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Neil Armstrong: The Quest For His Autograph



Synopsis

This is an autograph study for autograph collectors and the public interested in Mr. Armstrong, the first man on the moon.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Anthony Pizzitola is the Vice President of the UACC and has enjoyed a 30 year history in the pursuit of Neil Armstrong's autograph. His persistence has built a sizeable collection and also earned him an international reputation as an Armstrong collector. He was a contributor to James Hansen's "First Man" and is the editor of "Neil Armstrong: The Quest for His Autograph." He will provide some interesting facts and opinions as to why the first man on the moon refuses to sign.

a great book for the collector of astronaut autographs to determine the fakes from the real ones

This is a review I wrote on the collectSPACE website, but am also sharing here with readers: After a long delay, I finally received a copy of the signature study from . Here are my impressions of the study. It's a fairly quick read and includes numerous color scans of Armstrong-signed items. For most collectors, the images will be "eye candy." Surely everyone will find a few items within that they would love to have for their own collections. Overall, a nice history of Armstrong's signing habits is presented, along with some musings on why he stopped signing...most of which I agree with. I also enjoyed reading Ken Havekotte's chapter, presenting the evolution of Armstrong's signature from the 60s to the 90s. This chapter is a nice companion to the signature exemplars shown on the collectSPACE website (with a few items actually overlapping between both

studies...no doubt the items that Ken provided for both). Ken provides the history of the items he presents, providing items with impeccable provenance. Unfortunately, other parts of the study did not impress me. My main criticisms of the remainder of the study are as follows: 1. There are limited recommendations for collectors on how to obtain an authentic Armstrong signature for their collections. Al Wittnebert's two-page chapter is a really good start, but should be expanded upon. Instead, the party line in the study appears to be "buy from a UACC-certified dealer." 2. No effort is taken to summarize the major forgery styles that have been evident the past two decades (hooktails, Peachstates, certain German-sourced forgeries, etc). This would have been an excellent opportunity to display examples of these signatures, along with illustrating the key traits of each type. (Note: Some scans of these signatures are presented on two pages, but lack any descriptions identifying their source or characteristics.) 3. My biggest criticism, however, is the selection and use of at least three Armstrong signatures within the study that I personally believe to have suspect authenticity. Two of the signatures (signed photos on Page 2 and the bottom of Page 53) appear to conform with forgery styles that have appeared in the marketplace before. And a third (a signed cover at the top of Page 5) is, I believe, a relatively weak signature all-around. As far as I'm concerned, the primary duty of the editors was to make sure these kinds of mistakes didn't happen. If signatures are presented to collectors as exemplars of authentic signatures, then I feel EVERY EFFORT should be made to ensure that they are indeed authentic. In my opinion, that did not happen here...and the study is seriously flawed, as a result.

June 9 Follow-up: I have been informed that the UACC will be amending their signature study to remove the three apparent forgeries contained within that I mentioned above. This is good news overall. I haven't seen a timeline for when the corrected edition will be available. But potential buyers should make sure that they obtain a corrected copy when they place their order. If Page 2 contains a black and white profile shot of Armstrong, with a black sharpie signature in the lower right corner, then you have the original version...not the corrected version.

First off, There are at least seven "NON-AUTHENTIC EXAMPLES" in this book. Mr. Armstrong employed a secretarial service to sign autographs through the mail in 1982-1994 due to the high volume of requests and he finally became frustrated with collectors, in much the same way Paul Newman did. White index cards signed by Armstrong are usually secretarial, but dealers are defending these by adding Certificates of Authenticity, which are also lacking in value. The secretarial signatures are not mentioned at all in this book, and it is my guess that many dealers do not want certain information known. My particular copy of this book has three miss-printed pages

and spelling errors. I have been told that a newer version of this book exists with the careless mistakes and "questionable" examples omitted. To be fair, the newer version may deserve a better rating. If you are buying this book as a guide toward an Armstrong autograph purchase then I strongly suggest backing it up with a few others that are out there and do not limit yourself to one single reference book. Russ Still has an excellent book about Space Collectibles that I would highly recommend. As a side note, if you can't afford the high prices Armstrong commands, the auto-pen is an excellent alternative and even the auto-pen examples seem to be in high demand these days.

As a trusted source, the author and UACC have done a superb job of compiling a history and collection of Armstrong autographs that are worth taking note of before charging off into the hasty, sometimes naive, and wonderful world of autograph collectors. Experts in the field obviously won't need this book, but the vast amount of unwitting folks out there eager to pride themselves in owning an "authentic" autographed Armstrong photo had best flip through the pages before unloading a wad of cash on their brother-in-law's forged copy.Â Neil Armstrong: The Quest for His Autograph

I had the pleasure of reading this cover to cover while on a flight from Florida to Tucson recently, where I was the floor producer of an astronaut autograph show (Spacefest). Anthony and his gang did a wonderful job of compiling known signatures and doing a survey. Neil Armstrong's signature is the most highly sought after signature today. That being said, it is also the most often forged for sale. And, in addition, there is the dreaded autopen (machine generated signature NASA uses) that some knowingly and unknowingly, sell as real. Therefore, IF you were to want to buy a Neil Armstrong signature, this is the go to guide. Put together by the go to guys. His signature (legitimate ones) sell for in excess of \$1000. Please don't attempt to buy one without doing your homework. A minor investment in this book is the least you can do. And, the proceeds go to the UACC [...], an organization that tries to assist in fighting forgeries, and other frauds in the autograph world. Not to the authors themselves. Thanks guys - job well done.

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