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Jane Birkin's Handbag Legacy Continues:
A One-of-a-Kind Black Birkin
Owned by The Artist and Style Icon Comes to Auction

"Le Birkin Voyageur"

Personally Inscribed and Deeply Worn, The Bag Comes To Market On the Heels of Sotheby's Record-Breaking $10 million Sale in July 2025
Estimate $240,000 - 440,000

Part of the Inaugural "Abu Dhabi Collectors' Week"
Presented in Collaboration with Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO)
Exhibited at the St Regis Saadiyat Island Resort
in Abu Dhabi from 2 to 5 December
Live Auction on December 5


Abu Dhabi, 21 October — One of only four Birkin handbags ever owned by Jane Birkin in her lifetime after the sale of her Original Birkin, will be offered at auction as part of the inaugural [Abu Dhabi Collectors' Week], an exclusive programme of auctions, masterclasses, panel discussions, and exhibitions, presented in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO) and set against the stunning backdrop of at the St Regis Saadiyat Island Resort in Abu Dhabi from 2 to 5 December.

Gifted to Jane Birkin by Hermès, this black Birkin, was one of four Birkins the artist used after she sold her beloved Original Birkin, the prototype. This one-of-a-kind bag, will be sold in a live auction Abu Dhabi on 5 December under the name **Le Birkin Voyageur** – a reference to a message inside the bag written by Jane herself – with an estimate of $230,000 - $430,000.

Following the record-breaking sale in July of Jane Birkin's original Hermès Birkin – a unique and iconic prototype that fetched an astonishing €8.6 million / $10.1 million at Sotheby's Paris, becoming the most valuable handbag ever sold at auction – global interest in both Hermès Birkins and the actress's personal collection has surged to unprecedented heights. The extraordinary result also established new benchmarks for the most valuable fashion item sold at auction in Europe, and the most valuable luxury item ever sold at Sotheby's Paris.

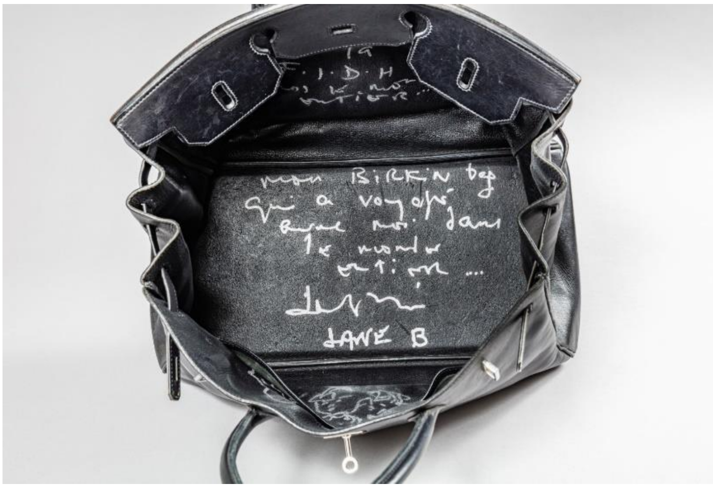
Jane Birkin's original Hermès Birkin was first sold by Jane Birkin in 1994 to raise funds for a leading French AIDS charity, which prompted Hermès to offer the artist a new Birkin, similar to the prototype she had inspired and helped design. Selling her Birkin bags to raise funds for charities she cared deeply about, after a few years of usage, became a tradition for Jane Birkin, with Hermès replacing them every time. In the course of her life, Hermès gave Jane Birkin a total of four Birkin handbags after the sale of the prototype, the very origin of the legend.

Now, one of those four Birkin bags is coming to auction – this particular model for the first time in over fifteen years – presenting a rare opportunity to own one of the five pieces making up the iconic Jane Birkin handbag legacy. **Le Birkin Voyageur** was Jane Birkin's everyday bag from 2003 to 2007, during which time it became an extension of her identity—worn, loved, and filled with the ordinary yet treasured objects of her life.

Morgane Halimi, Sotheby's Global Head of Handbags and Fashion, said: *"To present not one, but two of Jane Birkin's personal Hermès bags in a single year is nothing short of historic. Following the record-breaking sale of the original Birkin prototype in July, this exceptionally rare example offers collectors an intimate connection to the woman at the origin of the world's most iconic handbag. This is not just a piece of fashion history, but a deeply personal artifact from a cultural and style icon whose legacy continues to inspire."*

The Birkin Voyageur – A Bag with Secrets from Jane Birkin with Love

This rare piece, crafted in classic black box leather and visibly worn from years of personal use, embodies the effortlessly iconic style she made legendary. Gifted by Hermès to Jane Birkin in 2003, it was only sold once at auction in 2007 to benefit the Human Rights Association and has remained in a private collection ever since.



What sets this Birkin apart, however, is a feature unseen in any model ever offered by Hermès to the public and therefore made to order for Jane Birkin: closed bridges to help fasten the bag, a rare design element initially found on the original Birkin prototype. Measuring 40 cms in width (commonly referred to as size 40), the bag is further distinguished by Jane Birkin's unmistakable personal touch.

As part of its preparation for auction in 2007, the actress poured the love she had for her Birkin in the form of poetic handwritten notes in silver ink and disarming drawings on the bag's interior pockets. Her heart-touching musings included the phrases "My Birkin bag" and her signature, "Jane B" whilst she playfully drew a chaste female nude delicately covered by the flap of the pocket over which she traced what looks like the faces of cherubs or children.

