

CLASSIC DRIVER

RM Auctions, Salon Privé London 23 June 2011: Review

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Max Girardo hard at work. This is the 1966 Aston Martin DB6 Vantage, sold for £123,200

'Bentley' and 'Aston Martin' go together like champagne and canapés. No, hold on, that's not quite right, but they're still 'Quintessentially English' and that was the theme of RM's new summer sale, held at the luxury and supercar 'Salon Privé' event in Syon Park, West London.

The result – a £5.1 million gross figure with a handy 77% sell-through rate – must have been enough to get the champagne corks popping back in Ontario, with cars from Bentley and Aston Martin leading the way.

Top selling entry was the 1929 Bentley Speed Six 'Le Mans' Style Tourer, an imposing green metal and canvas machine with massive chromed radiator and driving lights. It sold for £470,400. A car from a similar era (and one that might just have challenged the Cricklewood company's dominance of the 'sporting saloon' market of the time), the 1926 Rolls-Royce Phantom I Experimental Sports Tourer, also found a new owner, for £392,000.

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1961 Sunbeam Alpine Harrington Coupé: Sold for £64,960

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1962 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud II Drophead Coupé: Sold for £268,800

But it was a 1960s Aston Martin, the LHD 1961 DB4 Vantage Convertible once owned by Sir Peter Ustinov, that took second spot, selling for a strong £431,200. Altogether, RM had put on a bit of an Aston extravaganza, with 15 cars catalogued (plus a brace of pre-War Lagondas).

All but three Astons sold, with the historically significant 1939 2-Litre 'Brooklands' Speed Model achieving £319,200. In recent years, pre-War Astons have lagged behind similar cars from Bugatti and Alfa Romeo so it was a pleasant change to see some big numbers associated with a 'Bertelli-era' car. The 1937 Aston Martin 15/98 Roadster was bid to £85,000 yet was clearly a touch short of its reserve, the red (these late-model, pre-War Astons do look better in black, dark blue or green) roadster being one of the event's few non-sellers.

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1929 Bentley Speed Six 'Le Mans' Style Tourer: Sold for £470,400

The specialists present at the sale rated the 'James Bond spec' 1964 Aston Martin DB5, and it duly sold for £263,200, while the attractive, matching numbers, original Special Series 1962 Aston Martin DB4 Series IV Vantage bested it by over £10k, finally going for £274,400 - well over its £200,000-250,000 estimate.

The prices achieved by Jaguars at the sale reflected current fashion and the rarity of the model. So, the 'one of 36 XK150 3.8S Roadsters' (and one of 24 Special order cars to boot, but RHD) XK sold for an impressive £201,600. Compare and contrast this with the workmanlike (possibly a little 'wedding car', it could be said, in its Post Office red and white-wall tyre configuration) 1937 Jaguar SS 2½-Litre Sports Saloon which garnered only £28,000.

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1992 Allard J2X Hardy Replica: Sold for £44,800

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1939 Aston Martin 2-Litre 'Brooklands' Speed Model: Sold for £319,200

The much-fancied LHD 1966 Jaguar E-type Series I 4.2 Fixed Head Coupé went for £61,600 and its younger brother, the 1974 Jaguar E-type Series III Roadster, £42,000.

The first lots in the sale were motorcycles. The highlights of the two-wheeled entries were consecutive ones, the 1960 BSA Gold Star (£21,280) followed by the 1939 Brough Superior 11.50 V-Twin which sold for £36,960.

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1959 Jaguar XK150 3.8S Roadster: Sold for £201,600

Elsewhere in the well-attended event, the attractive 1961 Sunbeam Alpine Harrington Coupé (ideally qualified for the Goodwood Revival and the 2012 Le Mans Classic) realised £64,960, the 1962 Triumph TR4 Roadster £33,600, and the 1993 Rolls-Royce Corniche IV Cabriolet £64,400.

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1932 Rolls-Royce Phantom II Continental Drophead Coupé: Not Sold

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1955 Bentley R-Type Continental Fastback: Sold for £358,400

One of the last lots to be offered was 155, the 1992 Allard J2X Hardy Replica. This was, in the words of one of the many well-known members of the London car scene there for the auction and Salon Privé, a “useful bit of kit” and it sold for £44,800.

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1960 AC Aceca Bristol: Sold for £86,800

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1987 Aston Martin V-8 Vantage Volante X-Pack: Sold for £100,800

Just the thing to drive away from the Syon Park venue that enjoyed a mixture of blazing sunshine and summer downpours. It's not called 'Quintessentially English' for nothing.

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1961 Aston Martin DB4 Vantage Convertible (front, sold for £431,200) and 1964 Aston Martin DB5 (back, sold for £263,200)

RM Auctions' next 2011 sale, in conjunction with the Concours d'Elegance of America, will take place at The Inn at St. John's, MI, USA on 30 July. Its big, Pebble Beach week event will be from 19-20 August at the Portola Hotel & Spa and Monterey Conference Center. After that, its European arm will hold the company's traditional early autumn, London auction on 26 October at Battersea.

Please click [HERE](#) to see the full results from the 23 June, Salon Privé sale.

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