

A Book? Furniture? It's *Both!*

In December, Taschen, publisher of art reference books, will print 2,500 limited-edition copies of the second-largest, perhaps the most expensive, and probably the heaviest book ever published.

Titled *Sumo* and weighing in at 66 pounds—or roughly 40% of the weight of the author, mildly risqué Australian fashion photog Helmut Newton—this tome is 19.7 inches wide, 27.6 inches tall, and just under 4 inches thick. It's size is second only to Audubon's *Birds of America*, the largest book in the Library of Congress, which features life-size illustrations of rare avian specimens. Even Newton, who turns 79 on Oct. 29, is astounded by *Sumo*. "I was just so scared of it and had sleepless nights," he said from his villa in Monte Carlo. (In case you were wondering, the smallest book in the LOC is a printing of *Old King Cole*. At 0.04 of an inch square, it's about the size of the period at the end of this sentence. You need a needle to turn the pages.) *Sumo* is a PG-13, possibly R-rated collection of snapshots of nude mannequins arranged on lush lawns and real live celebrities in compromising positions. Priced at \$1,500, each copy of the book is bound by hand, numbered, and signed by Newton. If the price seems a tad steep, please bear in mind that this may be the first coffee-table book to come with its own coffee table (no additional charge)—one designed by Philippe Starck, no less.

This "object," as Newton calls it, is not available in stores. Art lovers, please e-mail: c.akbari@taschen-america.com. — Tyler Maroney