

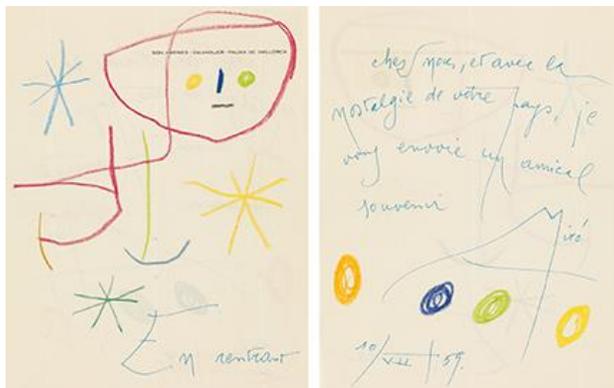


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Wartime Letters from PFC Kurt Vonnegut Come to Auction

Artists, Authors & Musicians Make for a Colorful Autographs Sale

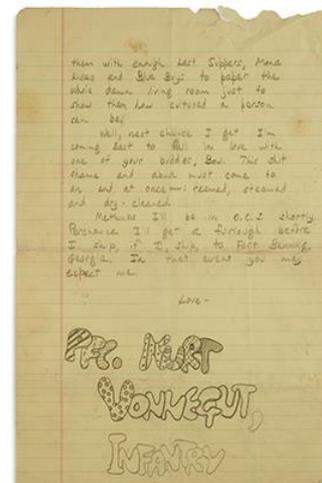


New York – Swann Auction Galleries’ Autographs sale will take place on **Thursday, November 8**, with a selection of rare and illuminating autographs, letters and other items from artists, authors and musicians, as well as figures from American history and beyond.

Among artist highlights is an illustrated autograph note signed, dated July 10, 1959, from **Joan Miró** to the MoMA Director of Exhibitions and Publications, Monroe Wheeler. Written in French, the note reads, “Returning home, and with the nostalgia of your country, I send you a friendly memory,” with a drawing by the artist of a figure surrounded by three stars in his recognizable hand. The letter is accompanied by a fancifully addressed envelope (Estimate: \$6,000-9,000). Also in the sale: a signed birthday card that contains a still-life drawing by Jacob Lawrence (\$2,000-3,000).

The highlight among literary autographs in the sale is a group of letters from **Kurt Vonnegut** to members of his family, largely from his time enlisted in the army during WWII. Vonnegut was an American writer best known for his science-fiction infused anti-war novel *Slaughterhouse-Five*. The offering of 12 letters touch on various subjects covering the War, love, alcohol and art, and contain small drawings and doodles by a young Vonnegut (\$4,000-6,000).

A written acceptance to the birthday party of a friend’s daughter from Charles Dickens, written in the dialect of the character Mrs. Gamp from *Martin Chuzzlewit*, is estimated at \$4,000 to \$6,000. Additional literary figures include Mark Twain, with an autograph letter signed SL. Clemens, explaining



that target of his new book is the founder of Christian Science (not its followers), offered at \$3,000 to \$4,000; and an undated manuscript journal entry by Henry David Thoreau recounting a meeting with Hugh Quoil, a character in *Walden* (\$3,000-4,000).

A typed letter signed, from Igor Stravinsky to conductor Bernardino Molinari, is available for \$4,000 to \$6,000. The letter, written in French, explains how *Rite of Spring* should be performed and features three bars of music in holograph. In the letter Stravinsky explains that Molinari should "...use my Columbia record where *The Rite* is recorded under my direction and you will therefore be able to find the answers to a lot of your questions."

Civil war autographs include the top lot in the sale, an 1861 letter, in uncommonly good condition, from Robert E. Lee to the colonel of the Kanawha Valley troop volunteers, aiming to boost their morale (\$15,000-25,000); and a letter from a Confederate Major Inspector-General desperately requesting resources to supply livestock for the siege of Petersburg. Endorsements on the sheet, including two by President Jefferson Davis, show his request was rejected and paint a picture of the declining ability of the Confederates to prosecute the war (\$2,500-3,500).

An autograph letter signed, dated December 9, 1874, from Mary Todd Lincoln is estimated at \$3,500 to \$5,000. Written on mourning stationary, the letter is addressed to the wife of her lawyer, expressing the former first lady's enjoyment of the Florida sunshine, but also her disdain for the "rebel horde" (members of Florida society) that had been continuously visiting her.

Other Americana highlights include Susan B. Anthony's message, written on her publisher's stationary, to an unnamed editor asking for favorable review of *The History of Woman Suffrage*, 1881, expected to bring \$2,000 to \$3,000.

The complete catalogue and bidding information is available at www.swanngalleries.com.

Additional highlights can be found [here](#).

Captions:

[Lot 371](#): Joan Miró, illustrated autograph note signed, to MoMA Director of Exhibitions & Publications Monroe Wheeler, 1959. Estimate \$6,000 to \$9,000.

[Lot 356](#): Kurt Vonnegut, archive of 12 letters signed, to his family, including 6 illustrated, 1930s-40s. Estimate \$4,000 to \$6,000.

Auction date: Thursday, November 8, at 1:30 pm

Exhibition dates: November 5-7, 10-6; November 8, 10-12

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