

比周杰倫演唱會難搶的竟然是根香蕉？而且起標價要3000萬台幣

## The Duct Taped Banana Is Coming to Auction Asking \$1 Million

It was the banana seen round the world.

When the artist Maurizio Cattelan duct taped a fresh banana to a wall at Art Basel Miami Beach in 2019 it caused an immediate uproar. Cattelan's gallery was soon forced to take the piece down because crowds in the booth became unmanageable; within days it was the subject of memes and knockoffs. Celebrities posted about it; Serious Art Critics weighed in; one person ate it. And perhaps most important, collectors **snapped it up**.

The work, which is titled *Comedian*, was produced in an edition of three, with reported prices of \$120,000 to \$150,000 apiece; one piece was donated to the Guggenheim Museum; the other two are owned privately.

Five years later, one of the works in private hands will be offered to the public with a notably higher price tag: Its presale estimate is \$1 million to \$1.5 million. "We're handling not only one of the most important and significant works of art [Cattelan] has ever made," says David Galperin, head of contemporary art for the Americas at Sotheby's, "it's really one of the most talked about works of the

century. So is the value of \$1 million to \$1.5 million scientific? No. But could it go far beyond that? I believe so.”

## Understanding Value

In art, value has never **been derived from materials alone**. A painting by Picasso is just **pigment** on canvas; for that matter, Michelangelo’s *David* is just a chunk of stone. The question of whether or not an artist’s “hand” was necessary for an object to become an artwork. Today, the art world is saturated with artworks, conceptual or otherwise, made from readymade materials. In that respect *Comedian* is nothing new.

What is arguably more novel about the work, however, is that it’s been interpreted as commentary on the **absurdity** of the art market itself. Allowing the public to bid on it, Galperin says, will be a fitting next chapter for its time in the public eye.

“This is a work of art that has provoked so much debate and dialogue around this notion of value specifically with respect to art,” he explains. “There’s no better platform to engage in that discussion than public auction.”

## What You’ll Get

Whoever buys the work will receive a certificate of authenticity. That certificate confers the right to **manifest** the artwork, and also includes detailed display instructions. As an added bonus, the winning bidder

will receive a roll of duct tape and a banana, which at the very least will save them an initial trip to their local supermarket.

“The banana and duct tape can be replaced as needed,” Galperin notes. “It’s not an original duct tape and banana.” (This edition has already sold privately once before.)

**Reference:** <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-10-24/maurizio-cattelan-s-duct-taped-banana-could-sell-for-1-million-at-sotheby-s?srnd=homepage-asia>

# Key vocabularies

## Snap up (搶購)

- **Explanation:** To quickly buy or acquire something, often because it is in high demand or limited in availability.
- **Sentence:** Art collectors snapped up the artwork within minutes of its release due to its uniqueness.

## Pigment (顏料)

- **Explanation:** A substance used to give color to materials, commonly used in paints and dyes.
- **Sentence:** The artist used high-quality pigment to bring vibrant color to her canvas.

## Absurdity(荒謬)

- **Explanation:** The quality or state of being ridiculously unreasonable or illogical.
- **Sentence:** The price of the duct-taped banana highlights the absurdity of the modern art market.

## Manifest (表現)

- **Explanation:** To display or show a quality or feeling clearly through one's actions or appearance.
- **Sentence:** The artist's creativity is manifested in her use of everyday objects as art pieces.

## Key sentences

In art, value has never **been derived from** materials alone.

**"Be derived from"** is a phrase meaning that something has its origin or source in something else.

Easy: "The unique flavor of the dish is derived from a mix of traditional spices and herbs native to the region."

Intermediate: "The happiness she felt was derived from the sense of accomplishment after completing her first marathon."

## Reading Comprehension

1. Why was the artwork titled *Comedian* removed from Art Basel Miami Beach in 2019?
2. How does the article describe the art piece *Comedian* in terms of its materials?
3. What does the article imply about the “absurdity” of the art market through *Comedian*?

4. What does the buyer receive if they purchase the artwork  
*Comedian?*

5. How is value in art typically determined, according to the article?