

RM Auctions - 'Automobiles of London', 26 October 2011: Review

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Classic Driver

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Max Girardo and Peter Wallman *en route* to selling the 1958 250 GT LWB Tour de France for £2,240,000

As was always likely to be the case, the 1958 Ferrari 250 GT LWB 'Tour de France' was the top-selling car at RM's customarily well-presented Battersea Park sale.

To a busy, typically 'London sale' room (that included BBC TV and radio presenter, and arch Ferrari enthusiast, Chris Evans) Max Girardo and Peter Wallman produced a customarily stylish performance. The sale grossed £13.3 million, with 79% of all lots sold – impressive figures that reflect the Ontario-based company's ability to not only 'put on a show', but also to hit the figures. And if that entails some caffeine-fuelled post-sale deals, so be it.

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LHD 1965 Aston Martin DB5 - Sold for £375,200

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The £588,000, 1972 Alfa Romeo 33-3 TT

On the night, though, the 1961 Aston Martin DB4GT was bid to the high £700ks but failed to find a buyer, and so did the 1955 Ferrari 750 Monza, despite bids of well over £1m.

After the £2,240,000 'TdF', the second highest seller was the 1965 Ferrari 500 Superfast (a high-estimate £644,000) followed by the fearsome 1972 Alfa Romeo 33-3 TT (£588,000, and needing some proper race-prepping, but still a fabulous car) and the 1955 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL 'Gullwing', a quite superb example in black/cream leather which sold well for £560,000.

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Fabulous 1955 Mercedes-Benz 300SL 'Gullwing' (sold for £560,000) and a packed auction room

All these, plus the very fine 1964 Ferrari 250 GT Lusso (£487,200), were highly rated by a saleroom packed with collectors, dealers and marque experts from the UK, Europe and North America. Other Maranello cars to sell included the 1950 195 Inter Coupé (£280,000) the 1966 330 GTC (£142,800) and the pretty 1972 Dino 246 GT that, at £89,600, possibly suggests a softening in the market.

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1958 Porsche 356A Carrera GS - Sold for £257,600

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1937 Bugatti Type 57 Stelvio Cabriolet - Sold for £296,800

With the exception of the DB4GT and the Club racing 1964 DB4, all the Astons roared away, such is the trend these days. Top-selling DB was the LHD 1965 DB5, at £375,200, with strong figures posted by the 1989 V8 7.0 Litre Coupé (£134,400) and the delectable 1953 DB2 Vantage Drophead Coupé: £196,000 and one of the highlights of the catalogue.

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Magnificent motorcycle line-up

Of the older cars, the £17,360, 1904 Waltham Orient Buckboard was an unusual migrant to these shores, the 1934 Mercedes-Benz 130 (W23) 2-Door Saloon (£33,600) engagingly weird, and the fabulous 1935 Avions Voisin C25 Cimier Coupé, which sold for £380,800, clearly basking in the warm Californian sunshine resulting from the marque's first win at Pebble Beach this year.

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A little work required - the £25,200, 1969 Mercedes-Benz 600 Pullman Limousine

Moving more up to date, in addition to the Lusso and the drophead DB2 another car that caught the cognoscenti's eye was the off-white 1957 Alfa Romeo 1900C Super Sprint Coupé. With its Zagato-bodied close cousin withdrawn, the Carrozzeria Touring-designed coupé sold well for £89,600. The almost modern 1990 Alfa Romeo SZ Coupé sold for £20,720. You know, I quite like these... future classic, and all that.

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1973 MV Agusta 750S, sold for £49,140

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The 'RM way': superb presentation, as ever

The sale also included a collection of predominantly Italian motorcycles, many to be sold without reserve. Of these, the striking 1973 MV Agusta 750S achieved £49,140, while the three popular 'café racer' bikes found new owners: the c.1973 Moto Guzzi 750 V7 Corsa Speciale for £7,020, the c.1972 Ducati 750SS Miglia di Imola Corsa Replica for £21,060, and the c. 1976 Laverda 1200 SFC Endurance Race Replica £11,115.

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Orange 'café racer' Laverda - everyone's favourite

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Gorgeous 'Gullwing'

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The Dexter Brown-painted 2008 Force India F1 car sold for charity

All-in all, it was another impressive night for RM. Over £13m, on one night, in these times - you can't knock it.

You can see the official results [elsewhere on Classic Driver](#).

RM Auctions' next sale will be in Arizona on 19 - 20 January 2012. Its associated company, Auctions America by RM, will hold the 'Lee Roy Hartung Collection' sale at the Hartung Automotive Museum, Glenview, Illinois on 3 - 5 November 2011.

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