The most poignant detail is a handwritten note from Jane herself: "Mon Birkin bag qui m'a accompagné dans le monde entier" (My Birkin bag, my globetrotting companion"), which inspired the bag's nickname: **Le Birkin Voyageur ("The Traveler")**. While the prototype Birkin holds unmatched historical significance as the origin of the iconic design, Le Birkin Voyageur is the most intimately connected to Jane Birkin's personality ever to appear on the market. For collectors of rare luxury handbags and admirers of Birkin's enduring cultural influence, this extraordinary piece represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to own not just a handbag, but a living part of her story—one she truly made her own.

The impact of Sotheby's announcement of The Original Birkin was immediate and far-reaching. In the month of July alone, Hermès sales on Sotheby's Buy Now online store surged up 48% in quantity and an extraordinary 94% in value. Traffic to Sotheby's Hermès Birkin landing page nearly doubled in both unique visitors and page views compared to the same period last year. Hermès quickly rose to become the most searched term across Sotheby's entire website, with 'Birkin' ranking as the fifth – a testament to the global excitement and renewed demand sparked by this landmark sale. Hermès handbags — particularly the Birkin and the Kelly — define the category of 'ultra handbags', which are designed for retail and yet are extremely hard to purchase on the primary market and are the subject of waiting lists. Since 2021, Sotheby's has sold nearly $100 million in Birkin bags, cementing its position as a global leader in the luxury resale market.

<u>Notes to Editors</u>

***sothebys.com/AbuDhabiBirkin**

*Black Birkin 40s in classic Box leather are a rare find on the secondary market. The last example sold by Sotheby's achieved $21,420 — a testament to both its scarcity and enduring appeal. This new offering which comes with extraordinary provenance (owned by Jane Birkin), is all the more exceptional and more than worthy of its $230,000 - $430,000 estimate.

* The historic sale of the Birkin prototype, which Jane Birkin used consistently for nearly ten years, saw nine determined bidders engage in a dramatic 10-minute bidding battle, culminating in the acquisition of the legendary handbag by a collector from Japan. The spectacular records achieved at the Paris sale have further cemented the status of the Birkin as the most iconic and coveted handbag in the world, both in retail and on the secondary market.

*The previous auction world record for a handbag is a White Himalaya Niloticus Crocodile Diamond Retourne Kelly 28, which fetched $513,040 in November 2021.

*The current auction record for any fashion item is a pair of Ruby Red Slippers from The Wizard of Oz, which sold for $32.5 million in 2024.

Sotheby's Handbags and Fashion department is the global leader in the resale of authenticated Hermès handbags, particularly Birkins and Kellys, through auctions, private sales, and direct online purchases at Sothebys.com. Our specialists are constantly sourcing the most coveted Birkin and Kelly bags from collectors around the world, including those in the most desirable colors, materials, and sizes, as well as rare Himalayan and Limited Edition Birkins. Currently there are over 1,200 Hermès bags available for immediate purchase from Sotheby's online shop, Buy Now, at sothebys.com.

About Abu Dhabi Collectors' Week in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO)

Presented in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO), Abu Dhabi Collectors' Week is Sotheby's inaugural marquee auction series in the region. Taking place from 2–5 December 2025, the event spans multiple luxury and collectible categories, including high jewellery, rare timepieces, world-leading collector cars and exclusive real-estate from RM Sotheby's and Sotheby's Concierge Auctions, alongside a museum quality exhibition of international fine art.

The week's offerings will be set against the stunning backdrop of The St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, culminating in an auction on Abu Dhabi's shores. Saadiyat Island is home to a constellation of museums, cultural institutions, collections and public programming, including the world-renowned Louvre Abu Dhabi as well as the soon-to-be-opened Guggenheim Abu Dhabi and Zayed National Museum.

This December, our inaugural auctions will spotlight the finest of what Sotheby's has to offer, led by a $20+ million single-owner collection of exceptional jewelry and timepieces. Highlights include The Desert Rose – the largest Fancy Vivid Orangy Pink Diamond ever graded (estimate: $5–7 million) – and a complete four-piece set of the Patek Philippe Star Caliber 2000 (estimate: in excess of $10 million) - the second highest estimate for any watch at auction. The week also features a collector car auction presenting three McLaren Racing competition cars sold during the final Formula One race of the season. More info on Collectors Week and the sales calendar can be found here.

About Sotheby's

Established in 1744, Sotheby's is the world's premier destination for art and luxury. Sotheby's promotes access to and ownership of exceptional art and luxury objects through auctions and buy-now channels including private sales, e-commerce and retail. Our trusted global marketplace is supported by an industry-leading technology platform and a network of specialists spanning 40 countries and 70 categories which include Contemporary Art, Modern and Impressionist Art, Old Masters, Chinese Works of Art, Jewelry, Watches, Wine and Spirits, and Design, as well as collectible cars and real estate. Sotheby's believes in the transformative power of art and culture and is committed to making our industries more inclusive, sustainable and collaborative.

About the Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO)

The Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO) is the government vehicle responsible for accelerating Abu Dhabi's growth and enabling the emirate's economic transformation. Through comprehensive support services, ADIO enables both local and foreign investors to shape industries of the future set to transform liveability, technology, resources, and value-added services. Initiatives focused on supporting tourism and retail development, as well as public-private partnerships, ensure that community well-being is at the centre of Abu Dhabi's economic transformation. With a robust network of investors, strong collaboration with key stakeholders, and a global presence, ADIO is committed to empowering those who invest with Abu Dhabi to make a lasting global impact.

** Estimates do not include buyer's premium or overhead premium. Prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium and overhead premium and are net of any fees paid to the purchaser where the purchaser provided an irrevocable bid.*

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