

Extinct and expensive: dinosaurs on sale in NY

正宗「絕跡」品紐約拍賣會吸金

Tens of millions of years have passed since they roamed Earth, but two dinosaurs rampaged through a New York auction house last week, selling at near double the pre-sale estimates.

A giant Triceratops skull — 1.7m long and with eye sockets the size of dinner plates — sold at Bonhams' Natural History auction for US\$242,000.

A skull from an Alioramus remotus, cousin of the notoriously fierce T-Rex, went for US\$206,000.

The skull, bristling with long teeth, was tiny compared to the gaping Triceratops head, but sold at a premium because of its rarity, said Bonhams' spokeswoman Staci Smith.

The two skulls had been estimated to go for between US\$120,000-US\$125,000 and US\$120,000-US\$140,000 respectively.

Smith said typical buyers for pricey bones often include private collectors looking to spruce up their home decor.

"The Triceratops skull, it actually looks lovely. It looks like a sculpture," Smith said.

There is a hitch, though.

"You'd have to have an extremely large living room."

(AFP)



距離恐龍在地球上活動已超過數千萬年，但上週兩隻恐龍大鬧紐約一場拍賣會，以預估成交價近兩倍的價格賣出。

在「邦漢思自然歷史」拍賣會上，一塊長一百七十公分、有著餐盤大小眼窩的巨大三角龍頭骨以二十四萬兩千美元賣出。

另一塊阿利奧拉姆斯龍（以兇猛聞名的暴龍種的一支），頭骨則賣得二十萬六千美元。

邦漢思拍賣會女發言人史黛西·史密斯說，這個滿是利齒的阿利奧拉姆斯龍頭骨，尺寸雖然比那個張大嘴的三角龍頭骨小得多，但卻因為稀有而以高價成交。

兩具頭骨的估價原本分別為十二萬至十二萬五千美元，及十二萬至十四萬美元。

史密斯說，高價骨骸的典型買主通常是私人收藏家，他們想找這些裝飾品來美化居家裝潢。

史密斯說：「這塊三角龍的頭骨看起來真的很漂亮，就像是雕塑品一樣。」

不過，有一個小問題。

「你的客廳得很大才行。」

(法新社/翻譯：袁星塵)

Top: A man inspects the mandibles of a 12m-long Lessemsaurus dinosaur at the Lokschuppen exhibition hall in Rosenheim, southern Germany, on April 8, 2009.

PHOTO: AFP

Left: Children touch a model Brachiosaurus dinosaur at Stage One in Tockwith, northern England on May 21, 2009. The Walking with Dinosaurs arena tour is rehearsing at the North Yorkshire site before touring Britain in July 2009.

PHOTO: REUTERS

上圖：四月八日，一名男子在德國南部羅森漢的「火車頭車庫展覽館」，檢視一尊十二公尺長的萊森氏龍下顎骨。

照片：法新社

左圖：五月二十一日，一群小朋友在英國北部塔克維斯的「第一舞台」觸摸一座腕龍模型。「與恐龍共舞」的演出目前正在北約克郡排練，今年七月將在英國各地巡迴表演。

照片：路透社

TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

1. roam /rom/ v.

漫遊 (man4 you2)

例：Raymond spends his days off work roaming around the park. (雷蒙休假時會到公園走走。)

2. fierce /f rs/ adj.

兇猛的 (xiong1 meng3 de5)

例：We encountered some fierce animals on the safari. (我們在狩獵時遇到了一些兇猛的野獸。)

3. premium /prim m/ n.

高價 (gao1 jia4)

例：Davis was prepared to pay a premium to get tickets for the opera. (戴維斯準備撒大錢買那場歌劇的門票。)

4. hitch /h / n.

小問題 (xiao3 wen4 ti2)

例：An administrative hitch delayed the sale of the property. (一個行政上的小問題延宕了這筆房地產買賣。)

IDIOM POINT 重要片語

spruce up 美化

If something gets spruced up, it becomes smarter or more attractive. The phrase originates in the 17th century, when a spruce jacket was an expensive kind of leather jacket.

Examples: "We've decided to spruce up our kitchen with some new paintings," or "I think it's about time we spruced up the living room."

若某事物「spruce up」，就表示它變得更漂亮或更引人注目。這個片語源自於十七世紀，當時「spruce jacket」指的是高級的皮革外套。

例如：「我們已經決定上些新漆來美化廚房」，或「我覺得該裝修一下客廳了」。

OUT LOUD 對話練習

Fabian: You won't believe what just happened to me.

Cathy: Try me. What happened?

Fabian: My cat has scratched my mother's favorite sofa. It's totally ruined.

Cathy: So what are you going to do about it?

Fabian: I'll have to repair the sofa.

Cathy: Why don't you just buy a new one. It's about time you spruced up the house a little bit.

Fabian: That would be a great idea — if I could afford it!

Cathy: Sorry, I didn't think about that.

費比亞：妳不會相信剛剛發生了什麼事。

凱西：說來聽聽，發生了什麼事？

費比亞：我的貓把我媽最愛的沙發抓壞了，整座沙發都毀了。

凱西：那你打算怎麼辦？

費比亞：我得把它修好。

凱西：你何不直接買一套新沙發，你們家也該美化一下了。

費比亞：那會是個很棒的主意——如果我買得起的話！

凱西：抱歉，我沒想到這點。