



Large format chromogenic print, "A Kodak Paper" watermark on verso; accompanied by single-leaf original official printed NASA press-release, confirming the NASA image ID "68-HC-870".

EARTHRISE

APOLLO 8 - Earth view

Author

ANDERS, William

Publication date

29 December 1968.

Publisher

Manned Spacecraft Center,

Publication place

Houston, Texas,

Physical description

Large format chromogenic print, "A Kodak Paper" watermark on verso; accompanied by single-leaf original official printed NASA press-release, confirming the NASA image ID "68-HC-870".

Dimensions

350 by 458mm. (13.75 by 18 inches).

Notes

Arguably "the most iconic photograph of the 20th century" (The Smithsonian), capturing the first earthrise, seen by human eyes, during the first manned voyage to orbit the moon, on the 24th of December 1968. The photograph was taken by Pilot William Anders after the Apollo 8 emerged from

the far side of the moon on their third orbit. Anders said of the moment: "We'd spent most of our time on Earth training about how to study the Moon, how to go to the Moon; it was very lunar oriented. And yet, when I looked up and saw the Earth coming up on this very stark, beat-up lunar horizon, and Earth that was the only color that we could see, a very fragile-looking Earth, a very delicate looking Earth, I was immediately almost overcome by the thought that here we came all this way to see the Moon, and yet the most significant thing we're seeing is our own home planet, the Earth".

The official press-release, accompanying this photograph states: "This view of the rising earth greeted the Apollo 8 astronauts as they came from behind the moon after the lunar-orbit inversion burn. Earth is about five degrees above the horizon in this photograph. The unnamed surface features in the foreground are near the eastern limb of the moon as viewed from earth. The lunar horizon is approximately 783 kilometers from the space craft. With of the photographed area at the horizon is about 175 kilometers. On the earth, 240,000 statute miles away, the sunset terminator bisects Africa".

For decades, there was a good-natured difference of opinion between Frank Borman and Bill Anders about exactly who had taken the photograph. However, a detailed study of the transcript of the in-flight recording, twenty-five years after the event, finally confirmed it was an awe-struck Anders who captured a moment that has fired the human imagination ever since.

Earlier in the mission, Anders had photographed the far side of the moon for scientific purposes, and the near side looking for potential landing sites.

"It didn't take long for the moon to become boring. It was like dirty beach sand,.. Then we suddenly saw this object called Earth. It was the only colour in the universe" (Anders).

Apollo 8, launched via a Saturn V rocket, from the Kennedy Space Centre, Cape Canaveral, Florida, on the 21st of December 1968. Inside were Anders, Frank Borman and James Lovell. They orbited the earth twice before reaching the moon nearly three days later; and completed ten lunar orbits, before splashing down in the north Pacific on the 27th of December.

Two days later, the film was processed, and NASA released the photograph to the public, as here.

Bibliography

Poole, 'Earthrise: How Man First Saw the Earth', p. 2; Schick and Van Haaften, 'The View From Space: American Astronaut Photography 1962-1972', p. 98.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 15753