

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The von Krieger 540 K Special Roadster — An Incomparable Pre-War Mercedes-Benz — Will Debut at Gooding & Company's Pebble Beach Auctions

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (June 13, 2012) – Seventy-six years after leaving the factory, one of the world's most extraordinary Mercedes-Benz motor cars will be presented for public sale for the first time at Gooding & Company's prestigious Pebble Beach Auctions on August 18 & 19. With remarkable lineage, exceptional provenance and a rich international history akin to a Hollywood romance, the sensational von Krieger Special Roadster, a 1936 Mercedes-Benz 540 K, will be the most significant Mercedes-Benz to ever come to auction when it crosses Gooding & Company's Pebble Beach stage later this summer.



The sensational von Krieger Special Roadster, a 1936 Mercedes-Benz 540 K, will be presented at Gooding & Company's 2012 Pebble Beach Auctions on August 18 & 19. Image copyright and courtesy of Gooding & Company. Photo by Peter Harholdt.

“As one of Mercedes-Benz’ ultra-rare 540 K Special Roadsters, the von Krieger Special Roadster is already a special car, yet it ranks superior to other examples because of its unrivalled condition, history and provenance,” says David Gooding, President and founder of Gooding & Company. “Its complete restoration, beautiful story and thoroughly documented history make it absolutely extraordinary and perhaps the finest 540 K Special Roadster in existence. It is the most exciting pre-war Mercedes-Benz I’ve ever known.”



The von Krieger Special Roadster and its Beautiful Baroness

The glamorous Special Roadster was purchased new in 1936 by an aristocratic Prussian family who owned some of the finest automobiles of the era. The Special Roadster was initially enjoyed by the von Krieger's son, Henning, before his sister, Gisela, assumed the driver's seat for her own use. A natural pairing for the stunning Hermann Ahrens-designed Special Roadster, Baroness von Krieger was widely recognized for her elegant style, and was aptly named one of the ten most fashionable women in the world. Among the very elite of international society, the beautiful Baroness enjoyed a privileged life for many years, residing at the Ritz and Hotel Le Meurice in Paris, Hotel Martinez in Cannes, and frequenting the best European destinations and social events, including the coronation of King George VI. Suitors adored and admired her, and in one account a devastated gentleman jumped out of a plane to his death after his proposal of marriage was declined.

Protected from War, the Car that Connected a Family

Unlike many supercharged Mercedes-Benz, which were often stolen or lost during the war, the von Krieger's Special Roadster remained an important possession of the family, carefully stored and accounted for even while they lived outside of Germany avoiding Third Reich orders. In 1942, at the height of the war,

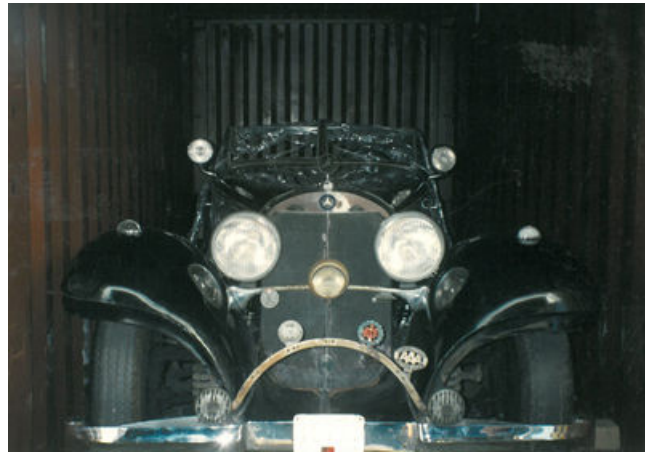
Baroness Gisela shipped the car to Switzerland. With her beloved Special Roadster as a comforting reminder of her carefree past, she continued traveling on her own for several years throughout Europe seeking sanctuary from the war. After the war ended and the family reunited, Henning and Gisela moved to New York, shipping the Special Roadster on the Queen Elizabeth, in an effort to start a new life. To escape the city's heat, Baroness von Krieger summered at the Homestead Inn in Greenwich, where she kept her precious Special Roadster.

An Undisturbed Time Capsule Discovered

Following the death of her brother and mother, Baroness Gisela returned to Switzerland where she lived as a recluse until her passing in 1989. Still among her impressive possessions was the Mercedes-Benz Special Roadster, tucked away in a Greenwich garage for the better part of four decades. The 540 K remained an undisturbed time capsule, with such items as the Baroness's driving maps, lipstick-stained cigarette butts and silk gloves intact. After the estate was settled, the Special Roadster was sold to its current owner, who has generously cared for the car ever since.

Hermann Ahrens-Designed Elegance

The distinguished, high-door, long-tail Roadster is arguably the most dashing and elegant of the marque's coveted models. Under the guidance of the car's current owner, the Special Roadster was recently restored to its original grandeur by Chris Charlton, whose restorations have won Best of Show at Pebble Beach. Just as it was upon leaving the factory in 1936, the Special Roadster is finished in black and chrome over a rich, Cognac-colored leather interior and remains distinctively marked by the von Krieger family crest, hand-painted on the upper portion of the driver's door.



While Gooding & Company has not placed an estimate on this extraordinary Mercedes-Benz due to the car's unprecedented historical significance and provenance, the auction house is confident that this rare and exquisite car will realize a world record for the marque.

Gooding & Company's [2012 Pebble Beach Auctions](#) will take place on Saturday and Sunday, August 18 & 19 at the Pebble Beach Equestrian Center, located at the corner of Portola Road and Stevenson Drive. Preview days will start on Wednesday, August 15 continuing through Sunday, August 19. The auctions will commence at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday and 6:00 p.m. on Sunday. Gooding & Company's Pebble Beach Auctions catalogues are available for \$100 and admit two to the viewing and the auctions. General admission tickets to the viewing and auctions may be purchased on site for \$40. Auctions are broadcast live from Gooding & Company's website. Bidder registration forms, [press credentials](#) and additional auction information are also available on <http://www.goodingco.com> or by calling (310) 899-1960. For additional vehicle information and up-to-the-minute results, follow Gooding & Company on [Facebook](#) and Twitter [@GoodingCompany](#).

About Gooding & Company

Gooding & Company, internationally celebrated for its world-class automotive auctions, provides unparalleled service in the collector car market, offering a wide range of services including private and estate sales, appraisals and collection management. In the past two years, Gooding & Company has realized the most prestigious automotive records in the world for a Car Sold at Auction with the iconic 1957 Ferrari 250 Testa Rossa Prototype at \$16.39 million and for an American Car at Auction with the 1931 Whittell Coupe Duesenberg Model J at \$10.34 million. The auction house has realized extraordinary results thus far in 2012 at its annual Scottsdale Auctions in January with more than \$39.8 million in sales and 98% sold, and its annual Amelia Island Auction in March with more than \$36 million in sales and 91% sold. Renowned for its annual standing as the official auction house for the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, Gooding & Company will return to Pebble Beach, California on August 18 & 19, 2012.

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Photo Captions:

Above Left: *Baroness Gisela von Krieger pictured. Photo provided by owner and courtesy of Gooding & Company.*

Above Right: *The 1936 Mercedes-Benz 540 K Special Roadster in as-found condition and ready for transport, after it was purchased by its current owner. Photo provided by owner and courtesy of Gooding & Company.*

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