skin-tight dress Monroe wore to sing *Happy Birthday* to JFK sold in 1999 for **\$1.3 million**, setting a then-world record price for any dress sold at auction.

Seventeen years later in 2016 it auctioned again at Julien's, achieving **\$4.8 million**. An increase in value of **15.8%** a year.

The buyer was Ripley's Believe It or Not museum, who famously lent it to Kim Kardashian in 2022.





Declining supply

Marilyn Monroe died tragically young, leaving behind a small, finite number of signed items and personal memorabilia from her short life.

For collectors, this rarity adds both financial and emotional value to Monroe's memorabilia.

Over time, supply of these few Monroe artefacts must diminish as pieces are lost or damaged.

Furthermore, museums will gradually own more and more of the best pieces, reducing the number of investment-grade artefacts available to own.

This ensures the demand for her personal memorabilia will always exceed the supply.

"With the sector's strong demographics, and the public's enduring fascination with Monroe's life and death, we believe now is the time to buy."

Outlook

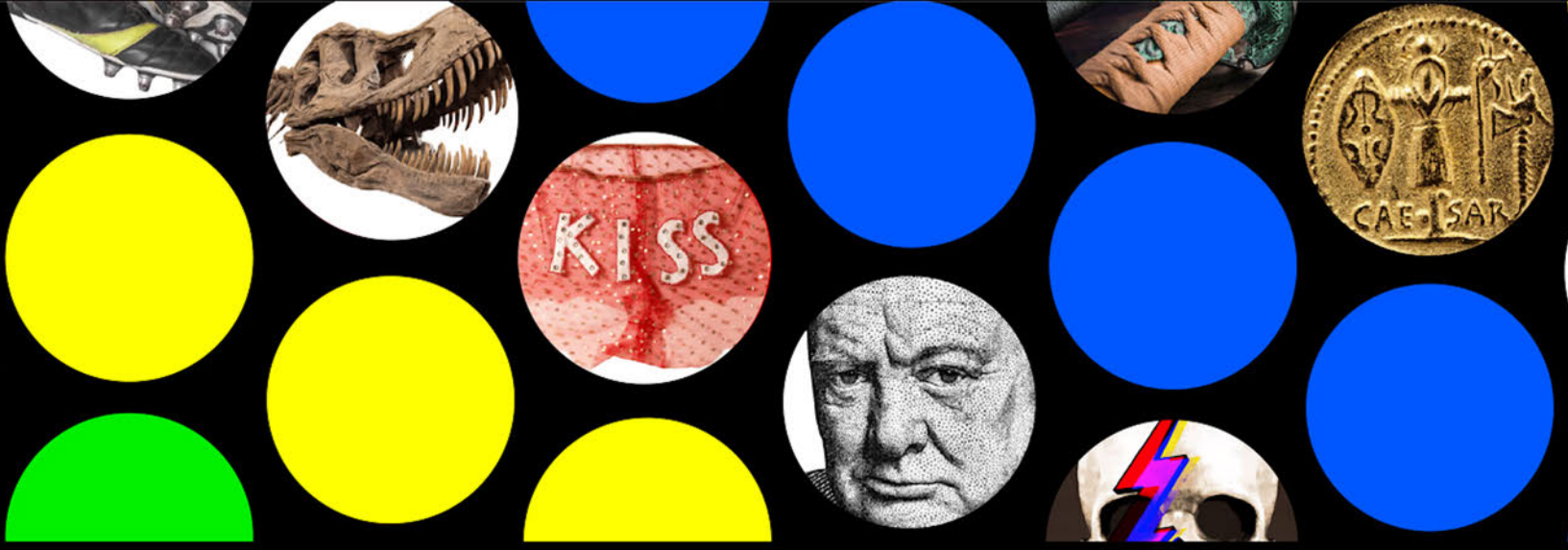
The most desirable Monroe collectibles have seen increasing demand in recent years, including:

- World records and estimate-eclipsing sales for film-worn dresses, autographs and photographs
- Autographs are up 23% per annum between 2000 and 2022

In times of high inflation, investment-minded collectors have traditionally turned to the safe haven of physical assets, such as collectibles.

In this present period of high inflation we anticipate values for top line Monroe artefacts will become increasingly attractive to investors seeking medium-to-long-term growth.





Discover the *Fastest* Growing Trend in Collecting

(And learn how you can potentially profit...)

Have you noticed the surge in popularity of fractional ownership collecting?

Millions of collectors are buying a fraction of a highly valuable object, for just a fraction of its full value.

We're not surprised it's proving popular. Who wouldn't want to be able to say, "I own a Picasso." Even if you only own 1/1000th of it!

This revolutionary way of collecting is fantastically enjoyable. It's also potentially lucrative. And best of all, it's just getting started.



What is fractional ownership?

Fractional ownership divides ownership of a valuable item, such as a rare collectible or work of art, among many collectors.

An example. A Picasso painting is worth \$1 million and is divided into 10,000 shares. Each share represents 0.01% ownership of the painting, or \$100.

Many people can buy shares of the Picasso, becoming fractional owners of the artwork.

Essentially, it makes owning world-class rare collectibles possible for every level of collector.



Here at Paul Fraser Collectibles we're offering you an easy way to get involved. And that's thanks to our new venture: CollectorLabs.

CollectorLabs transforms "I'll-never-afford-that" objects into instantly affordable artefacts within your grasp.

It enables you to diversify your collection across multiple pieces, rather than concentrating all of your capital on a single item. It spreads your risk.

CollectorLabs makes it instantly affordable to build a world class collection

In April we launched our first fractional item: **Madonna's stage worn knickers**. With portions selling for just \$100 each.

