

The Doors - A Unique Archive

Coming up for auction for the first time at Ewbank's February 26

DEVON, UNITED KINGDOM, January 21, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A unique archive of letters, invoices and even a signed copy of The Doors album Morrison Hotel have been unveiled for the first time as they come to auction at Ewbank's on February 26.

They all relate to the late 1960s and early 1970s as the band – one of the biggest names in the history of rock – tried to break into the European market.

Largely written by Leon Barnard, a superfan trying to persuade the band's manager Bill Siddons to put him in charge of the European arm of their operation, they shed light on the often chaotic and drug-fueled approach to marketing their music on this side of the Atlantic.

Barnard eventually became The Doors' publicist from 1969-70 before Siddons fired him 'for misbehavin'.

The fascinating archive of letters details Barnard's attempts to promote the band in Sweden and Denmark, together with tensions caused by his fears of being sidelined by the US PR company, problems with money and Siddons' reservations about Barnard's anarchic behaviour.

The rise of Jim Morrison

Amid all the chaos are important historical details too. On June 4, 1968, Barnard notes how The Doors were the first American band to make the Danish hitlist; on June 23, he explains how Jim Morrison is beginning to overshadow Mick Jagger as the fans' favourite; while in early July that year he reveals that the album Waiting for the Sun has already sold 4,000 copies and two planned concerts are sell-outs – just as doubts arise as to whether The Doors will even embark on the tour.

While Barnard comes across as a highly disorganised loose cannon, Siddons keeps faith with him and even discusses the prospect of an official role for him as part of the US PR firm's operation.

The speed of the band's rise is reflected in the revelation of an early October 1968 letter that Waiting for the Sun has now sold over 700,000 copies and will hit the one million mark soon: 'Dear Leon, What's happening brother???? . . . I'm meeting with Rogers, Cowan and Brenner Monday [the PR firm], to fight about the London-European situation . . . The Doors are all fine

and good . . . I would like you to send me a very detailed report on the cooperation and non-cooperation you are getting from Denmark. "Waiting for the Sun" has sold 700,000 copies. Rothchild and Holzman think the album should go over the million mark by the end of the year. Chomp on that one for a while!!!!"

In all, 28 autograph, signed and typed letters are included, all relating to The Doors' planned 1968 European promotional activities, the reception of promotional showings of their films Unknown Soldier and Break on Through, censorship issues, and Leon Barnard's attempts to establish an official European representative role for the band.

Details of the archive

The archive contains previously unpublished insights into Jim Morrison, the band's European exposure, Elektra's marketing strategy, and the short-lived Scandinavian promotional campaign.

Among the earliest documents in the archive are original Elektra Corporation Artist/Writer royalty payment statements issued to band members Robby Krieger and Ray Manzarek in October 1966, immediately following The Doors' signing to Elektra Records and prior to the release of their debut album.

"These documents likely represent some of the earliest advances or contractual royalty payments made to individual members of the band, predating the group's commercial breakthrough with recordings such as Light My Fire, Break On Through, and The End," says Ewbank's consultant specialist Denise Kelly. "As early Elektra financial records tied directly to named members of the group, they offer rare documentary insight into the moment The Doors transitioned from an unsigned Los Angeles club act to a major label recording artist."

At the heart of the archive is an extensive run of original blue T.T.G. Inc. studio invoices, together with Sunset Sound and Elektra Records accounting documentation, recording session-by-session activity including tracking, overdubbing, playback, editing, and tape stock usage. The documents name key figures central to the Elektra story — label founder Jac Holzman, producer Paul Rothchild, engineer Bruce Botnick, and A&R executive Dave Anderle — providing contemporary evidence of how the band, studio, and label interacted on a day-to-day basis during the recording of Waiting for the Sun.

"These documents go beyond routine accounting," says Denise Kelly. "They record revealing moments from the sessions themselves, including aborted studio time in which 'client showed but nothing was accomplished', late night sessions running until 4am, and charges for microphone damage incurred during recording — small but telling details that vividly illustrate the intensity and unpredictability of The Doors' creative process."

It also includes three 1967-68 original invoices from Sunset Sound Recorders, California, to Elektra Corp, issued for The Doors recording, dubbing and editing sessions from the height of

their career, as well as royalty statements for members of the band. The invoices form a continuous documentary record of the creation of the album Waiting For The Sun.

