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Auction Block: A Waxy Buildup

Let's be honest with one another, shall we?

We badly misuse the word "unique" in the memorabilia business. We use a word that literally means one-of-a-kind and apply it liberally, when we really mean that an item is rare, hard to find or just plain quirky. Seldom is any collectible actually No. 1 of 1.



Better than being frozen in carbonite.

This week, we feel completely comfortable saying that the Hollywood Wax Museum [is auctioning off truly unique collectibles](#). These are full-size wax figures -- depicting sports icons from **Michael Jordan** to **Tiger Woods** -- and they are on the auction block.

You read that right. You can now get your Madame Tussaud on in the privacy of your own home. Just visit the [Profiles in History](#) auction site and bid.

The museum is selling off all of its old figures, including those depicting heroes of stage, screen and bible, because new technology has made them obsolete.

"These figures we're auctioning can't be touched." says Joe Maddalena, CEO of Profiles in History. "Wax museums all over the world are introducing new figures that visitors can pose with, even touch, without fear of damage. The Hollywood Wax Museum is re-doing all of their displays with more accessible images."

Which begs the question: if the figures currently for sale can't be touched, how should a prospective buyer prepare himself to care for his purchase?

"Keep it cool." says Maddalena "Keep it in an air-conditioned space. These figures have already lasted 30 years, and there's no reason they can't last another 30 years."

Profiles in history keeps a list of recommended fine-art shipping companies, and any one of them will carefully crate and deliver your new waxy buddy to your front door.

Maddalena says it's unusual to have a single auction that touches so many different types of collectors. Fortunately, uber-fans have a way of finding these things out. The auction house has already heard rumors that **Cher's** fan club is pooling money to buy her life-size replica. **Jay Leno** even gave the sale some free publicity when he made fun of his own figure on the *Tonight Show* recently.

These mega-candles cost about \$20,000 to make from scratch, but bidding on the used models starts at around \$2,000 for most. With no previously-existing secondary market established for such collectibles, the museum was looking for a viable recycling option, rather than destroying sculptures that had given visitors so much enjoyment. The internet auction provides a perfect way to give back to the celebrities they've held in facsimile for so long. Proceeds from the sale will help maintain the sidewalk stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

So, no need to keep collecting your inner-ear scrapings in a jar -- there's an easier way to immortalize your sports heroes in wax. Just get together a little mad money and lay it down on one of the figures currently up for bid.

Muhammad Ali, Heavyweight Champ: This is one of the oldest figures the museum owned. And it's larger than life, just like the man himself. It actually stands 7'5", which would explain how he was able to knock mean and nasty **George Foreman** into the grill business.

Iron Mike: This figure is incredibly realistic. There's even a wax replica of **Evander Holyfield's** ear clamped in Tyson's choppers. Guaranteed not to fade into Bolivian.

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar shoots the sky hook:

Finally, we can complete our set of wax figures from the movie *Airplane!* "Roger, Roger." "What's your vector, Victor?" That never gets old.

Michael Jordan looking awkward: Apparently, there's no truth to the rumor that His Airness posed for this figure during the famous "flu game." It just looks that way. The funky pose comes from the fact that this figure was hanging from a hoop, frozen in the act of dunking, in the museum display.

Grinning Joe Montana: This figure was shaped using actual game footage. Joe was so cool in the pocket, you'd never know he was about to be sacked by **Reggie White** just moments later.

Mark McGwire's not here to wax nostalgic about the past: Once one of the most beloved heroes in modern baseball, McGwire's fishy steroid testimony in Congress has made him persona non grata. We're picturing **Marc Ecko** buying this one and [sparking up a giant Zippo](#).

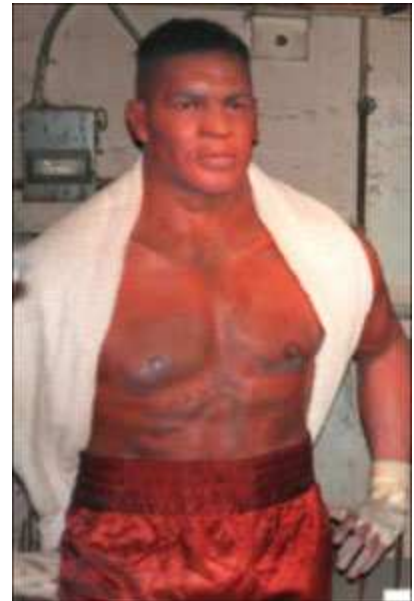
Tiger Woods w/cheesy smile: Um ... could someone get Eldrick a sandwich? Stat! He barely has enough ~~meat~~ wax on his bones to do the famous fist pump.

Fernando Valenzuela: Whoa, somebody made this one out of licorice. Oh, wait, it's just Valenzuela's uniform on a plastic mannequin. That's a relief.

And, finally, this one isn't really sports-related, but it's extremely cool.

Jason Voorhees costume: We dare you to buy the Tyson figure and dress him in this.

Seen any great sports memorabilia for sale recently? Drop us a line at collectespn@gmail.com



In 1997, the Hollywood Wax Museum put Tyson in the horror section. No joke.