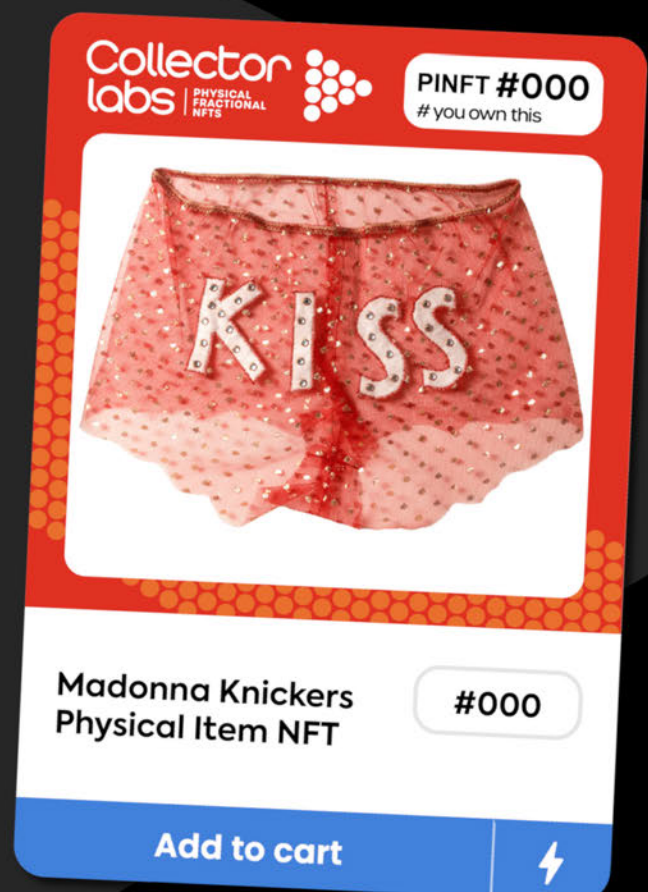
Look out for opportunities to acquire Apollo 11 astronaut Buzz Aldrin's training spacesuit and Gandhi's prison bowl in the near future.

They're just two of several new fractional-ownership pieces you can acquire through CollectorLabs in the coming months.

They will all have one thing in common: they will be tangible assets of real interest.

And once you own your piece of history - it's yours to do what you want with:

- Own it forever: imagine the kick you'll get from telling friends: "I own that"
- Track its value and sell to another collector when the time is right
- Buy more fractions and build your portfolio



And here's where things get really exciting for you, and potentially your bank balance.

We're going one better than our competitors in the fractional ownership sector.

We send each fraction to you as a non fungible token (NFT). This is a world first.

So not only will traditional collectors want to own your fraction when you come to sell, but NFT investors around the globe will also want to own it.

It means tens of thousands more buyers for your slice - which will potentially mean more return for you.

It's so easy to start buying and selling.

Many of us in the office are far from technically minded (we're history lovers after all!).

Yet we've found it so quick and straightforward to set up and buy fractions with CollectorLabs.

What is an NFT?

Imagine you own a signed photo of Marilyn Monroe. That signed photo has unique characteristics that make it one-of-a-kind, just like an NFT.

You could swap your Marilyn Monroe signed photo with someone else for another example, but you wouldn't get an exact copy of yours in return.

Similarly, an NFT is a unique item. No other version of it exists. It's a digital certificate of ownership that's stored on a computer network called a blockchain.

This certificate proves you own the unique digital item, like a piece of Madonna's knickers.

NFTs offer buyers transparent, traceable authenticity and ownership history. The most popular NFTs sell for tens of thousands of pounds.



"NFTs are a gamechanger for the rare collectibles market... and it's just getting started."

We caught up with CollectorLabs Project Manager Paul Simpson to talk about his passion for the NFT market and the future of the industry.



Hi Paul, how are you?

Busy! Launching a new project is always hectic, but it's really exciting as well, and the response we've had so far has been brilliant. And I'm speaking to people around the world about an area I'm passionate about - so the busier the better!

When did you first become interested in NFTs?

I got interested in Crypto in 2012 and was busy mining Litecoin and Bitcoin, and didn't pay too much attention to NFTs until around 2016, when I started to realise there was huge unlocked future potential for these 'visual' tokens.

What kind of collectors are buying NFTs right now? And what are they buying?

It's a broad demographic. Although you'd expect to see a younger generation involved in this form of collecting, we're also seeing many more traditional collectors dipping their toes in the digital waters for the first time.

Some of the clients I'm working with are classic early adopters, who love cutting-edge tech and new digital markets. But others are just regular collectors excited by fractional ownership, and the chance to own a piece of something truly rare.

The usual next hype NFTs will always be on the NFT crowd's shopping list, but also and increasingly, new utility NFTs that offer other benefits such as fractional ownership, membership and access are growing in popularity.

Why is the combination of NFTs and fractional ownership so significant?

NFTs offer a way into fractional ownership of physical items for many that was previously unavailable, opening up a huge new global demographic to this unique and borderless product.

Many now have the option to purchase part of a fantastic collectible item for a literal fraction of its actual price. I believe NFTs can be a game-changer for the rare collectibles market, and it's just getting started.



"Many more traditional collectors are dipping their toes in the digital waters for the first time."

What's in your own NFT wallet?

There's some Madonna knickers of course!
There's also some Megababies, Pixel Frens, Croods, Terrawolves, Little Grays, Mystic Elves, and 'Nature' - numbers 17,18 and 19.

What have you learned through your own experience as an NFT collector?

I was once offered a cryptopunk on an early chat forum for \$500, but I couldn't get the cash together quickly enough. It didn't bother me too much at the time but I try not to think about it too much these days. It's now worth \$80,000!

That experience taught me that the NFT market can move fast, and it's important to grab these opportunities when they appear.

It really pays to get in early if you can. I just wish someone had told me that back then!

What do you say to NFT sceptics?

I'd say take a look at NFTs that have utility, such as membership and ownership NFTs, and how large organisations are utilising the functionality of NFTs. I'd also say remember the internet when it started and what sceptics were saying about it, and where it is now.

What's the 10-year outlook for the NFT market?

I can see huge growth. Particularly in utility NFTs, Soulbound NFTs that contain personal, biometric & medical data, membership & ticketing NFTs and NFTs with value attached to physical items.

There is a route to global and borderless ownership democratisation that only NFTs can provide. As larger entities discover the benefits that NFT utility can offer, the space will continue to grow and mature.

To learn more about **CollectorLabs**, and how you can get involved in the fastest-growing market in collecting, visit:

www.collectorlabs.io



Stamp Albums

A Beginner's Guide & Six of the Best

How do you store your stamps?

