

Largest Diamond Ever Auctioned Sold For A Record Amount

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*T*he largest diamond ever offered at auction went under the hammer in Geneva Tuesday evening for nearly \$34 million (approximately R488 million), a world record for a gem of its kind, the Christie's auction house said.

The 163.41-carat flawless D colour diamond, suspended from an emerald and diamond necklace called The Art of Grisogono, sold for 33.5 million Swiss francs (\$33.8 million, 28.7 million euros), after taxes and commissions, at the Christie's autumn jewel auction.

This marks "a new world-record price for a D colour diamond at auction," Rahul Kadakia, auctioneer and head of Christie's international jewels division, told AFP.

D is the highest colour grade attributed to a diamond, indicating that the stone is completely colourless, and thus extremely rare.

With a drawn-out round of rapid-fire bidding starting at 20 million francs, the necklace was finally sold to a telephone bidder, who wished to remain anonymous, for well above the asking price of 25 million.

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But some had expected The Art of Grisogono, which Christie's described as a "masterpiece of unparalleled beauty and exquisite workmanship", to fetch even more.

"I am disappointed that the Art of de Grisogono didn't sell for a more dazzling price," said Tobias Kormind, head of 77 Diamonds, a large European online diamond jeweller, who had said before the sale he thought the price might top \$50 million.

The flawless, D colour 11A type diamond was cut from a 404 carat rough rock which was discovered in February 2016 in the Lulo mine in Angola -- the 27th biggest rough white diamond ever discovered.