

55ct. Ruby Could Fetch \$30 Million at Sotheby's



The 55.22-carat Estrela de Fura, the largest ruby ever to appear at auction, will go under the hammer at Sotheby's New York on June 8. Its high estimate in the Magnificent Jewels sale is more than \$30 million, which would challenge the current world-record price for a ruby at auction.

The polished stone came from a 101-carat rough that Dubai-based colored-stone miner Fura Gems unearthed last July in Montepuez, Mozambique. The ruby's name means "Star of Fura" in Portuguese.



The Estrela de Fura. (Sotheby's)

Even in its rough state, experts have deemed the ruby “an exceptional treasure of nature for its fluorescence, outstanding clarity and vivid red hue, known as ‘pigeon’s blood’ — a color traditionally associated only with Burmese rubies,” Sotheby’s said last week in its announcement of the sale.

The current world record for a ruby at auction belongs to the 25.59-carat Sunrise ruby, a Burmese specimen that sold at Sotheby’s Geneva in May 2015 for \$30.3 million, or nearly \$1.2 million per carat.

“To see a natural ruby of this size with such a combination of quality characteristics, spared from treatment, was considered almost unimaginable,” wrote Gübelin Gem Lab in its assessment of the Estrela de Fura. The stone “is setting a new record not only for Mozambican rubies, but also for rubies in general.”

Gübelin was one of two laboratories that graded the gem. The other lab, the Swiss Gemmological Institute (SSEF), highlighted the stone’s display of “vivid red hues due to multiple internal reflections.” The ruby is currently on view at Sotheby’s Hong Kong. It

will then travel to Taiwan, China, Singapore, Geneva and Dubai ahead of the New York sale.

Image: The Estrela de Fura. (Sotheby's)