Wherever you are in your stamp collecting journey it's the one fundamental you need to address.

For the vast majority of collections and collectors that means an album or albums (although there are alternative options out there).

But which album is the right choice for you?

Blank albums are preferred by beginners. They're simple: you collect the stamps and place them in the album, in whatever order you wish.

Printed albums are for specialists. They are lists to be completed, with philatelic categories presented in all their options for the collector to carefully fill in the blanks.

A good stamp album will be robust and well made. For transparent mounts you really need cardboard pages. And look for acid-free papers which will preserve your stamps in the best condition.

A good album will keep your stamps apart. Stamps on facing pages need to be separated with interleaved thin or transparent paper. Some albums will also use an enclosing plastic sleeve.

We admit stamp album designs tend to be rather conservative, but when you love your collection you want it to be protected and well presented.

High quality padded leather binders offer you both, and it's worth paying a little extra in the long run.

So to get you started, here are six of our favourite albums currently on the market.

Stanley Gibbons Stockbooks

For beginners or for less-favoured or unsorted stamps in more advanced collections you can't go wrong with the **Stanley Gibbons stockbook**.

It looks very nice (in red or blue) and delivers on function with glassine inserts to hold your stamps without hinges and interleaved pages of the same material to keep stamps apart.

Stanley Gibbons are a leading name in stamp collecting for good reason. This good-value album in 8, 16, or 32-page versions does everything right. You can't have too many of these practical albums.



Lighthouse Hingeless Albums

In similar quality bindings to Davo, **Lighthouse albums** are wonderfully made and perfect for British collectors.

Their printed albums cover all the basics - acid- and wood-free ivory 170gsm paper - and follow the Stanley Gibbons Great Britain Concise catalogue.

Annual supplements for the preceding year are published each May.

Davo Printed Albums

You can feel why **Davo albums** are so highly rated as soon as you pick one up. They are heavy, with padded binders and 170 gsm paper.

Their philatelic know-how is good, and you can try to complete more than 70 national or themed volumes. You should be aware that many Davo albums are "simplified" collections that may not include every stamp in a national catalogue.

They're printed with indicative illustrations with a crystal clear mount for each and every stamp.



MOC pre-printed albums

Made by **Leuchtturm**, the same company who produce the Lighthouse brand, the **MOC system** is a pre-printed album in binder form.

This modular system allows you to focus your collection and build the album that works for you.

It hits all the same quality markers as the Lighthouse range, allowing safe, hingeless mounting of stamps. New pages are added annually.



Lindner Albums

Lindner, a German company, make a ring binder system for collectors with a comprehensive range of printed pages covering the entire stamp issuing globe. These follow the Michel catalogue layout.

Their illustrated, hingeless pages, use a pocket system covered by a film sleeve. Everything is acid and chemical free and should preserve your beloved collection beautifully.

The binders are well made and well presented and the system updates in June every year with supplemental pages.

Safe Albums

These hingeless **Safe** albums live up to their name and are highly rated by advanced collectors.

An interleaved foil page takes the stamps, matching them to printed country pages in binders. You get both pages when you buy country albums or annual updates.

The paper is ph-neutral and heavy and there are similar conservation guarantees on the transparencies. Stamps are held in place by the pocket's seam (which is welded, not glued, so free of chemicals).



What *not* to do

Rare stamps are highly delicate pieces of paper often decades, or even more than a century old.

As a collector it's your role to preserve them - for yourself and for future generations.

Though they were designed to survive robust, sometimes automated sorting and delivery processes, they were also made to be cheap, single-use, essentially disposable items.

As stamp dealers we see hundreds of otherwise wonderful stamps that have been damaged by bad storage. And this can result in the value of your collection plummeting.

They will undoubtedly suffer damage if you don't keep them somewhere cool and dry.

Aim for a humidity level of 50 - 55%, away from direct sunlight, and preferably at a temperature of below 18° centigrade.

Albums should be stored upright, not stacked, to alleviate pressure and warping of the pages.

And slip-cases for albums will further protect your stamps against dust and other pollutants in the air.

A word about hinges

Collectors do still use hinges (rarely), but if you have valuable, and mint-condition stamps you should know that hinging is likely to damage them and reduce their value.

Be careful with hinges. As you use them make sure they are damp - not the stamp. And buy "peelable" hinges that can be easily removed.

But our advice is simple. If you're building a collection of investment-grade rare stamps, avoid hinges. 'Never Hinged' stamps will always be far more desirable - and therefore valuable - for collectors, as they are closer to their original state.



Final thoughts

These choices are very personal - like your collection - and most albums are produced to a high standard in our experience.

It's generally accepted now that hinges should be avoided. But if you must...

Of the six albums we highlighted, SAFE allows a double collection of hinged and unhinged stamps to co-exist - sleeves for mint, hinges for used.

One final option every collector should consider is to do it yourself.

Buy a binder, and create your own printed pages - Microsoft Powerpoint is popular software for this purpose - or download pre-printed pages, for example by Steiner.

Whichever albums you go for, make sure you get them out regularly and enjoy them.

Stamps are there to be enjoyed. And put them back carefully, upright, in their slip cases (if you bought those) and in a dry, warm place.



The World's Most **Expensive** Celebrity Watches

From Apollo astronauts to world leaders, sports legends and Hollywood icons...

We present the 10 most valuable celebrity owned watches ever sold at auction.

Jack Nicklaus' Rolex Day Date: \$1.22 million

In 1966 golfing legend Jack Nicklaus attended a cocktail party hosted by Rolex and was offered a free watch as a gift.

On the advice of fellow champion Gary Player, he chose a Rolex Day-Date Reference 1803 in yellow gold, perhaps in reference to his professional nickname 'the Golden Bear'.

Nicklaus received his watch in 1967, and it remained on his wrist for 50 years throughout one of the most remarkable careers in sporting history.

"This is the very first watch I ever owned, and the only watch I wore for every professional tournament I've won throughout my career," said Nicklaus. "This watch has seen a lot of time, it's seen a lot of me. It's a very happy old friend."

In December 2019 Nicklaus sold the watch at Phillips in New York for \$1.2 million, to raise funds for his Children's Health Care Foundation.



