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Moscow, April 18 (RHC)-- U.S. National Security Agency whistleblower Edward Snowden's NFT sold for about \$5.4 million, or 2,224 ETH. The NFT is of an artwork that shows an image of Snowden's face made from pages of a U.S. appeals court decision that ruled the mass surveillance program Snowden exposed had violated U.S. law. The image is called "Stay Free."

The profits won't go to America's most famous exiled whistleblower, however. Instead, the sale is meant to benefit the Freedom of the Press Foundation, where Snowden is the president. Its board includes actor John Cusack, whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg, and the writer Glenn Greenwald.

"Emerging applications of cryptography can play an important role in supporting our rights," Snowden said in a statement from the Freedom of the Press Foundation. "This auction will drive the development of valuable and privacy-protecting uses of encryption, to safeguard press freedom and serve the public."

Snowden, who currently lives in Moscow, copied top-secret information from the National Security Agency and gave it to Greenwald and documentary filmmaker Laura Poitras in 2013. The articles based on Snowden's information, published in The Guardian and The Washington Post won the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service. In 2020, seven years after Snowden passed his documents to Greenwald and Poitras, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit ruled that the mass surveillance of Americans' telephone records was illegal.

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