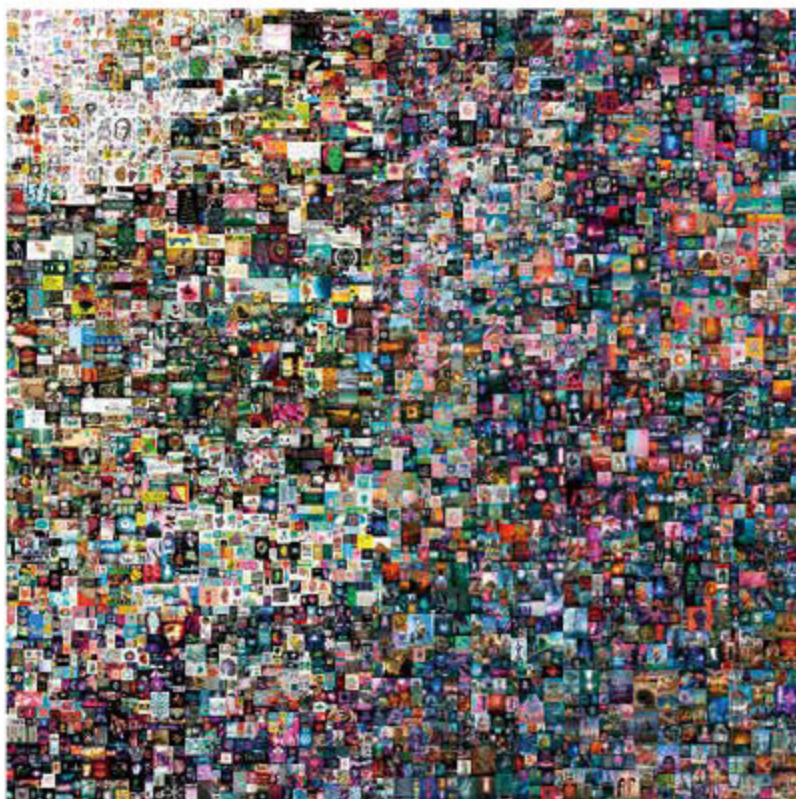


# Will the Boom Last?



## NFTs are the hot new topic in the digital world

In recent years, many new words related to the internet and digital business have emerged. You may have heard about cryptocurrency and blockchain. Do you know about NFTs? NFTs are unique items

that people can buy and sell on the internet. The concept became very popular in 2021, but many people do not fully understand it.

In simple terms, an NFT is a unique digital item. It is usually an image or other artwork

■ 史上最高額で落札された Beeple の NFT アート作品「Everydays: the First 5,000 Days」  
この作品は、Beeple が 13 年半で制作した 5000 枚の作品をコラージュしたもので、落札額は世界最大の NFT ファンドである「Metapurse」の創設者の Metakovan だった。  
CHRISTIE'S AUCTION HOUSE/AFP/WWW

### NOTES

00. NFT (Non-Fungible Token の略)	04. blockchain ブロックチェーン	36. auction [ɔːkʃən] オークション
02. digital [dɪdʒɪtəl] デジタルの	10. artwork [ɑːtˈwɜːk] アート作品	55. ownership [ˈɒnərʃɪp] 所有権
03. emerge [ɪˈmɜːdʒ] 現れる	20. fungible [ˈfʌndʒɪbəl] 代替可能な	
04. cryptocurrency [kɹɪptəʊkələnənsɪ] 暗号通貨	27. investment [ɪnˈves(t)mənt] 投資	
	34. record [rɪˈkɔːd] (音楽の) レコード	



■ NFT アート作品のオークションの様子 (2021年5月20日)  
2021年に落札された NFT アートの上位 10 作品の落札額の合計は 160 億超だった。  
AFP/AFLO

that can be copied, but only one person can own the original. You can prove that you are the owner of an NFT using a technology called blockchain. The blockchain has a list of every time an NFT was bought or sold. Bitcoin also uses blockchain, but bitcoins are different from NFTs. There are many bitcoins in the world, like paper money. This means they are exchangeable and replaceable – they are “fungible”. NFTs are unique, so there is only one of each – they are “non-fungible”. Something that is “non-fungible” has special qualities that make it unique, like a diamond with its own cuts and colors. A person can buy an NFT and sell it later for more money. In this way, it can be a kind of investment.

Digital artworks such as photos, animations, and songs can easily be copied and shared, so it is difficult to give them

value. NFTs use a system that lets their owners prove that the items are originals. Therefore, they can become valuable and be collected like physical artworks or records. A few NFTs have sold for surprising amounts of money. At an auction in March 2021, a digital artwork by the artist Beeple sold for \$69 million. Then, in December 2021, an artist named Pak sold a digital artwork for \$91.8 million. This became the highest price ever paid for a living artist's work.

Because of their popularity, many artists and companies are now rushing to sell NFTs. Some people think that the concept is getting too much attention now. There have been some problems with NFTs. Some people have stolen them, and others have sold ones that they did not own. And some companies have cancelled their NFT projects because of concerns about the environmental impact of the blockchain, which uses large amounts of electricity. Therefore, the future of NFTs is unclear. However, this system may be used to show ownership of other kinds of things in the future, such as houses and cars. If this happens, security of the blockchain will be a very important issue. ■

### WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Book 足立 明穂著「だれにでもわかる NFT の解説書」ライブパブリッシング  
Book 天羽 健介他著「NFT の教科書 ビジネス・ブロックチェーン・法律・会計まで デジタルデータが資産になる未来」朝日新聞出版

### VOICE DL

