

CLASSIC DRIVER

The market speaks at the 2016 RM Sotheby's sale in Paris

Lead

The champagne was flowing, the saleroom full-to-bursting and the presentation fantastic, but the RM Sotheby's 2016 Paris sale proved a mixed bag on the night, led by the 1955 Porsche 550 Spyder that realised an impressive 2.45m euros before premium. Classic Driver watched as the action unfolded...



An ever-determined Max Girardo commanded the Place Vauban for almost three hours, but despite his valiant multilingual efforts (and the usual first-rate presentation from RM Sotheby's), the market made its voice clearly heard, with three-quarters of the 61 lots selling below estimate, and 17 cars failing to sell altogether. Just as with the preceding Arizona sales, genuine 'star cars' were few and far between, with the rest of the catalogue populated by nice, albeit not perfect cars.

A steady start





From the very beginning of the sale, the gulf between the auction houses' (or vendors'?) estimates and what bidders were willing to pay was clear to see, with both the ultra-low-mileage 1989 Ferrari Testarossa and matching-numbers yellow 1981 Lamborghini Countach LP400 S failing to sell after falling well short of their estimates. We must point out that all prices stated were on-the-hammer, devoid of the 12% buyer's premium and, of course, some deals will be completed in the period following the sale.



Those in the market for century-old machines with which to tackle such events as the London to Brighton run were at the right place – the 1887 Valée Vis-à-Vis hammered away for exactly half its 150,000-euro lower estimate, while the 1896 Raynaud Vis-à-Vis Prototype sold for 120,000 euros – 100,000 euros short of its lower estimate.

The 1955 Frankfurt show star





After the coveted Ferrari 400 Superamerica LWB Coupé Aerodinamico was passed by Girardo at 2.875m euros (although a post-sale agreement was reached for an all-inclusive 2.95m euros), the undoubted star of the show was the 1955 ex-Frankfurt Motor Show Porsche 550 Spyder. It rightfully fetched a bang-on-estimate 2.45m euros. Hot on its heels was the 1957 BMW 507 Roadster, that realised 1.77m.



Considering its high-profile accident, RM's black 2004 Ferrari Enzo sold remarkably well at 1.4m euros, as did probably the finest Lancia Delta Integrale on the market. It realised an on-estimate 120,000 euros, indicative of the modern classic's increasing popularity. We're curious to see how the twice-rally-winning Peugeot 205 T16 will fare at the RM Sotheby's Monaco sale – we see plenty of Group B machines come to market, but very few with the provenance of this car. A Le Mans Classic entry was included with the 1966 Shelby GT350 – dubbed the quickest GT350 in existence – for a below-estimate 160,000 euros.

Surprise, surprise...





Notable no-sales included the 1965 Alfa Romeo Giulia TZ (bid to 880,000 euros), the 1997 Ferrari F50 (bid to 1.2m euros), the James Bond-spec Aston Martin DB5 (bidding stalled at 1m euros) and the 1951 Alfa Romeo 6C 2500 SS Villa d'Este Coupé. The latter fell 150,000 euros short of its 750,000-euro lower estimate, which we found surprising, given both the attention it garnered prior to the sale and how enchanted by it we found ourselves.

Deals to be done



Ambitious estimates weren't all bad for bidders, though. We'd say the stunning *Blu Sera* 1979 Ferrari 308 GTB was particularly well bought at 100,000 (versus its 140,000-160,000 pre-sale estimate), as was the barn-find Fiat-Abarth 750 GT 'Double Bubble' – a relative bargain at just 27,500 euros? We guess only the successful bidder can say for sure, after any restoration has been carried out. The trend we saw in Arizona last week is now all but confirmed – will it be bucked by either Bonhams or Artcurial later this week?

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Gallery

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