



THE HISTORY OF THE NEIMAN MARCUS CHRISTMAS BOOK

The world-famous Neiman Marcus *Christmas Book* originated in 1915 as a Christmas card inviting customers to the store to start their holiday shopping. The next Neiman Marcus Christmas catalog didn't appear until 1926, and, though modest in size at 16 pages, it established a lasting tradition of showcasing the unusual, the humorous and the beautiful in a wide variety of prices, with keen emphasis on selectivity and taste.

During the 1950s, Neiman Marcus became known for its publicity coups. In 1959, in answer to press inquiries about unusual Christmas gifts, Stanley Marcus and his brother Edward brainstormed about an extraordinary gift for that year: a Black Angus steer, delivered on the hoof or in steaks, complete with a silver-plated serving cart. The response was tremendous, and the "His and Hers" gifts gained fame the following year with a pair of Beechcraft airplanes. A world-famous retailing phenomenon was born.

Over the years, Neiman Marcus has offered "His and Hers" hot air balloons, Chinese Junks, camels, robots, windmills, and other unusual, creative, but always functional, gifts. Other unique *Christmas Book* items have included the ultimate \$20 million submarine, mummy cases that contained an actual mummy, seats from Ebbets Field, and a Dale Chihuly Pool Sculpture Installation.

The Neiman Marcus *Christmas Book* has evolved into the ultimate wish book. The most expensive item ever offered was an unfinished Boeing Business Jet for more than \$35 million. But not all of the gifts in the book are costly. A substantial number of gifts cost less than \$250.

Since the *Christmas Book's* inception, Neiman Marcus has commissioned leading artists to design the cover, with the art ranging from abstract to surreal to humorous. Cover artists have included such legends as Saul Steinberg, Ben Shahn, Robert Indiana and Al Hirschfeld. Fashion models whose careers were boosted by early appearances in the *Christmas Book* include Cindy Crawford, Heidi Klum, Morgan Fairchild, Andie MacDowell and Cybil Shepherd. For the 2016 *Christmas Book*, Neiman Marcus combined custom artwork by Maija Louekari with the face of Lindsey Wixson to create the final image photographed by Walter Chin. To add a bit of fantasy Neiman Marcus is famous for, the lenticular printing animates Lindsey winking.

Each year, a highly anticipated luxury automobile is showcased in the *Christmas Book*, and the tradition has become quite a phenomenon. Beginning with the BMW Z3 roadster in 1995, the cars have often sold out in the first 24 hours of availability. In 2000, Ford telephone lines in Dearborn, Michigan, handling the sale of the Neiman Marcus Limited Edition Ford Thunderbird, were jammed as callers flooded the automaker with orders; the new "birds" sold out in two hours.

The bestowing of philanthropic gifts is another long-standing Neiman Marcus *Christmas Book* tradition, with a deserving organization selected each year to benefit from sales of featured items. In past years, charities have included, among others, Cure Autism Now, The Nature Conservancy, Inner-City Games and UNICEF. This year, Neiman Marcus will donate a portion of the proceeds from the majority of fantasy gifts to The Heart of Neiman Marcus Foundation which brings enriching art experiences to youth in communities nationwide.

Today, the Neiman Marcus *Christmas Book* is distributed to approximately seven hundred and fifty thousand homes worldwide and is available online for the whole world to see at

www.NeimanMarcus.com/ChristmasBook. The debut of the *Christmas Book* marks the official start of the Christmas season each year.