
1947 Delahaye 135 M

Lot sold	USD 300 615 - 382 601 GBP 220 000 - 280 000 (listed)	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1947	Condition	Used
Chassis number	800939	Location	
Number of seats	2	Fuel type	Petrol
Drivetrain	2wd	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	231		

Description

The 1948 Paris Motor Show

1947 Delahaye Type 135 M Drophead Coupé

Coachwork by Jean Antem, Paris

Registration no. not UK registered

Chassis no. 800939

Delahaye had no in-house coachworks so all its chassis were bodied by independent coachbuilders, which created some of their most attractive designs on the Type 135. Right-hand drive like many high quality French cars of the period, this rare Delahaye 135 M drophead coupé, chassis number '800939', was bodied by the renowned French coachbuilder Jean Antem of Courbevoie, Paris. Jean Antem had established his coachbuilding business in 1919 and over the course of the next 30-plus years would body all kinds of chassis in a wide variety of styles. Antem manufactured series-production bodies for La Licorne and Ariès during the 1930s while reserving his bespoke creations for quality marques such as Bentley, Bugatti, Hispano Suiza and, of course, Delahaye. Jean Antem's work is rarely encountered today; indeed, an article published in 'La Vie de l'Auto' in January 1979 cited just four Antem-bodied Delahaye 135 soft-tops known at that time out of the estimated seven made post-war.

Antem bodied some six dropheads and one roadster in similar style on the Delahaye 135 M/MS chassis, and '800939' was one of two such cars displayed on Antem's stand at the 1948 Paris Motor

Show. This show car is readily recognisable by its Applex steering wheel and Plexiglas dashboard buttons, clearly visible in photographs taken at the show. It is understood that '800939' is the only car to have these features from new.

After the '48 Paris Motor Show, '800939' was sold to Monaco early in 1949 and registered as 'MC 2817' (owner unknown). On 25th September 1953, the Delahaye was sold to Natale Franchini of Cap-d'Ail on the French Riviera, receiving the French license plate '395 BR 06' (Alpes-Maritimes). There is then a gap in the car's history until it resurfaces many years later in the Deutsch Danischer Freizeitpark Oldtimer Museum in Germany. Photographed in front of the museum, and still with the French license plate '395 BR 06', it featured on one of the museum's postcards.

The Key Collection purchased '800939' in August 2012 when a selection of cars from the Danish Aalholm Automobile Museum was offered for sale at auction. Since then it has been restored by the Key Collection and is presented in magnificent cosmetic condition. Regular contenders at the most prestigious Concours d'Élégance events, these Antem-bodied Delahayes are very rare and highly sought-after. Bonhams would like to thank Delahaye authority Jean-Paul Tissot for his assistance in preparing this description.

Should the vehicle remain in the UK, local import taxes of 5% will be added to the hammer price.

Bonhams 1793

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