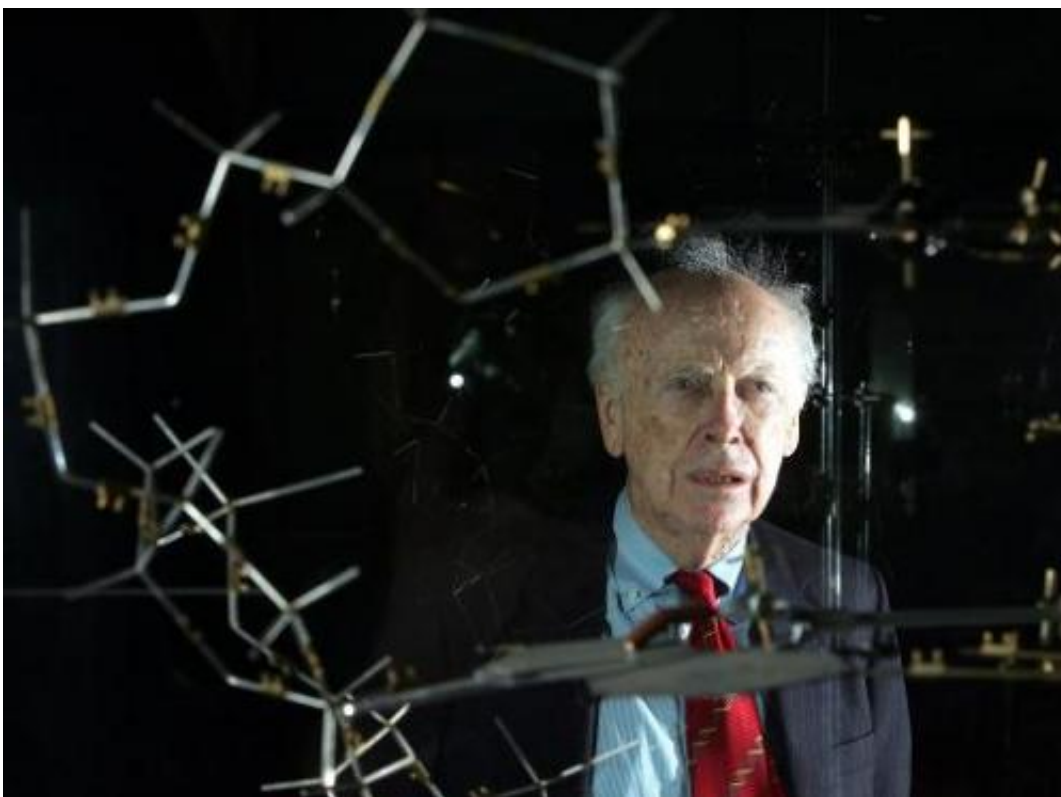


Scientist's Nobel medal fetches \$4.75 mn at auction

December 4 2014



US geneticist James Watson sold his Nobel Prize medal awarded in 1962 for \$4.75 million at Christie's auction in New York on December 4, 2014

The Nobel Prize medal of celebrated American geneticist James Watson sold for \$4.75 million in just minutes at auction on Thursday in New York.

The sale, the first of a Nobel Prize by a living laureate, was considerably more than the \$2.5-\$3.5 million estimate, the auction house Christie's said.

Watson was awarded the [prize](#) in 1962 for discovering the double-helix structure of DNA nine years earlier—one of the 20th century's most important scientific findings.

But the 86-year-old's reputation took a major hit after he questioned the intelligence of black people—comments for which he subsequently apologized—and he has been shunned ever since by some in the scientific community.

Made of 23-karat gold, the medal features the profile of Swedish chemist and inventor Alfred Nobel.

Christie's also sold Watson's [handwritten notes](#) for his speech during the Nobel banquet on December 10, 1962. Valued at \$300,000-\$400,000, the five pages went under the hammer for \$365,000.

Watson had also participated in the Nobel conference. A corrected, 46-page manuscript valued at \$200,000-\$300,000 sold for \$245,000.

The author of numerous scientific volumes, Watson intends to donate a portion of the proceeds to the University of Chicago, where he studied, Clare College at the University of Cambridge, where he worked, and Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, where he served as president for many years.

© 2014 AFP

Citation: Scientist's Nobel medal fetches \$4.75 mn at auction (2014, December 4) retrieved 9 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-12-scientist-nobel-medal-mn-auction.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.