

Camera taken to space in '60s sold for \$275,000

November 14 2014



This September 2014 photo released by RR Auction of Boston, shows the Hasselblad camera body and Zeiss lens carried into orbit onboard NASA's Mercury-Atlas 8 mission in 1962 where it was used by astronaut Wally Schirra, and again on Mercury-Atlas 9 in 1963 where it was used by astronaut Gordon Cooper. The camera and lens sold for \$275,000 on Thursday, Nov. 13, 2014, according to the auction house. (AP Photo/RR Auction)

The camera that "would forever change our view of Earth" from space more than a half century ago has been sold at auction for \$275,000, the auctioneer says.

The Hasselblad camera body and Zeiss lens, reportedly purchased by astronaut Wally Schirra at a Houston photo supply shop in 1962 and believed carried into orbit aboard the Mercury-Atlas 8 and 9 missions, was sold Thursday by Boston-based RR Auction to a private collector in the United Kingdom who wished remain anonymous.

Schirra brought the Hasselblad 500c camera to NASA for mission use preparation, and it was modified with the installation of a 100-exposure film container and an aiming device mounted on the side. The original metal facing was also repainted black to minimize reflections.

The camera was top of the line at the time, costing more than \$400, and vastly improved the quality of space photography, said Bobby Livingston, RR's executive vice president.

"In terms of photograph quality the Hasselblad camera at the time was in a league of its own—and it was this camera that would forever change our view of Earth," he said.

It was the start of a long relationship between NASA and the Swedish camera maker.

The selling price was far above the \$50,000 to \$100,000 the camera was expected to fetch, he said.

It was sold by a California collector who bought it from astronaut Gordon Cooper, who is believed to have used it on the Mercury-Atlas 9 mission.



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The [camera](#) is in good hands. "The new owner has a passion for space photography and understands its historic significance," Livingston said. "He'll take care of it."

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