

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Sotheby's auctions its largest cut diamond yet

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The black diamond is 555.55 carats. Image courtesy of Sotheby's

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Auction house Sotheby's has unveiled a 555.55-carat black diamond that will be up for auction next month, its largest single-lot diamond offering to date.

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It is the largest Fancy Black Natural Color diamond in the world, reported by [Gubelin](#) and the [Gemological Institute of America](#) (GIA), and was listed as the largest cut diamond in the 2006 Guinness Book of World Records. Prior to the auction, the diamond will be available for viewing in Dubai, Los Angeles and London.

"Named 'The Enigma,' this diamond is a true natural phenomenon," said Nikita Binani, jewelry specialist and head of sale at Sotheby's London, in a statement. "Much more than a jewel, it is a unique and precious object of curiosity."

The Enigma

The massive black diamond is thought to have been created from a meteoric impact or emerging from a diamond-bearing asteroid that collided with Earth.



Its design takes inspiration from the Hamsa symbol. Image courtesy of Sotheby's

Its shape was inspired by the Hamsa, a Middle Eastern palm-shaped symbol of protection, power and strength. The Hamsa is also associated with the number five, which is significant as the "Enigma" is 555.555 carats and contains 55 facets.

The diamond has never been on the market nor exhibited to the public, and will be sold in a dedicated auction, open for bidding from Feb. 3-9.

It will be on view in Dubai from Jan. 17-20, then will travel to Los Angeles where it will be shown publicly from Jan. 24-26, ending its journey in London, where it will be on view from Feb. 2-9.

As the art world increasingly welcomes new forms of currency and assets, cryptocurrency will be accepted as payment on the diamond.

Last year, Sotheby's announced that cryptocurrency would be accepted as payment for a 101.38-carat pear-shaped D Flawless diamond. Estimated at \$10-15 million, the diamond carried the highest estimate for a physical object offered for purchase with cryptocurrency ([see story](#)).

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