Image: Phillips

Dave Scott's Apollo 15 Bulova Chronograph: \$1.6 million

This Bulova Chronograph wristwatch is the only personally-owned watch ever worn on the surface of the moon.

Apollo astronauts usually wore NASA-issued Omega Speedmaster watches during their missions.

However, during the Apollo 15 mission in July 1971, Commander Dave Scott also took his own watch, and was forced to use it when his Omega watch malfunctioned.

He wore it during his third and final spacewalk, and it stayed on his wrist for the journey back to Earth.

The watch sold at RR Auction in October 2015 for \$1,625,000, setting a new record price for a piece of American space memorabilia.



Image RR Auction

Elvis Presley's Omega Tiffany & Co watch: \$1.8 million

When Elvis left the Army in 1960 he received the watch as a gift from his record company, RCA, to celebrate selling 75m records worldwide.

The reverse is inscribed: "To Elvis, 75 Million Records, RCA Victor, 12-25-60."

Years later he exchanged it with a fan who complimented the watch in a restaurant, receiving a diamond-set Hamilton in return.

In 2018 the fan's nephew consigned the watch to auction at Phillips in Geneva, where it sold for \$1.8 million - 10 times its original high estimate.

It was the highest price ever paid for an Omega watch at auction, and set a new record as the most valuable item of Elvis Presley memorabilia ever sold.



Image: Phillips



Image: RR Auction

Wally Schirra's 18k Gold Omega Speedmaster Professional: \$1.9 million

U.S astronaut Wally Schirra received this unique solid gold Omega Speedmaster during a gala dinner on November 25, 1969.

Omega presented 26 of the commemorative watches to NASA astronauts alive and deceased, in honour of their achievements.

Schirra was the only astronaut to fly as a member of all three early NASA projects, on board Mercury 8, Gemini 6 and Apollo 7.

The watch was inscribed with Schirra's name and his three missions, along with the quote "To mark man's conquest of space with time, through time, on time."

In 2022 the watch was sold at RR Auction for \$1.9 million, setting a new record as the world's most valuable astronaut-owned watch.

Steve McQueen's TAG Heuer Monaco: \$2.2 million

The 1969 TAG Heuer Monaco became a style icon when it was worn by Steve McQueen in the classic 1971 racing movie Le Mans.

McQueen wore six of the watches during production, including this example which he gifted to the film's chief mechanic Haig Alltounian.

As McQueen presented the watch, he said "Thank you for keeping me alive all these months." When Alltounian refused, McQueen replied "Too late, it already has your name on it."

Alltounian wore the engraved watch for years before storing it away in a safety deposit box.

In December 2020 he finally placed the watch up for auction at Phillips, where it sold for \$2.2 million, setting a new record as the world's most expensive TAG Heuer watch.



Image: Phillips

Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie's Patek Philippe: \$2.9 million

This Patek Philippe ref. 2497 watch was made in 1954 for Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie.

As a royal descendant of the biblical King Solomon, Selassie is regarded as the 'Messiah' for four million Rastafari followers around the world.

He received the 18k gold watch from Italian aviation pioneer Federico Bazzi, who presented it to him during an official visit to Switzerland.

It featured sweep centre seconds, moon phases, luminous Arabic numerals and Alpha hands, and was one of only three examples ever produced.

The watch was described as "one of the most captivating and important horological discoveries in recent years", and sold at Christie's in Geneva in 2017 for \$2.9 million.



Image: Christie's



Image: Christie's

Eric Clapton's Patek Philippe 2499 wristwatch - \$3.6 million

This 1987 Patek Philippe Ref. 2499, is regarded as one of the true Holy Grails for Patek Philippe watch collectors.

Only two examples were ever produced in platinum, at the personal request of company President Philippe Stern, to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the iconic model.

One remained in the Patek Philippe museum, and the other was offered for auction in 1989.

In 2002 it was acquired by the legendary guitarist and renowned watch collector Eric Clapton.

In November 2012 Clapton consigned it to auction at Christie's in Geneva, where it sold for a record \$3,635,808.



Image: Phillips

Vietnamese Emperor Bao Dai's Rolex: \$5 million

This unique Rolex watch originally belonged to His Majesty Bao Dai, the last Emperor of Vietnam.

The Emperor acquired the watch in Geneva in 1954, whilst attending a peace conference.

During a break in talks, he walked across the road to a watch dealer and said he wanted to buy the world's rarest and most valuable Rolex wristwatch.

The dealer sprang into action, and ordered him a Rolex reference 6062, the company's most complicated Oyster-cased watch.

Finished in yellow gold with a black dial and diamond indexes, the watch included day, date, month and moonphase indications, and was one of only three examples ever made.

The watch sold at Phillips in Geneva in 2017 for \$5,066,000, setting a record as the most expensive Rolex watch in the world.

Paul Newman's "Big Red" Rolex Daytona : \$5.48 million

Paul Newman received this Rolex Daytona Ref. 6239 from his wife Joanne Woodward in 1983 on their 25th wedding anniversary, engraved with the words "Drive Carefully, Joanne".

Newman then wore it almost every day throughout his acting and racing career for 25 years.

He was frequently photographed wearing the watch, and was known to keep the chronograph pushers unscrewed so he could quickly use the stopwatch to time racing laps.

In 2008 Newman passed it on to his daughter Clea just months before his death.

And in December 2020 it sold at Phillips in New York for \$5.47 million, with a portion of the proceeds benefitting Newman's many charities.



Image: Phillips



Image: Phillips

Paul Newman's Rolex Cosmograph Daytona Oyster: \$17.75 million

The Rolex Cosmograph Daytona Oyster 'Paul Newman' is one of the world's most collectible watches.

The model got its nickname thanks to Hollywood star Paul Newman, who famously wore several examples throughout his life. However, this example was the first he ever owned, and was closely tied to his personal life.

Newman developed a love of motor racing during training for his 1969 film 'Winning', and by 1972 he had taken it up professionally.

This second career brought him success on the track, but it also worried his wife Joanne Woodward, who feared for his safety.

She gave him the Rolex, which include the inscription "DRIVE CAREFULLY ME" as a reminder for him to come home in one piece.

