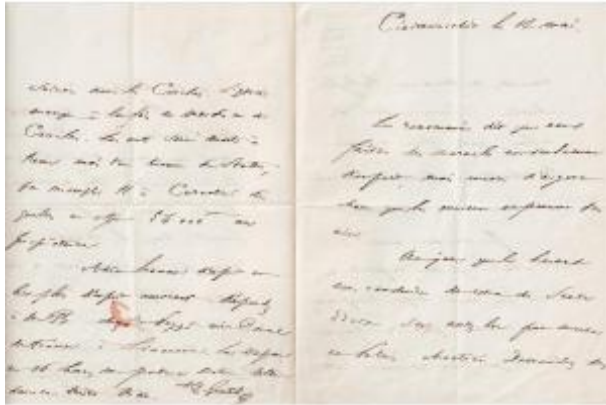




Stendhal, Autograph Letter Signed In The Last Year Of His Life, 1841

4 200 EUR



Signature : STENDHAL

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Length : 31 cm

Width : 20 cm

Description

Autograph letter signed by Stendhal (1783-1842) to the Florentine lawyer, advisor, and friend Vincenzo Salvagnoli (1802-1861). Civitavecchia, May 12 [1841]. Signed with the pseudonym "Alb. Gentili" (see below). Four full octavo pages. Paper with Stendhal's monogram, blind-embossed (his initials HB, for Henri Beyle). Slight trace of wax on the recto of the first leaf. Traces of a previous tabbed mounting. Size: 20 x 15.5 cm (20 x 31 cm unfolded). A beautiful and lively letter published in *L'Année stendhalienne* (no. 11, 2012, pp. 329-334) evoking both the financial successes of his friend Salvagnoli, Paris, Rome, and Giulia Rinieri, who became Madame Martini, Stendhal's central love and the inspiration for certain traits of Mathilde de la Mole in *The Red and The Black*. Giulia Rinieri met Stendhal, 18

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years his senior, in 1827 in Paris. Three years later, she was the first to declare her love with the now-iconic words, "I know well, and have known for a long time, that you are ugly and old, but I love you," before the writer decided to propose marriage to her through her guardian. His proposal was refused. On June 24th, she married one of her cousins, Giulio Martini, with whom she had two children. She saw Stendhal again during their shared stays in Florence a few years later, and the two maintained a deep and tender friendship until Stendhal's death. Vincenzo Salvagnoli, a brilliant and cultured young Florentine lawyer, met Stendhal in 1827, and a lasting friendship developed between them, the two men united by a shared passion for art and literature. The lawyer accompanied Stendhal to Paris a few months after our letter in October 1841. Stendhal was appointed French Consul in 1831 in Civitavecchia, the only port in the Papal States, an "abominable hole" of 7,500 inhabitants, including 1,000 convicts. There, he was overcome by boredom and stupidity: no salon, no friends, no pretty women, no intellectual discussions. He bolsters his courage with his motto, "SFCDT (Se Foutre Carrément De Tout - To Absolutely Not Give a Damn About Anything)." This is Stendhal's last May; he died the following year, in March 1842.

"Civitavecchia, May 12th. Fame says you perform miracles not only of wit, but also of money, something the envious cannot deny. One day, if chance happens to take you near Santa Croce, be kind enough to go up to the Palazzo Martini. Ask for news of Madame Berlinghieri Martini. How are her children? What position does Mr. Martini hold? Is Madame in Siena or Florence? I would like to write to Mrs. Martini. I reproach myself for not having written for nine months, and I would not want to be ignorant of anything that might interest this amiable family. Rome had three balls a week, all through Carnival, but this excess of society is not society. There is no house where you can find 15 passable

people every Tuesday." This is what makes Paris superior, and even then, Parisian women demand fine clothes, and one doesn't mock 20 things that are mockable; the men of any standing spend their evenings in the Cercles. Italy lacks both Tuesdays and Cercles. The arts are dead in Rome, but one finds statues, for example, 11 in Cerveteri, for which 54,000 francs are offered to the owner. Farewell, man of wit, and much more, of amusing wit. Reply to Mr. B* at Mr. Poggi's, French vice-consul in Livorno. The steamer will bring your letter to this sad hole in 16 hours. Alb. Gentili* *Mr. Beyle The author of The Charterhouse of Parma and The Red and the Black used several hundred different pseudonyms in his correspondence (more than 350 have been identified). The signature on our letter "Alb. "Gentili" is Stendhal's reference to Alberico Gentili, an Italian jurist of the late 16th century whose work contributed to the birth of public international law. Stendhal was fascinated by Renaissance and 16th-century Italy and spent entire days in Roman libraries copying old manuscripts recounting crimes of passion, trials, and political intrigues. Alberico Gentili, from the Marches region (like many of Stendhal's characters), is a major intellectual figure of this pivotal era whom the writer

revered.<https://baudelaireetcompagnie.com/>