

Neil Armstrong's Moon Bag Could Fetch \$4 Million at Auction

By **JACEY FORTIN** MAY 24, 2017

A bag that was used by Neil Armstrong to collect rocks from the surface of the moon in 1969 will go up for public auction in New York on July 20. It **is expected** to **fetch** \$4 million or more.

The bag, which still contains **traces of** priceless moon dust, has **been on a wild ride** over the past half-century — and not just to the moon and back as part of the Apollo 11 mission that took men there for the first time in human history.

Since returning to Earth, the moon bag's erstwhile custodians have included a museum president who **was convicted of** theft; a woman in Illinois who had the good fortune to **stumble upon** the bag, mislabeled, at an online auction; and the NASA space center in Texas, where it was held under lock and key as the United States attorney's office fought a year long legal battle to **transfer** the bag **into** government **custody**.

In February, a federal court **sided with** an Illinois lawyer who had purchased the **artifact** for \$995 in 2015, and NASA **was ordered to** return the bag to her.

已註解 [U1]: be expected to VR 被預期 VR...

已註解 [U2]: fetch(vt.)拿到

已註解 [U3]: traces of N 絲毫/ 些許的 N

已註解 [U4]: be on a wild ride 從事一趟狂野的旅程

已註解 [U5]: be convicted of N 被判決有 N 罪

已註解 [U6]: stumble upon/ across N 碰巧遇見 N

已註解 [U7]: transfer A into B 把 A 轉變成 B

已註解 [U8]: custody (n.)政府/ 保管/ 監護

已註解 [U9]: side with N 同意/ 支持 N

已註解 [U10]: artifact(n.)工藝品/ 加工品

已註解 [U11]: be ordered to VR 被授命 VR

It was a disappointing decision for the space agency, which said in a statement that the one-of-a-kind artifact “was never meant to be owned by an individual.”

已註解 [U12]: be meant to VR 必須要 VR/ 一定要 VR

The lawyer, Nancy Carlson, is now putting it up for auction at Sotheby’ s.

The \$4 million expectation could be low, according to Cassandra Hatton, a vice president and senior specialist at Sotheby’ s. With an “exceptionally rare” piece like this, the sky is really the limit, she said.

“This bag is not only from the first mission, but it was used by the first man to set foot on the moon, and it held the first samples that were collected,” she said. “So it’ s the first of the first of the first.”

已註解 [U13]: set foot on N 到達 N

Many other souvenirs from the Apollo 11 moon-landing mission, including the command module, are on display at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum. But the bag first slipped through the cracks after it was lent to a Kansas space museum called the Cosmosphere, according to a December decision written by J. Thomas Marten of the U.S. District Court in Wichita, Kan.

已註解 [U14]: souvenir (n.)紀念品

Max Ary, who ran the museum, resigned in 2002. After that, it was discovered that some of the artifacts, including the moon bag, were missing.

已註解 [U15]: cosmosphere (n.)核宇宙/ 宇宙儀

The bag was found in Mr. Ary' s garage in 2003; two years later, he **was convicted** **on** multiple counts of fraud, theft and **money laundering**.

已註解 [U16]: be convicted on N 被控告 N 罪名

已註解 [U17]: money laundering (n.)洗錢

The critical error came when the bag was turned over to the government. It **was identified as** a different bag — one that had not been used to collect moon rocks — because of “a mix-up in **inventory** lists and item numbers,” according to Judge Marten' s decision.

已註解 [U18]: be identified as N 被認為 N

已註解 [U19]: inventory (n.) 存貨

The government included it in an online auction, and in February 2015, Ms. Carlson saw it and bought it, not knowing the true value.

The story might have ended there had she not sent the bag to the Johnson Space Center in Houston to check its **authenticity**. There, NASA realized what it had: a priceless artifact, still bearing traces of lunar dust, which should have been in its own custody all along.

已註解 [U20]: authenticity (n.)真實性

So NASA kept the bag. Ms. Carlson sued to get it back.

In his December decision, Judge Marten concluded that the sale **stemmed from** an unfortunate **mishap** in which NASA was “the victim.” He nevertheless left the door open for Ms. Carlson' s lawsuit, and a federal court in Houston ruled in her favor in February.

已註解 [U21]: stem from N 源自於 N

已註解 [U22]: mishap(n.) 災難/ 不幸

Ms. Carlson could not be reached for comment on Wednesday, but Sotheby's said that she planned to donate some of the **proceeds** of the sale to charities including the Immune Deficiency Foundation and a children's health center.

已註解 [U23]: proceeds (n.) 盈餘/ 利潤

The auction house will put the bag on display during **a virtual reality conference** on June 22 and 23, and then again on July 13 **ahead of** the auction, which **is open to** the public. Interested bidders must register **in advance**.

已註解 [U24]: a virtual reality conference(n.) 虛擬實境會議

已註解 [U25]: ahead of N 在 N 之前

已註解 [U26]: be open to N 開放給 N

已註解 [U27]: in advance 事先

That was not the outcome NASA wanted.

"This artifact, we believe, **belongs to** the American people and should be on display for the public," the space agency said in its statement, "which is where it was before all of these unfortunate events occurred."

已註解 [U28]: belong to N 屬於 N

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