

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Taking the Long Way Down to Bonhams' Vegas motorcycle auction

### Lead

As well as 230 bikes, Bonhams' Las Vegas Motorcycle Auction on 8 January will see a stunningly varied selection of bike-related collectables that includes a very special collection of 32 photographs, to be sold for charity...



It's difficult to believe it now, but relatively few people seemed interested when Hollywood star Ewan McGregor and his biking buddy Charley Boorman set off from London to tackle their original trans-global motorcycle odyssey back in April 2004.

Yet by the time the pair arrived in New York, three and a half months and 18,887 miles later, the trip had gained global coverage and went on to become part of motorcycling lore through Sky Television's 'Long Way Round' documentary series that charted the adventure from start to finish.



Cynics claimed the ride was little more than a demonstration of celebrities having fun and that backing from BMW and the presence of an extensive support crew diminished the achievement – but there's no denying that it shone the spotlight on chosen charity UNICEF and prompted a major boom in overland motorcycling.

In 2007, McGregor and Boorman got back in the saddle for 'Long Way Down', which took them from Scotland to South Africa. As well as another TV documentary, the ride also produced a series of high-quality still photographs which, having first been seen at the 2008 Legend of the Motorcycle show in California, are now being offered for sale at Bonhams' Las Vegas bike auction.



The 32-piece collection of framed, large-scale images includes shots of the duo approaching the Pyramids, fixing their bikes in the wilderness and meeting children during a rest stop in a remote African village. Offered as a single lot, the collection is conservatively estimated to fetch \$5,000 – 7,000, with the entire proceeds going to UNICEF.

The photographs are among 87 lots of motorcycle ephemera, memorabilia and parts that include a Ulysse Nardin wristwatch hand-painted by the legendary customiser Von Dutch, plus a selection of vintage posters and a quantity of Vincent parts.



The core of the sale, however, comprises more than 230 machines ranging from a trio of Honda C70 'step-thru' commuters to one of the 67 Ducati 'Supermono', single-cylinder race bikes produced between 1993 and 1995. A late model, 572cc example (early ones were 550cc), the bike comes from the renowned Silverman Museum collection and is tipped to fetch up to \$170,000.

Other notables include a selection of centenary-edition Harley-Davidsons, classic Hondas ranging from an early CB750 KO to a six-cylinder CBX, a two-owner, award-winning BSA Gold Star and, the highlights of the sale, a 1954 Vincent Black Prince prototype that served as the Earls Court show bike and could realise up to \$300,000, and a 1946 Series B prototype which is tipped to fetch up to \$450,000.



An ex-Steve McQueen Husqvarna 250 Cross is also up for grabs (\$70,000 – 90,000), as well as a 1965 BSA Gold Star flat tracker that was owned for more than 25 years by legendary racer Dick Mann (\$90,000 – 100,000) and actor Peter Fonda's MV Agusta F4CC (\$60,000 – 80,000).

The sale takes place at Bally's Las Vegas Hotel and Casino on Thursday 8 January, starting at 10am. Viewing is the day before, 9am – 6pm.

*Photos: Bonhams*

## Gallery

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