

CLASSIC DRIVER

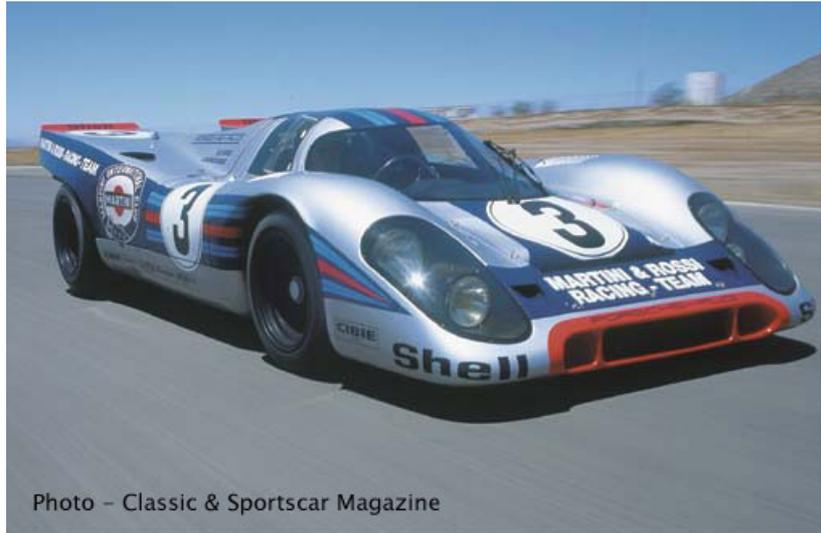


Photo – Classic & Sportscar Magazine

Christie's at Rétromobile, Paris 14 Feb 2004 - Preview

28 January 2004 | Classic Driver

1935 Bugatti T55 Estimate: €1,600,000 - €2,200,000

Just thirty five years separate the two star lots at Christie's Paris Rétromobile Sale, but both cars are examples of the pinnacle of sports car engineering. Porsche's 917, an ex-Martin Racing Team example of which is under the hammer at €1,500,000 - 1,800,000, was the veritable sledgehammer compared to Bugatti's rapier-like Type 55 - estimated at €1,600,000 - 2,200,000.

Chassis 55238 was the last **Type 55** produced (only 38 were ever made) and has spent nearly all of its life in French ownership. Clothed in the immortal Jean Bugatti Roadster bodywork and two-tone yellow/black paintwork the car ranks with the best of them, in fact Christie's point out that the other 1930s classic, the Alfa 8C, was produced in far greater numbers than the T55 and that many originally bore long-chassis, four-seater bodywork. The T55 is powered by Bugatti's Grand Prix T51-derived, twin-cam, supercharged eight-cylinder engine and its lines and engineering functional form cannot be faulted from any angle. One look under the bonnet of a Bugatti at the sublime design of the engine reveals a beauty to match the external shape that few other marques have ever attained.

If you don't get the T55, Christies have five other **Bugattis** to choose from, the **1929 Type 51 Grand Prix** is expected to reach €450,000 - 550,000 while the **1912 Type 15** is the 6th earliest surviving Bugatti. Estimated at €175,000 - 200,000 I'm afraid you don't get a 'horseshoe' radiator; it's that early on in the development of the marque.

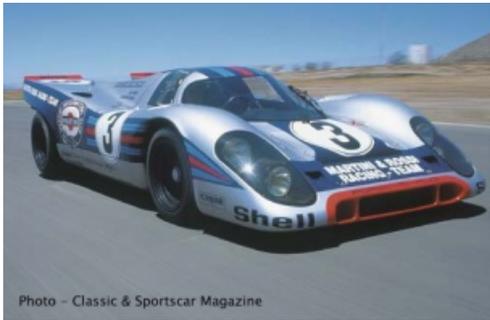


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The '**Nine-Seventeen**' is all about early 1970s' aerodynamics. Built as the twentieth car off Porsche's racing-car production line in late 1969 it was raced in 1970 as a semi-official 'Salzburg' car which was then transferred to Martini Racing Team ownership in 1970. With a colour-scheme as famous as that of the 'official' Gulf Blue cars, the Martini Team picked up some useful overall victories in 1971 including Le Mans, and this very car winning the Sebring 12 Hours driven by Elford/Larrousse. So much has been written about the 917, but if we said it is probably one of the fastest, most desirable and rare racing sports cars ever made - few would argue. People are still talking about the Rahal/Redman psychedelic car at the 2002 Le Mans Classic; wouldn't it be nice to see this one out in 2004?

There are some elegant cars for sale in the rest of the catalogue. After the 917 a personal favourite would be the **1965 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III** at €50,000 - 70,000. Don't be fooled by the title, this isn't a limousine it's a two-door coupé, very much Rolls-Royce's version of a Bentley Continental, complete with 'Chinese-Eye' headlamps. Once the property of Gunther Sachs (who gave it as a present to his wife, French 'sex kitten' Brigitte Bardot) it's elegant and refined and looks particularly sophisticated in its dark chestnut paintwork with beige leather interior. A couple of Astons are present, a **1964 Aston Martin DB5** (€100,000 - 140,000) and a **1967 Aston Martin DB6 Volante** (€150,000 - 180,000), both being LHD.

There are also three **6C Alfa Romeos** entered, a **1930 1750 Gran Turismo** (€170,000 - 190,000), a **1937 2300 B Spyder Brescia** (€140,000 - 160,000) and a **1943 2500 'Corsa' Spider 2 Seater Sport** (€195,000 - 245,000).

Citroen DS 19 Cabriolets have been fetching big money recently and this white 1962 example is estimated at €48,000 - 56,000. The **1968 Mercedes-Benz 600 Pullman** (€50,000 - 65,000) comes complete with six doors and seats seven - just the thing for the school run.

The **1950 Abarth 205A, 'The Fischer Green Star'** (€90,000 - 120,000), is an interesting car. Originally a 1950 car built by Abarth with a 1,089cc Fiat motor, it was bought in 1964 by Austrian enthusiast and privateer racer/automotive engineer Helmut Fischer. Intent on building 'the perfect car' Mr. Fischer sourced the engine, five speed gearbox and drivetrain from an Alfa Romeo 1300 Giulietta Sprint. With further modifications, and after 3 years of continuous development, the car officially passed its road worthiness test for the first time in Austria in 1966. Raced extensively by the Fischers from 1984, almost up until Helmut Fischer died in 2003, the car can either be kept in its current, wonderfully patinated state, or restored back to a concours original early Abarth. It's an extraordinary piece of European motoring history.

The auction will take place at: Salon Rétromobile, Porte de Versailles, 75015 Paris.

Viewing: Friday 13 and Saturday 14 February 2004

Sale: Saturday 14th February 2004 at 7.30pm

Classic Driver are delighted to announce that all the motor-car lots for the Rétromobile Auction are included in their car database. **[CLICK HERE](#)** to see all the lots in the sale, with photographs and links to detailed descriptions on www.christies.com

Click [HERE](#) to view the lotlist.

Photos - Christie's. Words - Classic Driver

<https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/christies-r%C3%A9tromobile-paris-14-feb-2004-preview>

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