

Coffee-table-sized book grabs a staggering \$2,300 price tag

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An Edmonton collector has paid \$2,300 for a 30-kg book that comes with its own table.

Steve and Sharon Budnarchuk, owners of Audreys Books, recently sold the weighty volume to an anonymous buyer.

The Budnarchuks say the book, *Sumo* by fashion photographer Helmut Newton, is the most expensive single volume they've sold in 30 years in the business.

"And certainly the heaviest," says Sharon.

Sumo more than lives up to its name. It's not so much a coffee-table book as coffee-table-sized.

And it certainly takes some grappling to read.

Trendy designer Philippe Starck created a metal stand with Newton's name embossed in it to hold each edition.

Nonetheless, the table doesn't make the book any easier to han-

"If you open the book from the uncentred position it is in when closed, it will become unbalanced and may fall off the stand and become damaged."

Warning that comes with the limited edition, 30-kg book of Helmut Newton photographs

dle. It took both Budnarchuks to heft the book down from its table so they could leaf through the pages.

But even if you have \$2,300 burning a hole in your pocket and a spot picked out in the living room or library, don't expect to run and grab a copy any time soon. The single edition the bookstore brought in for its anonymous collector is the first and only copy to come to Canada so far, say the Budnarchuks.

It may also be the only book to

boast its own set of operating instructions.

Bold lettering warns the prospective owner, "If you open the book from the uncentred position it is in when closed, it will become unbalanced and may fall off the stand and become damaged."

The 480-page book does not come with a warranty.

However, it is signed and numbered. Edmonton's mystery collector is the proud owner of number 3,177 out of 10,000 editions.

"This is quite the addition to anyone's library," Steve Budnarchuk says.

It's like having a complete Newton photo gallery. Renowned for his photography in which fine art, fashion and risqué nudity co-mingle, Newton has shot more covers for *Vanity Fair* than anyone else.

Budnarchuk said the book's owner doesn't want publicity.

"It's the sort of book that might attract all kinds of interest. He doesn't want any complications."