



## Sure Soros Signed It, But How Does It Sound?

By Chris Clair, Senior Financial Correspondent | Monday, December 12, 2005

NEW YORK (HedgeWorld.com)—On its web site, the guitar maker Fender offers 95 different variations of its legendary Stratocaster electric guitar, ranging in price from just over US\$500 to nearly US\$3,000.

So what would make otherwise financially savvy types bid up the price of a plain white Stratocaster on eBay to upwards of US\$30,000? Well, this particular guitar is not so plain; it is, in fact, a special autographed model. It spent two months being shipped around the country and receiving the scrawlings of some of the financial industry's more luminary personalities.

For instance, in a prominent place above the pickups is the signature of the "Oracle of Omaha," value investor Warren Buffett, below his wish for "Good luck!" Just to the left of that, the legendary bond manager Bill Gross, founder and chief investment officer of Pacific Investment Management Co., Newport Beach, Calif., offered some sage, if predictable, advice over his autograph: "Buy Bonds!"

In both those cases, and in 16 other instances on the smooth white guitar, the messages are addressed to "Todd." Todd, in this case, is Todd Harrison, former president of the hedge fund Cramer Berkowitz and as of 2002 the founder and chief executive of Minyanville Publishing & Multimedia LLC, which runs an investor education web site called Minyanville.com [Previous HedgeWorld Story](#).

In all, 19 financial wizards signed the guitar, including Mr. Harrison. Right next to the toggle switch, Jim Rogers wrote, "Todd, Ride hard ... and far." Way at the top of the body, Seth Tobias, founder of the hedge fund Circle T Partners, wrote "Toddo, You are my hero!! Keep it up. . . ." Next to him, Fleckenstein Capital founder Bill Fleckenstein called Mr. Harrison "Our hero from Minyanville."

Certainly the people at the Ruby Peck Foundation consider Mr. Harrison a hero of sorts. Proceeds from the auction of the guitar will benefit Ruby Peck, a nonprofit organization that funds children's educational programs like Free Arts NYC, Jacob's Cure and Little Kids Rock. Bidding for the instrument, which is taking place on the online auction site eBay (the guitar is item No. 7360892225, and a link to the bid page can be found on this website: <http://www.minyanville.com/guitar>) started at US\$100 on Dec. 7. By 5 p.m. ET on Dec. 9, the top bid was US\$30,100. The bidding will end Dec. 17 at 5 p.m. ET.

"When I started Minyanville, one of my primary goals was to encourage the finance community to give back to themselves as well as the community—to appreciate life both inside and outside the office," Mr. Harrison said in a news release. "My hope [for] this auction is that it will serve as a reminder to everyone not just to enjoy the spoils of the journey but to enjoy the journey itself."

Most of the inscriptions are addressed to Mr. Harrison, but even if your name isn't Todd, the guitar looks to be an impressive collection of autographs of people who've made enough money to buy several medium-sized countries and who along the way blazed trails of investment innovation. George Soros signed it, as did Leon Cooperman, Paul Tudor Jones, Mario Gabelli, Jim Chanos, Peter Lynch, John Roque, Jim Grant, Jerry Jordan, Tony Dwyer, Douglas Kass, Jeffrey Saut and Steve Galbraith.

In announcing the auction, Mr. Harrison said one hedge fund manager likened the guitar to a baseball bat signed by the entire 1927 New York Yankees team. "Dig deep," the press release reads. "This guitar is a piece of history, and promises to be one of the safest investments this year."