

CLASSIC DRIVER

[RM Auctions: Villa d'Este 21 May 2011 - Review](#)

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Auctioneer Max Girardo selling the 1967 Lamborghini Marzal (1,512,000 euros) 'the RM way'

With a headlining gross sales figure of over 23m euros, RM can be pretty satisfied with its inaugural Villa d'Este sale. The figure could have been higher, of course, had one or two of the feature lots sold for really big money.

But, with 3.6m euros achieved by the once-in-a-lifetime Bertone collection, and 3.3m euros for the 1955 Ferrari 375 MM Berlinetta, the Ontario-based auction company must feel that its decision to no longer hold a May Ferrari sale at Maranello, choosing to alternate between the Monaco Historics and the Villa d'Este Concours d'Elegance, was a wise one.

As always, RM had done the full number on both pre-sale preparation (beautiful catalogue, extensive marketing and press campaigns) and on-site presence (client travel booking, pre-event party and stylish auction setting). Until auctioneer Max Girardo stood at the rostrum at 8:30pm on Saturday evening, though, there was all to play for and no one was sure how the evening would pan out.

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1966 Ferrari 330 GTC: Sold for 196,000 euros

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The 1937 Bugatti Type 57 SC Atalante Coupé crosses the block

In front of a packed house and in fine form, Girardo proceeded to sell the first lot (a 1966 Ferrari 330 GTC *Berlinetta*, estimated at 175,000 - 225,000) for an upper estimate 196,000 euros. The first RM Auctions Villa d'Este sale was up and running.

First of the really heavy metal was the ex-Harrah Collection 1937 Bugatti Type 57 SC Atalante Coupé. A dazzling car in all senses of the word, it was bid to 2.1m euros - and no more; some way short of its anticipated 3,250,000 - 4,250,000 euros.

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1967 Lamborghini Marzal: Sold for 1,512,000 euros

The disappointment over the Atalante was short-lived, however, as the Bertone collection lots commenced straight afterwards, starting with the beetling, brown-painted 1978 Lancia Sibilo (sold for 95,200 euros) and then the first of the Lamborghini-based concepts.

With legendary Sant'Agata Bolognese test driver Valentino Balboni just one of the many personalities in the saleroom, it was fitting that all the Bertone Lamborghini concepts sold sensationally well. Bids came in fast and furious, with the opening 1980 Athon going for 347,200 euros (est. 150,000 - 220,000 euros) and the following 1974 Bravo knocking its 150,000 - 220,000-euros estimate into orbit with a super-strong 588,000 euros. The 1963 Chevrolet Testudo (336,000 euros) was under its lower estimate, while one of the star lots, the 1967 Lamborghini Marzal, comfortably sold mid-estimate for 1,512,000 euros.

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1954 Aston Martin DB2/4 Competition Spider: Sold for 672,000 euros

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1955 Ferrari 375 MM Berlinetta: Sold for 3,360,000 euros

It must have been a Lamborghini thing with the Bertone cars as - like the Corvair-based Testudo - the 1970 Lancia Stratos HF Zero changed hands for 761,600 euros, a touch lower than many people expected.

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1959 Ferrari 250 GT LWB California Spyder: Sold for 2,520,000 euros

Despite his very best efforts, Girardo just could not get beyond 2.1m euros for the colourful 1953 Ferrari 250 MM *Berlinetta*, but its slightly younger brother, the 1955 Ferrari 375 MM *Berlinetta* sold for 3,360,000 euros. And if any car sums up the raison d'être of the Villa d'Este concours it's the latter: exclusive only for royalty, film stars and industrial tycoons, the big white and blue Ferrari simply dripped elegance and brutish power. The essence of *bella macchina*...

...as was Lot 122, another Ferrari, the 1959 250 GT LWB California Spyder. We'd already admired an open-headlamp-with-hardtop LWB 'Cal' Spyder at Villa d'Este that day. RM's example was a gorgeous, matching-number, Ferrari Classiche-certified car which had been sold to an Italian aristocrat in March 1959. It then passed into German semi-professional racing driver and car dealer Wolfgang Seidel's hands before enjoying the usual pampered life of international car collector ownership ever since.

It looked quite superb and comfortably broke its pre-sale estimate of 1,600,000 - 2,000,000 euros by going for 2,520,000 euros.

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1967 Ferrari 275 GTB/4: Sold for 660,000 euros

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1968 Bizzarrini 5300GT Strada: Sold for 400,000 euros

Other outstanding entries to sell in the latter part of the sale included the Bertone-designed 1954 Aston Martin DB2/4 Competition Spider (672,000 euros and unrestored) and the 1957 BMW 507 (at 728,000 euros well, well over upper-estimate and clearly bought by someone who just HAD to have it - a lovely car but as with all 507s, slightly compromised to drive) and the 1967 Ferrari 275 GTB/4 (660,000 euros, another post-sale car and unusually finished in a striking *Rosso Cordoba*).

Finally, in this last section were some of the evening's most significant sales. The stylish 1938 Talbot-Lago T150-C SS Teardrop Coupé sold for 3,136,000 euros, the 1964 Alfa Romeo TZ for 627,200 euros (a world record, RM believes) and Lot 132, the colourful 1957 Ferrari 500 TRC that closed proceedings in style, achieving 2,800,000 euros.

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1965 Ford GT Prototype Roadster: Not Sold

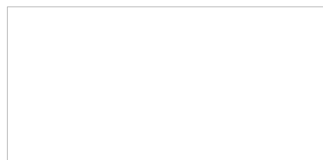
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1964 Alfa Romeo TZ: Sold for 627,200 euros

It's testament to the slick organisation of RM and the clever consignment team that any one of the evening's entries could well have graced (given an appropriate invitation, that is to say) the daytime event - who knows which of these cars will appear at concours worldwide in years to come?

RM Auctions' next European sale will be on 23 June with its inaugural sale at the Salon Privé luxury car show and concours d'elegance, at the Syon Park estate in West London. You can see early entries to this sale in the [Classic Driver car database](#).

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1957 Ferrari 500 TRC: 2,800,000 euros

Please click [HERE](#) to see the full results.



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