

CLASSIC DRIVER

Johnny Hallyday's Iso Grifo fails to strike a chord for RM Sotheby's in Paris

Lead

The hotly-anticipated and timely sale of the Iso Grifo formerly owned by the late rock and roll star Johnny Hallyday couldn't pique enough interest from enthusiasts in Paris last night, as RM Sotheby's held its annual sale in the snowy French capital...

Snow? Pah!



The blanket of snow over Paris couldn't deter hundreds of enthusiasts, collectors, dealers, and the odd celebrity from descending on the picturesque Place Vauban for the annual RM Sotheby's sale in the City of Love last night. But despite the bursting saleroom, flowing bar, and usual slick presentation by the Canadian auction house, several of its headline cars failed to find new owners.

On the night, before any post-sale deals could be negotiated, 68 of the 83 lots offered were hammered away by Maarten ten Holder, making for an 82% sell-through rate. However, 45 - or 66% - failed to surpass their lower estimates, which, when combined with the notable no sales of the alloy-bodied Ferrari 275 GTB (bid to 2.2m euros), the Ferrari 166 MM (bid to 3.45m euros), and the ex-Johnny Hallyday Iso Grifo A3/C (bid to 1.975m euros), resulted in a preliminary gross of 24m euros.

Bolstering trends



It was a slew of rare modern supercars that instead led the way, bolstering the growing market-wide trend. The virtually brand new Bugatti Chiron came out on top, fetching 2.95m euros (3.323m euros including buyer's premium), followed by the low-mileage Maserati MC12 (1.775m euros on the hammer - 2.001m euros all in), and the Bugatti EB110 Super Sport Prototype (1.152m inclusive of fees).

Meanwhile, the modern Porsche pandemonium at last year's sale was a distant memory. The 'Porsche Exclusive' 993 Turbo Cabriolet failed to reach the dizzying heights of the similar example last year, fetching just 600,000 euros (680,000 euros including premium), and the monstrous 996 GT2 failed to sell.

Best bought?



We thought the 241,000-euro Porsche 914/6 'GT Spec', the 350,000-euro Ruf CTR Clubsport conversion, and the 80,000-euro Porsche 912 barn find were all strong results, though. The latter provided one of the more entertaining bidding wars of the evening, after specialist Paul Darvill - on the rostrum for the very first time - announced that the car had, unbeknownst to RM, originated in the Dutch royal family. The star of the show, however, was arguably the Lancia Delta Integrale 'Dealers Collection' edition, on which the hammer fell at an incredible 140,000 euros (161,000 euros incl. premium).

Given the results, there were certainly some steals to be had. Take the highly eligible Bugatti Type 35, for example, which sold for 340,000 euros on the hammer, 160,000 euros short of its lower estimate. Similarly, the charming little OSCA 2000 S, with its gorgeous Morelli bodywork and race-winning provenance, fell 180,000 euros short of its estimate, hammering away for 700,000 euros (792,000 incl. premium).

Rock 'n' Roll



And while the 300,000-500,000-euro estimate attached to the interesting Magnate P708 Barchetta might, in hindsight, have been extremely ambitious, we can't help but think that whoever won the car for just 90,000 euros all in has walked away with a real talking point for a snip.

So, what did we learn from the opening act of the Rétromobile auction trilogy? Well, more of the same really - that only the very best examples will command the very best prices, that the auction houses need to further adjust to the market's expectations, and that Johnny Hallyday perhaps isn't quite so popular with the more well-heeled enthusiasts in France.

Photos: Rémi Dargegen for RM Sotheby's © 2018

Gallery

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