
1934 Bugatti Type 57 - Cabriolet par Vanvooren

Cabriolet par Vanvooren

Lot sold	USD 530 100 - 765 700 EUR 450 000 - 650 000 (listed)	Drive	RHD
Year of manufacture	1934	Condition	Used
Drivetrain	2wd	Location	
Lot number	28	Fuel type	Petrol
		Exterior colour	Blue
		Car type	Convertible / Roadster

Description

Unregistered
Chassis n° 57162
Engine n° 134

- Original body, matching numbers
- One of two surviving examples
- Owned by a number of art lovers

Bugatti and Vanvooren

The collaboration between the Molsheim constructor and the coachbuilder from Courbevoie coincided with the arrival of Robert de Prandières at Vanvooren in 1929. He was largely responsible for the relationship with Bugatti, and also happened to be a close friend of Dominique Lamberjack Junior, the largest Bugatti dealer in Paris with a showroom at 68 rue Bayen. From 1930, Vanvooren designed for Bugatti several closed bodies on 3-litre Type 44 chassis. There was also a coach and a faux cabriolet body available for the 5-litre chassis. In 1931, a 2-door, 4-seater coach Type 49 was added to the range. At the end of 1931, Lamberjack obtained exclusive rights to sell Type 55 chassis delivered in Paris, and between 1932 and 1935, six Type 55 chassis were bodied at Courbevoie.

The Type 57s bodied by Vanvooren

When the Type 57 went into production in 1934, Lamberjack sent several of these chassis to Vanvooren to be fitted with 4-seater cabriolet bodies. There were numerous 4-door, 4-seater Type 57 saloons built in Courbevoie between 1934 and 1936. Four Type 57S chassis were given Vanvooren cabriolet bodies between 1936 and 1937. Three coupés and a roadster were built between 1938 and 1939.

The Type 57 cabriolets by Vanvooren 1934-1939

The numbers of this type of body produced were limited compared to the number of coach and saloon bodies built for different chassis between 1930 and 1936. Following extensive research into the Type 57 chassis delivered and not bodied by Bugatti or Gangloff, we have compiled a fairly accurate list of Type 57 chassis given cabriolet bodies by Vanvooren. It appears that there were no more than twelve examples built between 1934 and 1939, the whole period of production. Two cabriolet designs were offered to clients by the coachbuilder from the spring of 1934.

The first design was for a cabriolet with fold-down windscreen, with sloping vents on the bonnet, suicide doors, flanges on the rear wings and no sign of a trunk. The second cabriolet model had doors opening from back to front, a fixed windscreen, vertical vents in the bonnet and metal rear trunk. The car presented in the sale, chassis 57162, was built from the second design. In 1934, just four Type 57 cabriolets were produced by Vanvooren and 57162 was the last of these, delivered to Lamberjack on 10 November 1934. It had the spare wheels on the front wings. In 1935, Vanvooren produced three Type 57 cabriolets including 57269, which was the fourth and last car to be built from the second design, and the only one not to have spare wheels on the front wings. Between 1936 and 1939, only four other 4-seater cabriolets were built by Vanvooren, with a 2-seater cabriolet, chassis 57430, delivered in 1936 and a 2-seater roadster, chassis 57808c from 1939, completing the list. Of the twelve known cabriolets built, just four bodies have survived on their original chassis, including 57162.

The Cabriolet Vanvooren chassis 57162

The chassis 57162/engine 134 was assembled at the factory in October 1934 along with 22 other chassis fitted with engines 100 - 124. It was delivered by rail, on 10 November 1934, to the largest Bugatti dealer in Paris, Dominique Lamberjack, at 68 rue Bayen. His client was Baron Charles Brincard, son of the President of Crédit Lyonnais. The coachwork was built in the Vanvooren workshop on Rue Pierre Lhomme in Courbevoie to be finished by Christmas 1934. The car was delivered to the Baron's private mansion at 1 rue Saint Dominique, Paris VII.

Charles-Henri BRINCARD (1899-1970)

Brincard was born in Deauville on 31 August 1899, at his parents' holiday home on Rue des Villas. The family lived in a huge private mansion on the corner of rue Saint Dominique in the 7th arrondissement in Paris. Baron Charles Brincard was a regular client of the Molsheim marque. He acquired a 3-litre Lavocat & Marsaud Torpédo in 1928, and another 3-litre car in the spring of 1929, before ordering a 5-litre model in February 1930 and a Type 50 roadster the following July. A typed note from the showroom on avenue Montaigne states : " 57162. Mr Brincard Charles ,Baron, 1 Rue St Dominique, Paris. " The car was delivered to him, as was his Type 50, by the Parisian dealer Dominique Lamberjack

We know of no other Bugatti Type 57 in the Baron's name, and assume that he kept his cabriolet 57 for several years. The car left Paris for a period of time to return again in the spring of 1940. It was registered at the Paris Prefecture with the number 9879 RM 3 on 28 May 1940. It is believed to have spent the war in a Parisian garage, before being sold in Gironde afterwards.

We come across it again in Arcachon at the end of winter 1947. The cabriolet was registered 3792 GC 3, on 5 February 1947 in the name of :

Jean Bové, Insurer, Villa Vermeil, Boulevard de la Teste, Le Moulleau, Arcachon. There is a photo of the car, probably taken in Arcachon that shows the 1940 Parisian number plate. This leads us to believe that Bové drove around for a while with the old 1940 plates, and must have bought the car in Paris before 1947. Three years later, on 27 June 1950, the cabriolet returned to the capital, with the registration 2674 G 75, in the name of Fernand Bezé, engineer, living a 22 rue d'Estienne d'Orves in Colombes. He kept the car for two years before selling it at the end of 1952.