Newman kept the watch for years, and later gifted it to his daughter's boyfriend. Thirty years later he placed it up for sale, with a portion of the proceeds to benefit the Newman's Own charity foundation.

The watch was described as "arguably the most iconic collector's wristwatch of the 20th century", and in October 2017 it smashed the world record for any wristwatch when it sold at Phillips for \$17,752,500.

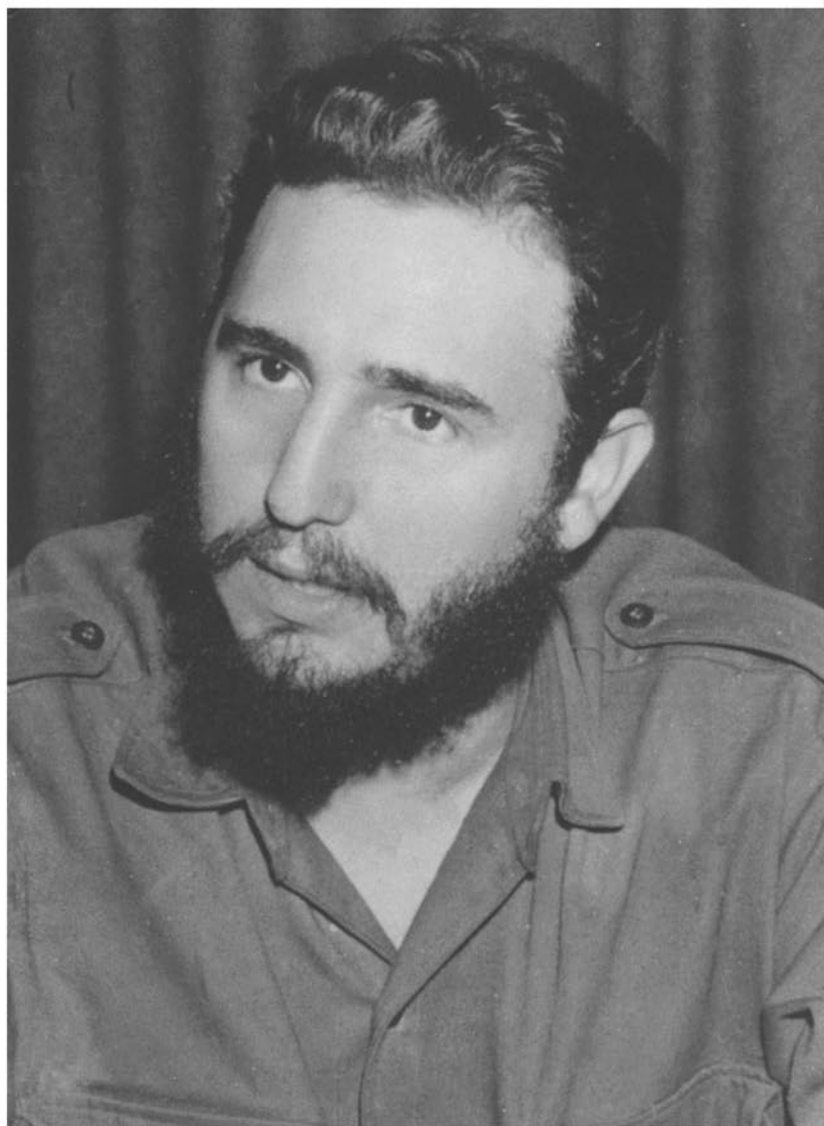


Featured Treasures

Fidel Castro's personal signed cigar box

A Romeo y Julieta cigar box used by Fidel Castro to avoid assassination, circa 1960 - 1984.

- Gifted to Castro by his long-term mistress Natty Revuelta Clews.
- Used extensively by Castro in his main office and during official foreign trips for 24 years.
- Signed clearly in black pen by Castro on the underside of the lid.
- Comes with the original key, and a cigar that was discovered inside the box.
- One of only three cigar boxes authentically signed by Fidel Castro known to exist.
- Measures 15 x 12 inches when closed.



History

In 1960, with continuing attempts on his life, Castro became aware of a CIA plot to poison one of the cigars he smoked. Or to put a cigar bomb in his cigar box.

To save Castro from harm, his long-term mistress Natty Revuelta Clews gave Castro this cigar box along with a crystal and silver ashtray.

As he did with most of his personal belongings, Castro signed the cigar box. Only he and his protection team were allowed to touch items which Castro had signed.

Castro placed the box on his desk in his main office.

Castro would also take it with him when he travelled (hence the minor damage to the feet).

Castro would routinely offer four of his generals cigars from the box, and tell them it was a present from him to keep them safe.

After he stopped smoking in December 1984, Castro sent the box and ashtray to the home he shared with mistress Natty Revuelta Clews (Calle 35 #1476 entre 26th y 28 Nuevo Vedado).

The box remained there until Clews' death in 2015, when it was sold during an auction of her estate.



This cigar box is a key piece of Castro's personal history, that perfectly conveys his constant fear of assassination.

