

CLASSIC DRIVER

[Snap up Buzz Aldrin and co's 'space selfies' at auction](#)

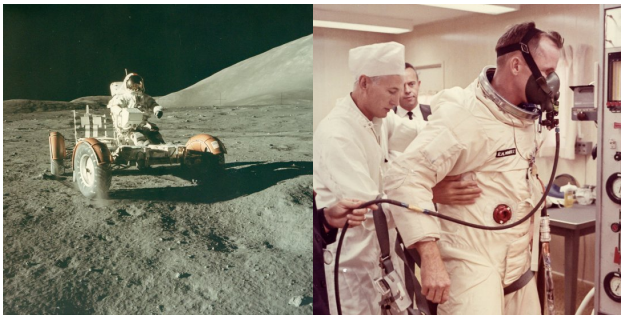
Lead

Even in this age of helmet cams and people posting crackpot stunts on YouTube, a set of photographs taken on 3 June 1965, showing Ed White 'leaving his vehicle', still takes some beating...

Why? Well, the vehicle in question was the Gemini 4 rocket, and White's excursion outside the capsule made him the first American to walk in space.

The remarkable images, snapped by Gemini 4's command pilot James McDivitt, show White floating in space attached to the craft only by the length of 'umbilical' cord which supplied him with oxygen. The mirror visor of his helmet makes it impossible to see the expression on his face - but there's no doubt that White was having fun, since he exceeded the time officially allotted for the walk and had to be ordered back inside.

The (Lunar) Rover returns



The shots are among a set of 30 vintage colour prints which are due to come under the hammer on Thursday (26 Feb) as part of a sale of NASA photographs depicting some of the first voyages beyond Earth.

Estimated to fetch £8,000 - 10,000, the Gemini 4 pictures document the entire mission from testing to the recovery of the astronauts by helicopter. They are just part of a 692-lot private collection that encompasses everything from a black-and-white image of the celebrated rocket scientist Wernher von Braun to some 'action shots' of astronauts such as Eugene Cernan and David Scott driving across the surface of the Moon at the controls of the Lunar Rover (that, thankfully, wasn't actually built by Rover).

Astronomical prices?



One especially evocative scene comprises a panorama made from 11 gelatin silver prints measuring a total of 147cm in length, showing the Rover in the area where the Hadley Rille meteorite was discovered. Other photos show Buzz Aldrin walking on the Moon, the famous shot of James Irwin saluting the American Flag during the Apollo 15 mission, and a truly stunning image of Earthrise from outer space, taken as Apollo 11's astronauts were in lunar orbit preparing to descend to the Moon's surface.

"I have done things and been places you simply would not believe, and I keep that inside me," said astronaut Michael Collins afterwards.

Beat that, YouTube.

Photos: Bloomsbury Auctions

Gallery

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