SOTHEBY’S TO SELL ORIGINAL WORKING MANUSCRIPT FOR LIKE A ROLLING STONE

The Most Important Rock Manuscript To Appear At Auction

Estimated To Fetch $1-2 million

Dylan Manuscript Will Lead Inaugural Rock & Roll History Sale On 24 June 2014

Auction Will Also Feature The Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, Elvis Presley and The Rolling Stones
On 24 June Sotheby’s will stage Presley to Punk: A Rock & Roll History – a sale of rock and pop music material that will showcase important manuscripts and objects as pieces of 20th century cultural history. The auction will be led by Bob Dylan’s original hand-written lyrics for the 1965 epic Like A Rolling Stone – the most significant popular music manuscript ever to appear at auction and the song that transformed Dylan from a folk singer to a rock icon.

Since ushering in a new musical era in the 1960s, Like A Rolling Stone has proved overwhelmingly popular, topping Rolling Stone Magazine’s 500 Greatest Songs of All Time. In this near complete four-page working draft the distinctive often repeated ‘how does it feel’ lyric is clearly visible alongside unused lines, stray thoughts on American cultural imagery, and interesting doodles. Further Dylan lyrics to be offered include the original working manuscript comprising the final lyrics for A Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall (est. $400/600,000) while the sale will also include significant pieces relating to The Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, and Joni Mitchell.

Richard Austin, the expert in charge of the Presley to Punk sale commented: “This is the Holy Grail of rock lyrics. The release of Like A Rolling Stone irreversibly changed postwar music history. With one song, Bob Dylan elevated rock music from mere ‘pop’ to the medium though which youth culture expressed itself. The lyrics set down on these four small sheets of paper are a near-complete rendering of the song that resonated like no other, influencing the course of pop music for the next 50 years.”

Before the release of Like A Rolling Stone, music charts were overrun with short and sweet love songs, many clocking in at three minutes or less. By contrast to this light pop, Dylan sets out to tell the story of Miss Lonely, a once high rolling character now fallen on hard times. Rather than writing an ode to her misfortune, Dylan penned a sneering rebuke to her previous high
society pretensions. By defying convention and going electric with six and a half minutes of dark, brooding poetry, Dylan rewrote the rules.

Although Like A Rolling Stone was kept off the top of the Billboard chart by The Beatles Help, the reach of the song can be seen in the bands and artists it influenced, from Jimi Hendrix to David Bowie to Bob Marley & the Wailers to Green Day, all of whom have famously released covers of the song. In 2005 Martin Scorsese chose a line from the song as the title for his documentary about Dylan No Direction Home and Dylan finally released an official video in 2013. A handwritten version of the songs chorus is in the Dylan collection of The Morgan Library and Museum in New York.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

Hendrix, Jimi

Hendrix signs his infamous first contract, engaging to perform live and in the studio for $1, thus beginning the debilitating legal troubles that would plague his career for the rest of his musical career.

Est. In the range of $100/200,000
Elvis Presley
“In Person Elvis Presley and his All-Star Show.”

11 x 14 in, Photo-illustrated concert poster printed on thick cardstock

For a 1957 Multnomah Stadium, Portland, Oregon appearance. The last show on Elvis’s short west coast tour in 1957. Very few posters from the 1950s feature a photograph of Elvis. Here he is seen in his costume for the film “Loving You,” released earlier that year.

Estimate: $25/35,000

The Rolling Stones
“The Rolling Stones Decca Disques.
Large 46 ½ x 30 ½ photo-illustrated French concert promo poster for a 1965 L'Olympia auditorium appearance in Paris.

Few Stones posters from this early date survive, having been used as store displays and often discarded after the record album’s release campaign.

Est. $2/3,000
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*Estimates do not include buyer’s premium and prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer’s premium.