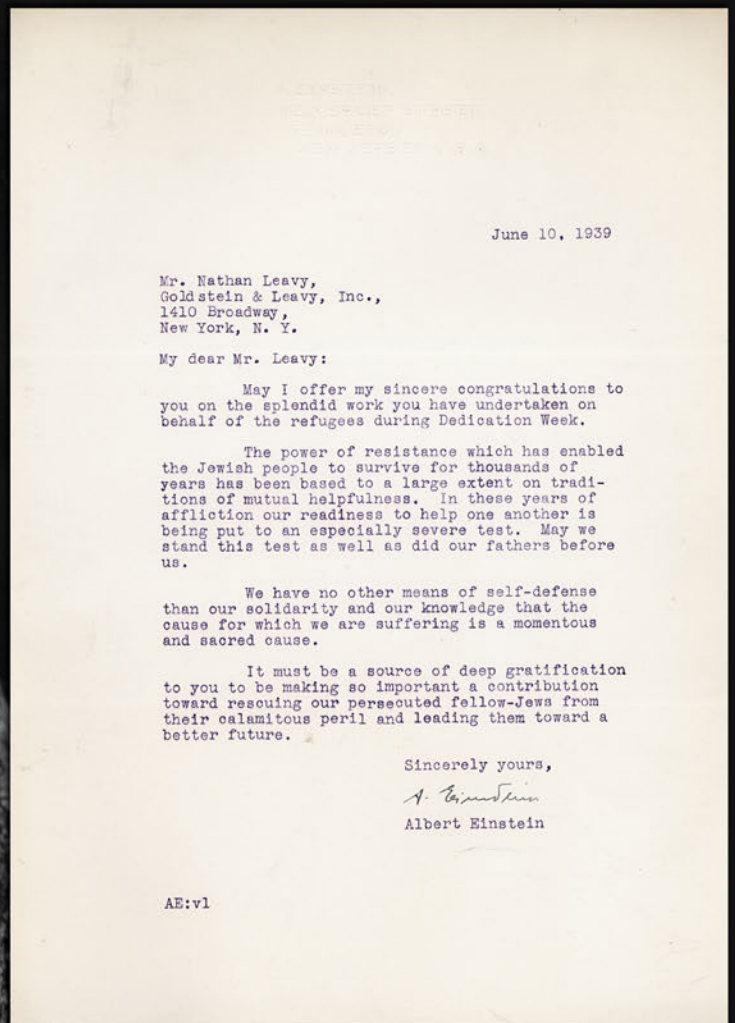
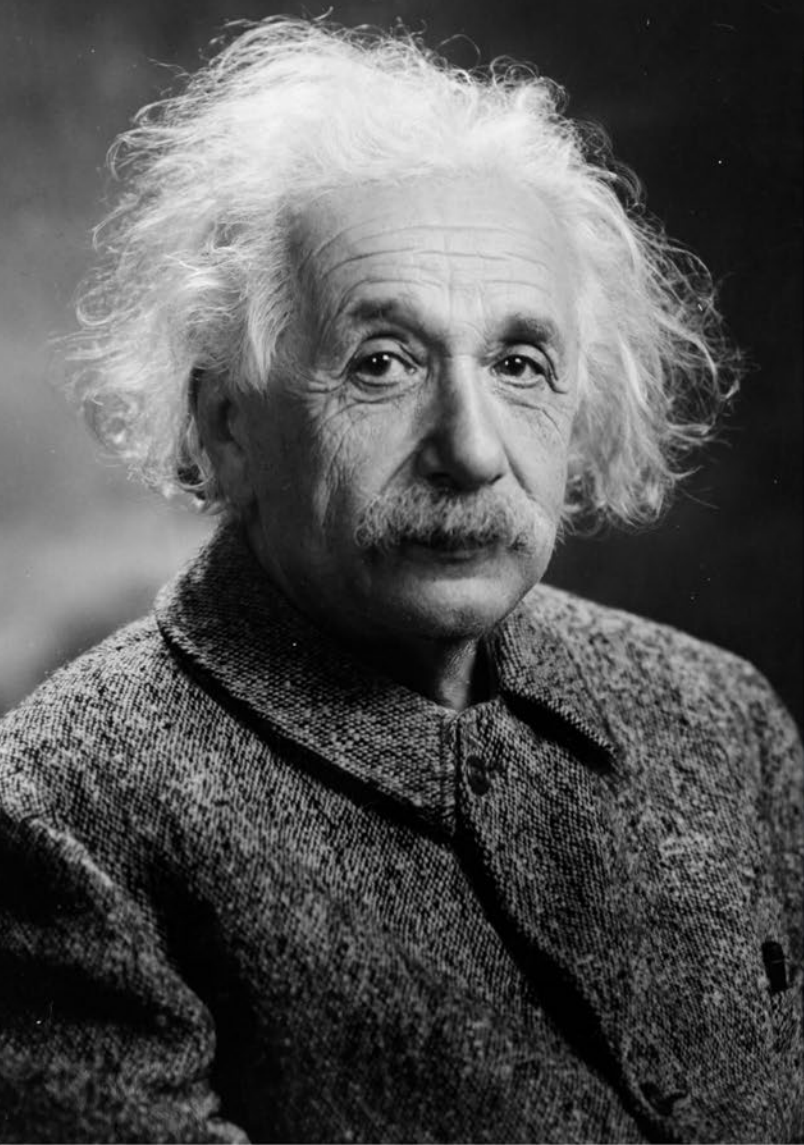
Cigars are synonymous with Fidel Castro, and all cigar-related Castro artefacts are in great demand.

"Without doubt one of the world's rarest and most historically significant cigar boxes in existence."

Retail Price: £29,995

Scan this QR code to discover more about the item and visit our online store.





Albert Einstein typed and signed letter

- A superb Albert Einstein typed & signed letter dated June 10, 1939
- Offered fresh to the market after more than 80 years by the original owners
- With highly significant content relating to Einstein's Jewish heritage and the plight of Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazis in WWII
- With three letters from the Albert Einstein estate documenting its history and provenance

History

Albert Einstein fled Germany for the U.S in 1933, as the Nazis began their rise to power.

He knew he was one of the lucky ones.

So in 1939, on the brink of WWII, he was determined to help other desperate Jewish refugees find safety in America.

On March 22, 1939, Einstein gave a passionate radio address on behalf of the United Jewish Appeal.

He was heavily involved in national campaigns to raise money and awareness for Jewish refugees.

And on June 10, 1939 he personally sent letters to several Jewish civic leaders, thanking them for their contributions to the cause.

This example was sent to the prominent New York businessman Mr Nathan Leavy.

It's typed on a single sheet of Einstein's personal stationery, embossed with his address at Princeton University.

The letter measures 8.5" x 11" and is presented in very good condition, with just faint horizontal mailing folds and minor creasing.

The content of this letter is a profound, personal statement on Albert Einstein's Jewish heritage.

The text is based almost word-for-word on a national radio address he gave on March 22 on behalf of the United Jewish Appeal.

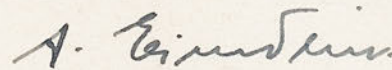
As such, these words and this letter take on a greater historic significance.

Einstein signs the letter "A. Einstein" in crisp black ink, with his full name typed neatly below.

It's a superb specimen of his signature, unfaded after more than 80 years and worthy of the finest historic autograph collection.

