

## Items Signed by Many of History's Brightest Luminaries will be Sold May 31st by University Archives

News-Press Release

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### Summary

The Rare Signed Manuscripts, Books & Sports Memorabilia auction starts at 11 am Eastern and features signed items in many categories. All lots are up for viewing and bidding now.

### Message

Wilton, CT, USA, May 17, 2023 -- An autograph letter handwritten in German and signed by Ludwig van Beethoven, regarding his only opera, Fidelio; an autograph letter signed by Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson following his historic raid on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad in 1861; and an autograph letter signed by John Adams in 1801 regarding the influence of Virginia Democrats will headline University Archives™ next online-only auction scheduled for Wednesday, May 31st. The auction titled "Rare Signed Manuscripts, Books & Sports Memorabilia" will start promptly at 11 am Eastern time. All 388 lots in the catalog are up for viewing and bidding now (on the University Archives website: [www.UniversityArchives.com](http://www.UniversityArchives.com)), as well as [Invaluable.com](http://Invaluable.com), [Auctionzip.com](http://Auctionzip.com) and [LiveAuctioneers.com](http://LiveAuctioneers.com). Telephone and absentee bids will also be accepted. Major collecting categories in our outstanding May auction include music, science and U.S. Presidential, with outstanding autographed material from Ludwig van Beethoven to George Gershwin; from Albert Einstein and Max Planck to Thomas A. Edison; and from George Washington to Joe Biden," said John Reznikoff, president and owner of University Archives. Mr. Reznikoff added, "Exceptional items of Civil Rights, military, entertainment, literature, and sports memorabilia will also pass the auction block. Our lavishly illustrated catalog is up and ready for viewing/bidding right now. This is truly a great collecting and buying opportunity." The undated autograph letter in German signed by Beethoven (as "Beethoven") also features excellent musical content relating to his only opera, Fidelio, a love story about a wife disguised as a man rescuing her husband from a political prison. Beethoven's letter was addressed to Friedrich Sebastian Mayer, the baritone singer who played Don Pizarro, the prison governor in the first two productions of Fidelio. The letter carries a pre-sale estimate of \$80,000-\$100,000. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson wrote a one-page autograph letter signed to a neighbor on June 29, 1861, as commander of the 1st Brigade of the Confederate Army. Earlier that spring, Jackson had conducted multiple raids against the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, one of the Union Army's main supply lines, destroying tracks and bridges and confiscating locomotives (est. \$12,000-\$15,000). John Adams wrote an autograph letter, signed and dated March 31, 1801, addressed to Isaiah Thomas, Jr., the Worcester printer of the formerly Boston-based Patriot weekly Massachusetts Spy. In it, Adams wonders if Massachusetts is being overrun by the "moral and political opinions of Virginia" in a reference to the ascendant Thomas Jefferson and other Virginia Democrats (est. \$7,000-\$8,000). There are three lots related to Albert Einstein in the sale. One is a remarkable script from the mid-1940s NBC TV series Your World Tomorrow, signed by him as "A. Einstein" on the front cover. In the pilot episode, "The Atom," Einstein's discovery of his famous equation  $E=MC^2$  is dramatized via dialogue between "Einstein" and two fictional characters. There are very few examples of Einstein's inscribing his famous formula in something other than a book, making this example particularly desirable (est. \$40,000-\$50,000). George Washington boldly signed an October 21, 1799 letter addressed to a Revolutionary War veteran named Captain Abraham Shepherd in the former's capacity as Commander-in-Chief of Federal Armies under the Adams administration. Washington assumed command of the military after his second presidential term ended, up until his death in Dec. 1799 two months later (est. \$20,000-\$30,000). Martin Luther King, Jr. signed a typed letter on "Southern Christian Leadership Conference" stationery in 1966, concerning the use of the "N" word. To the inquiring man from Haddonfield, N.J., King wrote: "The word 'n--r' carries with it a meaning deeply rooted in the debilitating racist caste ordering of our society's slavery epoch and segregation era" (est. \$18,000-\$20,000). Abraham Lincoln penned an 1862 autograph note regarding a brigade surgeon's appointment in the Excelsior Brigade. The battle unit had been plagued by political in-fighting between disgraced former New York Congressman Daniel Sickles, and his nemesis, New York Governor Edwin Morgan. Lincoln's note acknowledges the strained political climate (est. \$7,500-\$10,000). An archive of World War II-dated correspondence from Charles Sweeney, pilot of Bockscar, paints a vivid portrait of Air Force life before and after the dropping of the atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Sweeney flew to Hiroshima in The Great Artiste auxiliary plane and dropped "Fat Man" from Bockscar over Nagasaki on August 9, 1945 (est. \$5,000-\$10,000). A three-page autograph letter signed by Beatrice Houdini on mourning stationery, dated Nov. 9, 1926, provides a moving account of her husband's death less than two weeks earlier, on October 31st. The letter was uncovered in Germany and quite possibly has never been published. In it, Beatrice laments, "The

world has lost a Genius, but I have lost my Man" (est. \$5,000-\$10,000). James Joyce signed edition copy of *Finnegans Wake* (1939), considered one of the most difficult books in the English language. Fir ch more ambitious in literary aims than even Joyce's subversive *Ulysses* (1922). The partly uncut and rs to be unread, and is in near pristine condition (est. \$7,000-\$8,000). Sports items include signed photo alls, game-worn apparel, vintage posters and ephemera from the likes of Babe Ruth, Jackie Robinson, Joe DiMaggio, and Muhammad Ali. A group of six game-worn baseball helmets and jerseys from the Baltimore Orioles, circa 1990-2016, comes complete with grading and authentication from JSA and Mears (est. \$900-\$1,000). A lengthy, five-page letter in French signed Toussaint Louverture as the General in Chief of the Army of Saint-Domingue, Haiti, dated July 18, 1798 and addressed to Citoyen Vincent, Haiti's French director of fortifications, including the observation, "the blacks have received their former masters with open arms, should bring \$10,000-\$12,000." University Archives has become world-renowned as a go-to source for rare items of this kind. It is actively seeking quality material for future auctions, presenting a rare opportunity for sellers. Anyone who has a single item or a collection that may be a fit for a future University Archives auction may call John Reznikoff at 203-454-0111, or email him at [john@universityarchives.com](mailto:john@universityarchives.com). For more information about University Archives and the online-only Rare Signed Manuscripts, Books & Sports Memorabilia auction scheduled for Wednesday, May 31st, at 11 am Eastern time, please visit [www.universityarchives.com](http://www.universityarchives.com). Updates are posted frequently. About University Archives: University Archives was founded in 1979, as a division of University Stamp Company, by John Reznikoff, who started collecting stamps and coins in 1968, while in the third grade. Industry-wide, Reznikoff is considered the leading authenticity expert for manuscripts and documents. He consults with law enforcement, dealers, auction houses and both major authentication companies. University Archives' offices are located at 88 Danbury Rd. (Ste. 2A) in Wilton, Conn. For more information about University Archives, please visit [www.universityarchives.com](http://www.universityarchives.com). Updates are posted frequently.

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