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**Lot 46 of 724:
RICK DANKO STAGE AND STUDIO PLAYED FRETLESS AMPEG BASS**

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Asking: Current bid: \$10,000 (4 bids)

Estimate: \$10,000 - \$20,000

Starting: \$5,000

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Rick Danko's Ampeg AMUB-1 fretless bass produced circa 1968 and received from Ampeg circa 1970. Danko used this guitar while he was with Bob Dylan's backing band, The Band, and subsequent Band recordings after they separated from Dylan. This guitar was used both on stage and in the studio. It can also be seen in Danko's 1987 bass instructional video.

Originally, the bass had a red burst finish but was refinished by Danko at some point before 1976. The bass appears with its current black finish in the film *The Last Waltz* (UA, 1978) recorded at the Winterland Theater on Thanksgiving in 1976.

Serial number M120, scroll top, hollow body with two f-holes, two Fender precision pickups added by Danko circa 1971. Other performances in which Danko is known to play this bass: The Weight (Festival Express) 1970, The Band's Syria Mosque show in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1970; Hamburg, Germany concert, 1971; Bob Dylan and The Band's 1974 tour; Bill Graham's produced 1975 SNACK (Students Need Athletics, Culture and Kicks) benefit with Bob Dylan and Neil Young. Studio use: The Band's *Stage Fright*, 1970; The Band's 1971 studio album *Cahoots*; and the album *Rock of Ages* which was recorded live in 1971.

In a 1976 *Guitar Player* magazine interview, Danko was asked about the difference between a fretted and a fretless bass. He said "The difference is more than only the wood and the steel. The fretless disciplines you to play in tune-you must listen to everything. It's likely that's what made me begin sliding, sliding up to the exact note. Then it just became a natural thing. It all depends on the situation when it comes to choosing one bass over the other. If the song requires a little warped slide sound, I'll use the fretless." Levon Helm mentions Danko's mastering the fretless bass in the book *This Wheel's on Fire: Levon Helm and the Story of the Band* (New York: W. Morrow, 1993), saying that the fretless "gave the rhythm section a different feel." Accompanied by a custom velvet-lined flight case.

47 by 14 inches

PROVENANCE Lot 236, "Rock & Roll and Entertainment Memorabilia," Christie's, New York, sale number 1438, December 17, 2004

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Other lots in this sale:

Navigation: << < > >>

<p>44</p> <p>TODD RUNDGREN WORN SUIT</p>	<p>45</p> <p>TODD RUNDGREN ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS</p>	<p>46</p> <p>RICK DANKO STAGE AND STUDIO PLAYED FRETLESS AMPEG BASS</p>	<p>47</p> <p>TOM JONES STAGE WORN SUIT</p>	<p>48</p> <p>JOHNNY AND JUNE CARTER CASH SIGNED CONCERT PROGRAM</p>
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