It must be a source of deep gratification to you to be making so important a contribution toward rescuing our persecuted fellow-Jews from their calamitous peril and leading them toward a better future.

Sincerely yours,



Albert Einstein

The letter reads in part:

"My Dear Mr Leavy:

"May I offer my sincere congratulations to you on the splendid work you have undertaken on behalf of the refugees during dedication week.

"The power of resistance which has enabled the Jewish people to survive for thousands of years has been based to a large extent on traditions of mutual helpfulness.

"In these years of affliction our readiness to help one another is being put to an especially severe test. May we stand this test as well as did our fathers before us...

"Sincerely yours,

Albert Einstein."

The letter is accompanied by three further letters from the Albert Einstein estate, documenting their efforts to secure a copy for their archive in 1980.

These documents attest to both the historic provenance and importance of this letter.

Retail Price: £29,995

Scan this QR code to discover more about the item and visit our online store.



12 British Stamps I Always Want to Have in Stock

Stamp expert **Mike Hall** shares the most in-demand British rarities in our catalogue

Every British stamp dealer has this problem.

There are certain stamps you need to have in stock at all times. They are the most popular GB stamp issues, and represent the defining stamps of Britain's postal history.

The demand is always high, as almost every collector of rare British stamps wants to own them.

So keeping them in stock is a never-ending task. And in today's market it's much more difficult, because sourcing fine quality examples is like finding a needle in a haystack.

So here I present the 12 most prized British stamps in our catalogue. When you see them I think you'll understand why. Let's begin our countdown with the most recent issue...

The 1993 Britannia £10 stamp

The £10 Britannia is one of the finest modern stamp issues from Great Britain and the UK's highest value ever stamp.

It was introduced on 2nd March 1993, replacing the £5 stamp as the UK's highest-value stamp.

The higher value was required because of a need to cover the cost of postage for heavy packages going by air.

It was phased out after just a few years and has become increasingly hard to acquire because they are so popular and held in private collections.

It's also the most secure British stamp ever released as it employs an array of state of the art printing techniques to protect it against forgery.



It incorporates Braille embossed dots – not so much to help the blind or partially sighted to identify the stamp, but as a further deterrent to the would-be counterfeiter.

Furthermore, the £10 Britannia consisted of the two pairs of elliptical holes at the top and bottom.

Previously this curious feature had been confined to savings, television, national insurance and telephone stamps. After the £10 stamp it became normal for the Machin definitives as well.

The 1951 Festival of Britain Stamps

This beautifully designed set of King George VI high value stamps was issued on 3 May 1951 to celebrate the centenary of the Great Exhibition of 1851.

The Festival of Britain in 1951 aimed to illustrate the British contribution to civilisation past, present and future in the arts, science and technology, and industrial design.

Pressure was put on the Post Office to issue a special set of stamps to celebrate the event. 12 artists were invited to submit their ideas for the designs.

The four stamps finally chosen depicted HMS Victory (2s6d), White Cliffs of Dover (5s), St. George and the Dragon (10s) and the Royal Court of Arms (£1).

They are a lovely set of stamps. It is not surprising they have become one of the most popular sets of British commemorative stamps ever issued.



The 1948 Royal Silver Wedding Stamps

This stamp issue in 1948 to commemorate the Royal Silver Wedding anniversary of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth proved the most popular issue of all time.

On the day of issue on 26th April, 1948 they sold like hot cakes. Stocks were practically exhausted by the close of business on the first day.

The £1 stamp, which was issued specifically for collectors, proved the most popular. There were several reports of offices selling out completely within an hour of opening.

The 1935 Prussian Blue

The King George VI Prussian Blue is the most iconic stamp error in all of British philately. It is the error everyone wants to own. Yet, owning one is a privilege to only a select few.

Known affectionately as "The King's Error", I would go so far as to say it is the easiest British stamp rarity to sell.

The iconic design and famous back story make it a trophy purchase to more than just stamp collectors. Here's why it's so rare and desirable.

King George V was a passionate stamp collector, and on June 6th 1934 he agreed to a commemorative stamp issue to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of his Accession to the Throne,

Seven months and 34 designs later, the King finally chose a design by artist Barnett Freeman.

Just one question remained: What colour did he want the stamp to be: 'Blue' or 'Prussian blue'?

The King opted for the former. But the printers Harrison & Son printed some sheets in the "Prussian blue" colour in error.



They realised their mistake and quickly destroyed the erroneous sheets, except for six sheets sent to the Post Office Stores for inspection.

The Superintendent Warehouseman was asked to destroy the six sheets apart from a block of four to be retained for reference purposes.

However, a further mistake was made and only two of the sheets were destroyed. The other four were accidentally placed with the correct colour sheets by a busy worker.

Three of these sheets were sent to the Edmonton Post Office in North London. The other sheet was issued to an unknown Post Office.

As a result, we know that only 480 of these stamps were ever issued. This is the maximum possible number in existence. The actual number of surviving examples is much lower.

To this day, the 2½d Prussian blue remains one of the rarest and most famous GB stamps. Quite simply, it should not have been printed.

The 1929 Postal Union Congress (P.U.C)



The 1929 P.U.C. £1 stamp is now considered Britain's greatest ever stamp design. So, needless to say, it is one of the most popular and desirable stamps in the world.

With an intricate design by Harold Nelson and beautiful engraving, it was just the second commemorative stamp to be released after the British Empire Exhibition stamps of 1924/25.

It had an unusually low print run of only 61,000 examples, and as such fine quality mint examples are hard to find, particularly with full original gum.



The 1924/25 British Empire Exhibition Stamps

The first ever commemorative stamps issued by Great Britain, to celebrate the British Empire Exhibition held at Wembley Park in 1924 - 25.

The stamps were originally issued in 1924, then again when the exhibition reopened in the summer of 1925. They were known affectionately as 'The Wembleys', and were acclaimed for their stunning design, quality engraving and printing.

Despite their large print runs, they are actually more difficult to find in Post Office fresh unmounted mint quality than you would expect.

The British Post Office issued two commemorative stamps, the 1d scarlet and the 1½d brown, designed by Harold Nelson.

The stamps were also produced to very high standards employing recess printing methods. It was customary at the time to use the much less costly photogravure process for low value definitive stamps.

