

Well-known book collectors in the industry include (from left) Depp, Ratner, Kennedy and Stringer.

Midcity's George Houle Rare Books & Autographs (7260 Beverly Blvd.). Adds Jonathan Brown, owner of the West Hollywood shop LeadApron (8445 Melrose Place), "A director will be embarking on a movie and come in for source material for the set designer, the location scout, the cinematographer."

Others buy to give, whether to celebrate a greenlight announcement, a nomination or anything in between. "I've sent books to film sets on the other side of the world," says Brown. "There was a birthday party about a year ago for an actor in Indonesia, and [fashion photographer] Guy Bourdin's *Sighs and Whispers* was presented as a totemic object." Agencies in particular — especially CAA, according to dealers — like to play Print Charming. "It's a very healthy sociological sign to see industry people give good literature rather than champagne," says Harvey Jason, a veteran actor and Academy foreign-language committee member who for 14 years has run the West Hollywood shop Mystery Pier (8826 W. Sunset Blvd.), which focuses on first editions.

Ironically (or not), screenwriters get the least lettered love in Hollywood, while actors and directors receive bigger-bucks books. "Writers are at the bottom," in terms of allocations for gifts, confirms Michael Deyermond of Santa Monica's Deyermond Art + Books (2801 Main St.). Deyermond recalls showing a \$3,500 first-edition copy of Walker Percy's *The Moviegoer* to a client shopping for a writer. "The buyer was like, 'This is perfect — but let's find something for under \$100.'" **THR**

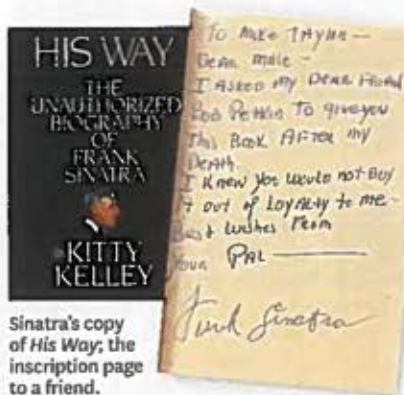
HOLLYWOOD'S RARE BOOKS ADDICTION

Want to seem instantly smarter? The Antiquarian Book Fair (Feb. 10-12) is just one place where boldface collectors exercise their brains — and wallets
By Gary Baum

HIGHBROWS MIGHT scoff that Hollywood doesn't respect serious literature, but they obviously haven't discovered the biz's high-end rare-book scene. Johnny Depp collects first-edition works by Jack Kerouac, Arthur Rimbaud, Dylan Thomas and Edgar Allan Poe. Other industry figures have assembled museum-quality collections devoted to everything from exploration (producer Kathleen Kennedy) and aviation (director Tony Bill) to novelizations of silent-era films (business manager Bill Tanner) and the poetry of William Butler Yeats (screenwriter Jeffrey Fiskin). CAA is a particular fan of vintage volumes as gifts. And bibliophiles including Brad Pitt and Steve Martin have been spotted at the California International Antiquarian Book Fair, which this year takes place at

the Pasadena Convention Center. "People think I'm a high-end hoarder," says Brett Ratner, who has amassed thousands of photography books including three first editions of Robert Frank's *The Americans*. Those in the business afflicted with bibliomania — they include Whoopi Goldberg, Kelsey Grammer, Sony chief Howard Stringer, director Charles Shyer and Sarah Michelle Gellar — can find themselves committing serious cash for the hard-to-find, out-of-print books. "I'm about to have a meeting with a gentleman who's nominated for an Oscar this year," says Mark Hime, who runs the appointment-only Beverly Hills shop

Bibliotopus (bibliotopus.com). "He's going to buy a book for \$125,000. The last one I sold him was \$200,000." John Larroquette, known within the scene for his Samuel Beckett cache, can relate. "I'm an addictive personality, and I love books," he says. "Once I had disposable income, I began to buy more. My wife would get angry, finding me asleep with a \$20,000 book on my chest, gingerly having to lift it away." Many buy for research. "Sometimes a film is in development, and you sell out of something and don't find out until later that they are doing *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*," says dealer George Houle of



Sinatra's copy of *His Way*; the inscription page to a friend.

SINATRA, WOODY AND THEIR BOOKS

Big-ticket items at the rare-book fair offer new, intimate glimpses: "To Mia ..."

THIS YEAR'S CALIFORNIA INTERNATIONAL ANTIQUARIAN BOOK FAIR WILL FIND 200 booksellers showing off their best stuff. The subject matter ranges from medicine to children's literature, but this being L.A., entertainment-related fare plays a key role. Offerings include an archive of six Georges Méliès letters written when he was running a toy shop at Paris' Montparnasse Station from 1928 to 1932 — the period covered in *Hugo* — which is being sold for \$35,000, as well as a 50-volume selection of Douglas Fairbanks' personal library, available a la carte. Other buzzed-about, far more modestly priced books are two volumes bearing inscriptions that add a bit of frisson. Frank Sinatra bequeathed his personal copy of Kitty Kelley's unauthorized *Blue Eyes* biography, *His Way*, to a friend after his death, writing that he knew the buddy wouldn't have bought it while Sinatra was alive (\$2,000); and Woody Allen signed a copy of 1982's *Four Films of Woody Allen*, "To Mia [Farrow], who I love more every day" (\$7,500). labookfair.com