Hollywood's Sunset Sound Recorders was the iconic studio where The Doors recorded their first two albums, The Doors (1967) and Strange Days (1967). The studios unique acoustics and custom-built recording equipment enabled the band to capture their ground-breaking signature sound, working with producer, Paul Rothchild and engineer, Bruce Bothnick, especially notable for their hits such as Light My Fire and The End.

In December 1967, The Doors were busy with live performances, a legendary televised performance on The Jonathan Winters Show, and multiple shows at San Francisco's Winterland Arena which showcased the band's musical prowess. The month was also marked by Jim Morrison's infamous arrest on stage after a pre-show altercation with the police during a chaotic New Haven concert on December 9, an incident that led to a riot and added to the band's rebellious image.

"This archive provides a hugely detailed and fascinating insight into an iconic band whose music and character resonates as strongly today as it did more than 55 years ago when Jim Morrison, then only 27 years old and the most charismatic front man in rock, died tragically in Paris," said Denise Kelly.

"It comes to auction here unaltered after nearly 60 years, instantly recapturing the 'hippie' spirit of the times, and is a must for serious collectors."

Offered in a series of lots that keep the 28 letters together, the archive comes with an overall upper auction guide of £10,500.

Live online bidding for the Music Memorabilia auction on February 26 is available at www.ewbankauctions.co.uk

Please view the high-resolution images [here](#).

Images courtesy of Ewbank's Auctioneers

Captions

Morrison Hotel signed
The copy of The Doors album Morrison Hotel, signed by the whole band.

Business Letter
Bill Siddons' letter of apology, explaining how he prioritises business.

Acid Letter

Bill Siddons' letter criticizing Leon Barnard for taking too many drugs.

Airmail A & B

The May 7, 1968 Airmail letter from Barnard to Siddons from Copenhagen explaining the difficulties he faces linked to The Doors' movie.

Headed Notepaper

A letter on the coveted stationery that lent Barnard a sheen of authority as he worked unofficially on the European set-up.

Invoices (and Studio Invoice A, B & C)

The historic studio invoices from the Waiting For The Sun recording sessions.

Krieger payment

Royalty statement for guitarist Robbie Krieger.

Manzarek payment

Royalty statement for keyboard player and bassist Ray Manzarek showing the original spelling of his surname.

Royalties

The group of royalty statements.

Morrison cutting

A newspaper cutting from the archive folder showing a photograph of Jim Morrison.

About Ewbank's Auctions

Ewbank's are the Premier International Antiques and Fine Art Valuers and Auctioneers. Based near Guildford, we cover Surrey and South London, with registered bidders logging on from upwards of 50 countries on a regular basis to buy lots.

Having celebrated over 35 years in business, Ewbank's have pioneered new areas of collecting for years and have now become the pre-eminent UK auction house for Popular Culture, with dedicated departments and auctions in Entertainment Memorabilia including Vintage Posters, Sporting Memorabilia, Comics and Comic Books, Music and Vinyl, Trading Cards, Retro Video Games, Tabletop Gaming and James Bond 007.

We continue to offer all the major collecting disciplines at auction, from Fine Art and Ceramics, to Silver, Coins, Clocks and Watches and Furniture and Works of Art, as well as 20th Century Art and Design, Luxury Goods, Asian Art, Militaria, Books, Toys, Garden and Architectural, Vintage Fashion, Textiles and Fine Wine, and Classic Cars, Bikes and Automobilia.

Additional specialist sales categories now include Pre-Loved, Vintage & Antique, Interiors & Modern Design, Contemporary Art, Editions & Modern British Pictures.

Single-owner collections in recent years have included the Football Memorabilia of former Manchester United captain Norman Whiteside; the Bray Studios sale of Gerry Anderson memorabilia, relating to classics such as Thunderbirds, Captain Scarlet and Terrahawks; the Tony Hart Collection; and The Sir Ray Tindle Silver Collection.

We are proud to foster new and young talent among our specialists, as well as greatly valuing the decades of expertise among our more senior staff and consultants.

In 2025, the company posted a record sales turnover of £7.93 million.

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