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Christie's Exceptional Motor Cars Auction

Christie's Exceptional Motor Cars Auction at the [Greenwich Concours d'Elegance](#) 2006 had the audience's pulse racing.

For the second year, [Christie's](#) held their Exceptional Motor Cars Auction at the Greenwich Concours d'Elegance, in Greenwich, Connecticut, where car aficionados gathered for the opportunity to own legendary, rare and unique motor cars. This year's auction, held on June 4, 2006, included the spectacular car collection of entertainer, Sergio Franchi, who was passionate about his cars.

Entering the Christie's auction tent you could feel the electric energy of the appreciative celebrity-studded audience who filled the seats and the sidelines, as they waited for Christie's Auctioneer, Dermot Chichester, to begin the auction. Telephone bidders sat by their telephones waiting for the word from their buyers to start the bidding process.



The auction opened with the first car of Sergio Franchi's collection, a red with red interior 1958 Mercedes-Benz 190SL Roadster with Hard Top, which sold for \$17,625. Excitement heated up though, when Sergio Franchi's 1933 Packard Standard Eight Victoria Cabriolet with coachwork by Graber, in blue over French blue with a tan canvas top and beige interior, came up for bid, with animated bidding between the audience and telephone bidders. To my surprise and delight, the gentleman seated on my right side was the highest bidder, and the car sold for \$111,625.

One of the definite highlights of the auction was Sergio Franchi's 1930 Isotta Fraschini 8AS Boattail Convertible with coachwork by Castagna, gray with gray leather upholstery and dark green soft top. This gorgeous luxury car sold for \$658,500, after rigorous bidding between telephone bidders and in-room bidders.

For me, one of the most exciting benefits of attending the Christie's Exceptional Motor Cars Auction at the Greenwich Concours d'Elegance each year is the opportunity to see some very rare cars at the auction. This year, a 1931 Packard 845 Deluxe Eight Convertible Coupé, with coachwork by Derham, black with black leather interior and beige cloth top, believed to be one of two known to exist, sold for \$235,000.

I was certainly seated in an exciting section when a 1930 Packard 734 Speedster-Roadster, red with tan leather interior and matching cloth top, came up for bid, with an opening bid of \$300,000 and sold for \$455,000, to a gentleman sitting in front of me!

Another auction beauty included a 1934 Packard 1104 Super Eight Seven Passenger Phaeton, Burgundy with beige fenders and beige leather interior with matching cloth top, which holds added significance of being the lowest-numbered 1934 Packard 1104 Super Eight Seven Passenger Phaeton, according to Packard Historian James Pearsall, and sold for \$129,250. Other outstanding cars included a 1937 Packard 1502 Convertible Sedan, blue with tan interior that sold for \$105,750; a 1956 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing, black with tan interior, that sold for \$334,000; and a 1932 Lincoln Model KB Convertible Roadster

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with coachwork by LeBaron, blue with dark blue beltlines, red leather interior and a tan top, that sold for \$158,625.



Auctions usually offer something for everyone, and one of the more unusual cars auctioned this year was a 1978 Checker Marathon Four Door Sedan 'Taxi Cab' - 'Janie', yellow with black interior, that was the last Checker Cab in active service in New York City, and was 'retired' in 1999, and sold for \$9,400. If cars could talk, I can only imagine the exciting tales that Checker Cab could tell!

Please read other articles on the **Greenwich Concours d'Elegance** in the **Arts and Antiques** section.

For additional information on the Greenwich Concours d'Elegance please visit their website at www.greenwichconcours.com or call Bruce and Genia Wennerstrom at +1-203-618-0460. For Christie's information, please visit their website www.christies.com or call them at +1-212-636-2000.

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