

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Rik Pike 212.636.2680 rpike@christies.com

A FABLED SILVER ARROW TOUCHES DOWN IN NEW YORK

New York – Christie’s is delighted to bring a 1939 Auto Union D-Type to New York for two days of public viewing before the car is auctioned in February. The public view, to be held on Thursday, January 25 (noon to 5pm) and Friday, January 26 (10am to 7pm), will take place at the Audi Forum, 250 Park Avenue (at 47th St.) in Manhattan.

The highlight of the Christie’s International Motor Cars sale on February 17 to be held at Retromobile in Paris, this 1939 Auto Union D-Type is one of the most important cars in motor-racing history. With bids expected in the region of \$12 to \$15 million, the thoroughbred racer is expected to break current records and become the most expensive car ever sold at auction.

Rupert Banner, Head of Christie’s International Motor Cars, says, “This may be considered to be among the most important cars ever to pass under the gavel; Christie’s is proud to have been entrusted with its sale. And we are delighted to have worked with Cars UK to ship the car to the States to allow car collectors, enthusiasts and the general public the opportunity to view this incredible motor car.”

The Auto Union racer’s revolutionary design, conceived by Ferdinand Porsche, placed the driver in front of the engine and the fuel tanks, while all four wheels benefited from independent suspension. This mid-engine design can still be found today in some of the world’s most technologically advanced automobiles.

As it won a number of Grand Prix across Europe, the Auto Union series evolved from its beginnings in 1933 into its final model, the D-Type. Over 20 Auto Unions were built between 1933 and 1939 – five now remain, with this example the only one left in private hands.

This car, one of two D-Types currently in existence, won the 1939 French Grand Prix. The onset of war interrupted this famous era of racing, and the cars were lost or destroyed during the hostilities that followed. Remarkably, this racer survived, and was taken to Russia to be disassembled and studied. It was there that its parts were discovered by an American car collector, completely apart from the body and waiting to be crushed. Sent from Russia to England, the body was recreated upon the original underpinnings by Rod Jolley Coachbuilding to the exact dimensions of the original.

The car was fully restored by Crosthwaite and Gardiner, and was tested for the first time by Dick Crosthwaite at the Nürburgring in October 1994. It has been meticulously preserved in the same state ever since.

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Notes to Editors:

Public Auction: Friday 16 and Saturday 17 February, Retromobile, Paris

Public Information: +33 (0)1 40 76 83 76 / +44-(0) 20 7389 2133 / www.christies.com

The current world record for a car at auction is for a 1931 Bugatti Type 41 Royale Sports Coupe, which sold at Christie's in London in November 1987 for £5.5 million, or \$9.8 million.

Christie's is the longest continuous name in the collectors' car market, having held auctions devoted solely to motor cars since 1972. Christie's remains the choice of the individual who wishes to sell a unique and rare motor car or collection. Uniquely placed in the market, Christie's International Motor Cars concentrates on quality rather than quantity. The Department consists of eight specialists based in London, Brussels, New York, Texas and California, devoted to a network of sale sites that stretch from Monterey to Paris and include regular auctions in Paris, Le Mans, Monterey and Connecticut.

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*Images available on request
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