On 29 December 1952, the Vanvooren cabriolet was acquired by: Pierre LOEB, retailer, living at 2 rue des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He was not a simple retailer, however, and the address 2, rue des Beaux-Arts, was a special place.

Pierre LOEB (1897-1964)

The twins Edouard and Pierre Loeb, were born in Paris on 24 September 1897 to Alsatian parents, at their home, 11 rue Ambroise Thomas in the 9th arrondissement. The twins were called up in 1916, and at the end of the war, they joined the family wholesale lace and tulle business, as travelling salesmen. In an interview for the Express in 1964, Pierre Loeb recalls : " I sold lace for my father, and with my savings I bought paintings...My father said to me, you love painting, well, go and sell them ! Et voila ! "

It was a family friend, Doctor Tzanck, a collector of artists such as Pascin, Derain and Friesz, who introduced him to painting and encouraged him to take this path. The Galerie Pierre opened on 17 October 1924 at 13 rue Bonaparte, with an exhibition of work by Pascin. At the opening, Loeb met Picasso. By 1925, the gallery had already shown work by Gromaire and Miro. The first Picasso exhibition at Galerie Pierre, which had moved to 2, rue des Beaux-Arts, was in December 1927. Forced into exile during the war, the Loeb family went to Marseille in December 1941 and on to Havana. It was due to Picasso's intervention that the gallery was returned to Pierre Loeb in November 1945. After the Liberation, the gallery hosted work by such artists as Giacometti, Artaud, Dora Maar, Zao-Wou-Ki...The first exhibition of the Canadian painter

Jean-Paul Riopelle took place in May 1953. Pierre Loeb bought a large part of his work and once the artist's career had been launched, success came quickly. At this time, Loeb was using his Bugatti cabriolet Vanvooren and offered his friend Riopelle the means to enjoy the same passion : Riopelle bought two cabriolets in 1956 and 1958 that he kept until his death in 2002.

On 15 April 1955, the cabriolet Vanvooren was registered in the name of :

Bernard Dufour, Artist painter, living at 7 rue de la Grande Chaumière, Paris VI. His studio was opposite Gauguin's at number 8, the residence of painter Charles Maussion who drove a Bugatti Type 40 roadster.

Bernard DUFOUR (1922-2016)

Born in Paris on 21 November 1922, Bernard Dufour was originally an agricultural engineer before becoming an artist after the Second World War. He exhibited at the Salon in May 1946 and at the Galerie Maeght in 1948.

It was Pierre Loeb who really launched the artist's career. He held exhibitions for his friend Dufour at the Galerie Pierre every year between 1955 and 1963. The first show was held on 10 - 25 June 1955, shortly after the transfer of ownership of the Bugatti. In an interview published in 2012, Dufour confided : " I had two Bugatti, a large eight-cylinder cabriolet, and a small four-cylinder car from 1924. I had a passion for these machines that I had repaired at the Bugatti factory in Molsheim. "

On 30 October 1957, the Bugatti moved to the department of Eure, registered with the number 454 CM 28. The new owner is believed to have been an American by the name of Phillips. Shortly afterwards, the car sold to

Jean Chevalérias, 101 avenue du Maine. He was a great Bugatti enthusiast who also owned a Type 57 Galibier, a cabriolet 57C Gangloff and several Type 40s. At some point before 1961, the cabriolet Vanvooren was acquired by Henri Petiet, of 8 rue de Tournon in Paris. He appears as the owner in the " Bugatti Register " published by H.G.Conway in 1962. The car was then registered in the department of Eure, with the number 252 EK 27.

Henri PETIET (1894-1980).

Petiet was a visionary collector. His father, a railway engineer, was the 4th Baron of the Empire. His older brother, Baron Charles, was Vice-President of the A.C.F., who had many roles in the automotive field including being the constructor of Ariès vehicles, an adventure that Henri Petiet became involved in. In the mid-60s, the cabriolet Bugatti Vanvooren was sold by Petiet to the collector André Laporte (1915-1996), president of the F.F.V.E from 1980 to 1991, who lived in Hérault. He didn't restore the car which was no longer driving by then as the engine had seized. After his death, the Bugatti sold at a Poulain-Le Fur auction in Montpellier on 4 October 1998. During this sale, it was noted that the car, with just 32,320 km on the odometer, had light blue coachwork, blue leather

upholstery and a hood requiring repair. The buyer undertook a full restoration and the cabriolet Vanvooren then joined a big Spanish collection.

The car presented today is one of two survivors of four Type 57s by Vanvooren to design no.2 (the other being 57274). If it is permissible for an artist to produce eight examples of a work, the " type 57 model N°2 " series was never finished by Vanvooren. In the garage that will be this car's new exhibition space, it should be surrounded by a portrait of Pierre Loeb by Denise Colomb, next to a nude by Bernard Dufour, a lithograph by Riopelle and a print by Picasso from the Petiet collection. If you take the car from Rue de Beaux-Arts, to Rue de la Grande Chaumière and on to rue de Tournon, it will show you the route it knows so well.

The Bugatti is not a static work of art, but a rare industrial object displaying precision in movement, created by a brilliant artist and built by talented craftsmen. The enlightened visionaries who have spent time looking at it were not mistaken.

Pierre-Yves Laugier

For more information and photos: <https://www.artcurial.com/fr/lot-1934-bugatti-type-57-cabriolet-par-vanvooren-3980-28>

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