

**BOOKS**

# To the moon with Mailer

In 1969, 600 million people — one-fifth of the world's population — watched the live television broadcast of the moonwalk. Leading art book publisher Taschen has not let the 40th anniversary go unheralded; its book "Norman Mailer, MoonFire: The Epic Journey of Apollo 11" is available in a limited edition of 1,969 copies. The book, which combines archival photos with text from Norman Mailer's 1970 book, "Of a Fire on the Moon," comes in a white resin case with a plexiglass porthole window and includes a poster signed by Buzz Aldrin (Taschen: 350 pp., limited edition, \$1,500 and

The Apollo mission's incongruous blend of the everyday and the magnificent comes alive in hundreds of photographs. Ladies in cardigans and capris, looking like a bridge group, wire the Apollo command module at a plant in Downey. An ad-hoc campground of station wagons, tents and VW buses gathers for the launch, as VIPs wait in the bleachers — Lyndon Johnson in sunglasses, Spiro Agnew holding a glass of something that looks like Scotch. Then, in

eight photos across four centerfold pages, the Apollo 11 rocket launches. It's still stunning. Yet it was also human: At the moment of the moon landing, Buzz Aldrin's wife, Joan, is captured turning her face away from the television, a blur of emotion. Is it terror or joy?

The greatness of the achievement leaves even Mailer floundering, at times, for the right words. Try to explain what you feel looking at the full-page photograph of the footprint in moon dust: the awesome fact of man on the moon, imprinted there with the simple sole of a shoe. Although we haven't been back since 1972, perhaps the discovery of water on the moon will prompt a return. There's another way to touch the moon, though — 12 copies of this book come with genuine lunar rock. The price of those extremely limited edition copies is, of course, out of this world.

— CAROLYN KELLOGG



NASA Taschen

**PILOT:** Aldrin during an in-flight inspection.



NASA Taschen

**MOON:** Aldrin leaves his footprint on another world.



RALPH MORSE  
Time & Life Pictures / Getty Image

**CREW:** Buzz Aldrin, left, Michael Collins and Neil Armstrong of Apollo 11.