They were engraved and printed by Waterlow & Sons in the best intaglio style normally reserved for the highest GB stamp denominations.

The quality of workmanship that went into producing these 1d and 1½d values resulted in huge praise and adoration from the general public.

The King George V Seahorse stamps

The King George V Seahorse stamps, in issue during World War I, are perhaps the most defining stamps ever issued by Great Britain.

The imagery of the stamp made a bold statement to the world as a miniature form of propaganda.

One noble piece of paper that encapsulated the meaning of being “proud to be British”.

It is such a popular stamp issue and, with so many varieties to collect, it is the obsessive and sole study of some specialist British stamp collections.



Whilst most examples are not especially rare, finding them in fine quality is getting harder and harder as they become tied in long term collections, lost, damaged and destroyed.

Finding a perfect example of the rarest shade 'Deep Blue' is the holy grail for many - and it's a stamp I'm always proud to offer.



The King Edward VII 1911 £1 Deep Green

The stamps issued during the short reign of King Edward VII (1901-1910) have long been a very popular area of British stamp collecting.

Edward was the first male British monarch to feature on a postage stamp.

The 1911 Long One Pound stamp is considered by many the most famous of the 19 basic stamps issued.

This most distinctive and memorable stamp design caused controversy at the time because of its unusual shape and size.

It is now argued by some as being the most attractive definitive stamp issue of King Edward VII's reign.

The 1911 £1 Deep Green stamps were one of the last produced, as Edward died in May 1910 and was succeeded by his son George V.

Printing continued until they were finally replaced by the first George V designs in June 1911.

The £5 Orange

The 1882 £5 orange is considered Britain's boldest stamp. It is also one of the most coveted of British stamps, but a sad gap in the albums of most collectors.

With such a high face value (equivalent to nearly £600 in today's money), its larger than life size and startling colour, it was always going to stand out.

Because they are so popular, and very difficult to find in fine condition, we handle precious few examples.

The high face value meant there was no actual postal need for this stamp issue.



It was first introduced as a Telegraphs stamp to account for payment of bulk telegrams and for those of individual high cost.

Telegraphs were withdrawn in 1881 and the same plate design was adapted for use as a postage stamp. Postal packages that warranted a £5 stamp were obviously going to be very few and far between.

That's why so few of these stamps exist. According to research by Dr. John Horsey, it's thought that less than 8,000 £5 Oranges still survive.

The Victorian Embossed Stamps

The Queen Victoria Embossed stamps were issued between 1847 and 1854, and were the first stamps created to cover the rates for overseas postage.

The 1-shilling rate was for postage to the USA, the 10d to Europe including France and Italy, and the 6d covered the rate to Belgium.

They truly ushered in the worldwide postal communications revolution, and as such are highly sought-after by collectors for their historic importance.

They are also fascinating to philatelists because the printing methods employed techniques unique to British philately.

Stamps were printed one at a time on silk thread paper, using a method to raise and recess the surface, which led to many being printed very close to each other or even overlapped.



The octagonal designs were then cut out by hand, meaning clean square-cut examples with four clear margins are exceptionally rare.

I would say the Victorian embossed stamps are the hardest British stamp issue to find in fine condition.



The Two Penny Blue

The 2d Blue was the world's second official postage stamp, issued a few days after the Penny Black in May 1840, with a higher value to cover heavier post.

Both stamps were produced for less than a year, but the Two Penny Blues are considered far rarer today.

Just under 6.5 million Two Penny Blues were printed, compared to 68 million Penny Blacks, making them 10 times scarcer. But I find it probably 20 times harder to find them in fine condition.

I'd argue no collection of historic British stamps is truly complete without a good example of a Two Penny Blue.



The Penny Black

And here's the world's first stamp that started it all.

Obviously, I must have a Penny Black in stock. In fact, I generally try to have as many fine quality examples as I can possibly get my hands on.

The market has taught me you can never have too many Penny Blacks. Because pretty much every stamp collector in the world wants to own one.

Today there are over a million surviving examples, but most of them are not in fine condition.

You can even pick one up on eBay for £10 - but it won't look good and it will never be valuable.

Keeping a stock of fine quality, four margin used examples is hard work. At most auctions we won't win against collectors who are willing to pay more. But when it comes to the world's most iconic stamp, it's my job to meet the ever-increasing demand.

Contact Us Today

We understand the rare collectibles market like nobody else.

Our team has over a century of knowledge and experience. We've worked with everyone from novice collectors to the Smithsonian Museum.

And our business has two simple aims in mind.

To help you build a collection you can be proud of, and achieve the strongest prices for your rare items.

It's what we do best. And we'd love to work with you.

Our advice to you will always be free and impartial. And our expertise is at your full disposal.

Whether you're taking your first steps into the market, looking to sell, or seeking the final rare piece to complete your collection, we can help you achieve your goals.

So contact us today, and join more than 2,000 clients around the world who have entrusted us with over £150 million in rare collectibles.

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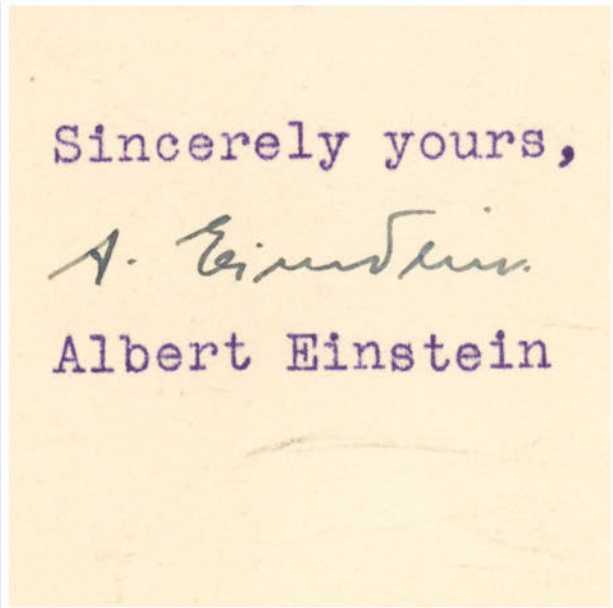


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