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PRESS RELEASE

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Follow the Yellow Brick Road to Heritage Auctions for a Wonderful ‘Wizard of Oz’ Event

*Munchkin coroner hat, Emerald City guard musket, complete set of first-edition L. Frank Baum ‘Oz’ titles take collectors
over the rainbow July 28*

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DALLAS, Texas (July 5, 2023) – This is no dream: On July 28, as part of its blockbuster three-day [Hollywood & Entertainment Signature® Auction](#),

Heritage will offer the largest selection of memorabilia from *The Wizard of Oz* available in more than 50 years. So scarce is material from the 1939 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer classic – a motion picture so beloved the U.S. Library of Congress classifies it as the most watched film in movie history – only nine lots make up the auction. But what wonderful lots they are.

The event’s offerings hail from Munchkinland and the Emerald City and all the way back to Oz’s literary beginnings, with [a complete set of first-edition Oz books by L. Frank Baum](#), the author who, in 1900, first introduced readers to Kansas farmgirl Dorothy Gale and the magical Land of Oz. The auction comes on the heels of the December 2022 Heritage event that saw [the Wicked Witch of the West’s hourglass](#) sell for \$495,000. That’s a far cry from the \$15,000 hammer price for the pair of Dorothy’s ruby slippers that sold in [the legendary MGM auction of 1970](#), during which hundreds of thousands of items from the mega movie studio realized a total of \$1.5 million.

Today those sequined red shoes worn by a 16-year-old Judy Garland reside in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, as does the straw-stuffed Scarecrow costume Ray Bolger sported on his journey down the yellow brick road and during his unforgettable song-and-dance number “If I Only Had a Brain.” But not all the Oz props, costumes and mementos are stashed away in a museum. A select group of items from the groundbreaking Technicolor classic are now open for bidding in Heritage’s *Wizard of Oz* auction.

Topping the event is [the screen-worn hat donned by Meinhardt Raabe as the Munchkin coroner](#) who pronounces the Wicked Witch of the East “really, most sincerely dead” after a tornado picks up Dorothy’s house and drops it on the unsuspecting witch. The signature purple-and-green hat was designed by Adrian, the well-known costume designer whose creations for *The Wizard of Oz* rank among his most famous.



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Also hailing from the Land of the Munchkins is [the Adrian-designed pink-and-gray townsman jacket worn by Tommy Cottonaro](#) during two of the movie’s most memorable sequences: “Follow the Yellow Brick Road” and “Ding Dong the Witch Is Dead.” After production wrapped on *The Wizard of Oz*, MGM hired Cottonaro to wear the bow-bedecked costume at the film’s Hollywood premiere at Grauman’s Chinese Theatre on Aug. 15, 1939. That night – five days after *The Hollywood Reporter* called *Oz* “brilliantly inventive and arrestingly beautiful and dramatically compelling to the eye, the ear and the emotions” – the film broke an attendance record at the theater.

“*The Wizard of Oz* never fails to dazzle and delight collectors, as evidenced by last year’s sale of the Wicked Witch of the West’s hourglass that made international headlines,” says Heritage Auctions Executive Vice President Joe Maddalena. “This is the largest offering of *Oz* material since the famous MGM auction held in 1970, and it’s a thrill to offer in this curated event the coroner’s hat and the Munchkin costume, both of which are among the most beautiful and coveted – and rarest – artifacts from one of the Golden Age’s most beloved films.”

Other costumes on offer include [an Emerald City jacket with Munchkin soldier pants](#), [an Emerald City townsman jacket](#) and [an Emerald City long coat](#) seen in the film’s “Surrender Dorothy” sequence.

Bidders can also take aim at [an Emerald City guard musket](#) adorned with hand-painted gold scroll patterns, crowned creatures and the letters “OZ.” The musket is readily identifiable as the standard-issue weapon of the guards Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Cowardly Lion and the Tin Man encounter during their visit to the Wizard.

But not all the auction’s highlights come from the Victor Fleming-directed *Wizard of Oz* film. One of the most exceptional lots featured in the event



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dates to nearly 40 years before the movie was released. In May 1900, the George M. Hill Company published a children's book written by L. Frank Baum and illustrated by W.W. Denslow.

Titled *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, the book was an instant hit and later spawned 13 additional Oz titles, a Broadway musical adaptation and, of course, the revered live-action version. Here, in the July 28 auction, is [a remarkable complete collection of first editions of all 14 Oz books](#), representing the full publishing history of one of the most important children's book series ever written.

Rounding out the auction is [a 1921 Oz-themed board game from Parker Bros](#) and [a 1996 Oz-themed sculpture by artist Frederick Prescott](#). The kinetic steel-and-neon artwork is one of a kind, stands 8 feet tall and features iconic themes and characters from the movie.

To paraphrase Dorothy Gale, when it comes to *The Wizard of Oz*, there's no place like Heritage.

Images and information on all lots in the auction can be found at [HA.com/7351](https://www.ha.com/7351).

Heritage Auctions is the largest fine art and collectibles auction house founded in the United States, and the world's largest collectibles auctioneer. Heritage maintains offices in New York, Dallas, Beverly Hills, Chicago, Palm Beach, London, Paris, Geneva, Amsterdam and Hong Kong.

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