
1964 Marusho

Paris, 06 February

Lot sold	USD 6 842 - 10 833 EUR 6 000 - 9 500 (listed)	Condition	Used
Year of manufacture	1964	Location	
Engine number	2-0144	Motorcycle type	Street
		Colour	Other

Description

1964 Marusho ST 500

Frame no. F9-0084

Engine no. 2-0144

The Marusho Motorcycle Industrial Co Ltd was founded in 1951 in Hamamatsu, Japan by Masashi Ito, and sold its products under the 'Lilac' name. The first Lilac was a shaft-driven 150cc lightweight. A succession of larger models was introduced including a 350cc horizontally opposed twin. Increasingly stiff competition from Honda forced a wholesale revision of the Lilac range in the late 1950s, the new line-up including a brace of transverse v-twins. Despite an agreement to import Lilacs into the USA, the company was forced to file for bankruptcy and the factory closed in 1961.

Marusho re-emerged as a motorcycle manufacturer in 1964, reorganised as the Lilac Co Ltd the previous year. Clearly influenced by the contemporary BMW, their first new product was a 500cc horizontally opposed twin, marketed as 'Marusho ST' in the USA and 'Lilac' in Japan and Australia. Despite a worthy product, Lilac's production decreased year by year and the factory finally ceased motorcycle production at some time around 1967.

One of an estimated 150 survivors out of around 500 made, this ultra-rare Japanese classic was sold new in California and enjoyed three owners there before being sold to the fourth owner in West Virginia, who exported it to the UK. The machine passed to the next owner in Germany in the early 1990s. Benefiting from a restored engine while retaining mostly original paintwork, this Marusho featured in a German motorcycle magazine (Oldtimer-Markt, June 1998 edition) and has not been run

since its acquisition by the Hockenheim Museum in 2001. The machine is offered with California Certificate of Title (1967) and German import documents.

Bonhams 1793

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