

RM Auctions at Monterey 19 - 20 August 2011: Review

25 August 2011
Classic Driver

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The RM Way: Max Girardo and Peter Wallman sell another car

Wow, another mega Monterey sale for RM, selling around \$80m and highlighted by both the 'McQueen 911' and the pre-War Mercedes - where do we begin with this?

Playing to another packed saleroom at its regular Portola Hotel & Spa venue, RM's auctioneer Max Girardo again conducted a successful sale for the Ontario-based company, with an 85% sales rate and a gross figure on the night of \$78,192,700 (that, with further post-sale activity, is likely to top \$80m).

Friday's proceedings were dominated by the ex-Steve McQueen (his personal road car which also appears in the opening sequence of 'Le Mans') 1970 Porsche 911S selling for a not unexpected \$1,375,000. Almost under the radar, that figure was bested by a lot that crossed the block just a few cars later, the 1967 Ferrari 275 GTB/4 that achieved \$1,485,000. Finished in its original colours of Bleu Ferrari with Bleu VM interior, the elegant, award-winning four-cam was everything a serious Ferrari investor could wish for.

You can rely on it being good to drive, too, of course.

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1952 Ferrari 340 Mexico *Berlinetta* - Sold for \$3,685,000

Also on Friday, what must now be called a 'preservation class' (rather than 'restoration project') 1964 Shelby Cobra 289 sold for \$440,000, and someone picked up a nice-looking 1951 Allard K2 Roadster for \$104,500. Of the earlier cars, an RM staple, the 1934 Duesenberg Model J Riviera Phaeton, went for \$990,000 and where would an RM Monterey sale be without a rare one-off: the incredible 1941 Chrysler Thunderbolt Concept Car selling for \$935,000.

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1932 Alfa Romeo 6C 1750 GS 5th Series - Sold for \$935,000

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1967 Ferrari 275 GTB/4 - Sold for \$1,485,000

In addition to the big-money, celebrity 911S, the \$165,000 paid for the rare 1967 Porsche 911S Soft Window Targa shows just how collectible these older 911s have become – even though it was at the lower end of the estimate. RM also sold a 1957 Porsche 356A 1600S Speedster (\$220,000) and a 2004 Porsche Carrera GT (\$368,500).

And a 1968 Volkswagen Type 2 Double-Cab Pickup Truck (\$28,600) if you take the family thing seriously.

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Left to right: 1952 Ferrari 340 Mexico *Berlinetta* (\$3,685,000), 1953 Ferrari 375 America Coupé (\$1,980,000), 1960 Ferrari 250 GT SWB *Berlinetta Competizione* (\$5,280,000)

The following day, it was time for the various pre-War 'blower' Mercedes to take centre-stage. RM had prepared a separate 'Mercedes suite' and an invitation-only drinks reception to present the cars to the public. In all, 13 cars from the great Stuttgart manufacturer would cross the block that night, ranging in age from a 1924 Mercedes 28/95 Sport Phaeton (sold for \$1,017,500) to a 2006 Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren Coupé (\$242,000).

Star of the show was, understandably, the magnificently imposing 1937 Mercedes-Benz 540 K *Spezial* Roadster at \$9,680,000, although my \$2,970,000 would probably have gone on the 1936 Mercedes-Benz 540 K Sport Cabriolet A. With its prominent twin rear spares, and flexible chromed exhaust manifold, it's everyone's idea of a sporting 1930s Mercedes.

Of the later-era Mercedes, the 1955 300SL 'Gullwing' sold for \$803,000 (another 1957 example achieved \$836,000), the 1966 230SL 'Pagoda' a handy \$82,500, the 1962 300SL Roadster \$687,500 and that doyen of the American West Coast, the 1971 280SE 3.5 Cabriolet, \$154,000.

RM near enough matched Bonhams' figure for its 1958 BMW 507 Roadster (\$1,072,500), and sold the interesting 1935 Bugatti Type 57 'Grand Raid' Roadster for \$990,000.







Ferrari usually takes the spotlight at Monterey sales and RM had gathered an impressive number of rare racing cars from Maranello for its 2011 offering. The superb 1952 Ferrari 340 Mexico *Berlinetta*, complete with iconic 'Productos 1•2•3' red/white livery sold for \$3,685,000, while the 1955 Ferrari 750 Monza (\$2,530,000) and immaculate 1960 Ferrari 250 GT SWB *Berlinetta Competizione*, at \$5,280,000, also found new owners.

Not to everyone's taste, the boldly styled 1965 Mercer-Cobra Roadster sold well for \$660,000, while \$423,500 for the 1954 Lancia Aurelia B24 Spider America shows just how far these cars have come in recent years.

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Left to right: 1957 Mercedes-Benz 300SL 'Gullwing' (\$836,000), 1935 Mercedes-Benz 500 K Roadster (\$3,767,500)

With the final lot, a 1886 Benz Patent Motorwagen Replica, selling for \$49,500, another terrific Monterey performance from RM came to a close, with 123 out of 144 cars offered finding new homes. Next stop: 6-7 October at Hershey, Pennsylvania in the USA and 26 October in London. See you there.

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Ex-Steve McQueen, 'Le Mans' 1970 Porsche 911S - Sold for \$1,375,000

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