

LOT 443

1957 Maserati 3500GT Coupe
with coachwork by *CARROZZERIA TOURING.*



CHASSIS No AM101.002

220bhp 3,485cc. carbureted dual overhead camshaft inline six-cylinder engine, four-speed manual transmission, independent front suspension with coil springs, live axle rear suspension with semi-elliptical leaf springs, hydraulically actuated front disc, rear drum brakes. Wheelbase 2,600mm (102.3").

Bearing chassis number 002, this is possibly the first 'production' Maserati 3500 GT.

Carrozzeria Touring was established in 1926 by Felice Bianchi Anderloni who had worked for Isotta-Fraschini since 1904 as a test driver, then a brief period at Peugeot Italiana. Anderloni and Gaetano Ponzoni acquired Carrozzeria Falco in 1926, shortly thereafter, adopting the Touring name. The two, both trained in law, had a long and mutually satisfying relationship and Ponzoni, despite outside interests, remained Touring's managing director until the company ceased operations 40 years later.

Anderloni came to Touring without specific knowledge of coachbuilding, learning as he went along and developing over time a unique style of design that blended his appreciation for lightweight construction with his experience as a driver to create a characteristic style. An early licensee of Charles Weymann's system for constructing lightweight flexible automobile bodies covered with fabric, Touring's first professional designer was Giuseppe Seregini who collaborated with Anderloni to create the 1927 Isotta-Fraschini 'Flying Star,' a landmark in the artful combination of aerodynamics and beauty. They continued to pursue the dual goal of lightweight construction and efficient aerodynamics and in the 1920s and 1930s created a succession of innovative and creative designs.

Touring's production capabilities in light alloy and fabric-covered tubing structures brought the firm commercial success in aircraft during the mid and late- 1930s, and this experience led Anderloni to develop and patent the 'Superleggera' construction system. Touring's 'Superleggera' (super lightweight) system employed a structure of small diameter tubes as the body's armature. Extremely thin alloy panels then covered the armature, taking their strength from the tubing. 'Superleggera' had other advantages aside from light weight, particularly its flexibility in design.



Pre-war 'Superleggera' coachwork for Alfa Romeo, particularly on the 8C 2900 chassis, and the aerodynamic full envelope bodies for BMW's 328, laid the groundwork for Touring's success following World War II. Felice Anderloni's death in 1948 during the company's reconstruction, was untimely but not before he and Federico Formenti had created the Alfa Romeo Frecchia d'Oro and coupe and spider bodies for Ferrari's 166.

The postwar years were prolific for Touring and its 'Superleggera' construction system. Production work followed and the firm grew rapidly under the leadership of Anderloni's son Carlo and the guidance of the ever-present Ponzoni. The late 1950s were particularly productive as Touring undertook series production of bodies for Alfa Romeo's 1900 Super Sprint and 2600, Aston Martin's DB4, Lancia Flaminia GT, Lamborghini 350 and 400 GT and the Maserati 3500 GT. This rush of business, however, also sowed the seeds of the company's demise. The expansion undertaken to meet demand was unsustainable when these projects ended and new ones were not forthcoming to replace them. Touring, which was known for and prided itself on the quality of its workmanship, struggled to reconcile the conflicting needs of volume production with its traditionally obsessive quality. Fortunately for later enthusiasts, the quality of Carrozzeria Touring's design and workmanship has been preserved in the exceptional automobiles it built, such as this example, Maserati 3500 GT coupé number 002.

Introduced at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1957, the 3500 GT was a major departure for Maserati, a luxurious high speed *gran turismo* intended from its inception to be built in quantities heretofore unprecedented at Maserati. Nearly 2,000 would be built during its nine years' production, a number that by all accounts is an order of magnitude greater than all the Maseratis built in the 30 years since Alfieri Maserati built and raced the Tipo 26. Powered by a dual overhead camshaft six-cylinder engine developed by Ing. Alfieri from Maserati's experience with the A6 and 350S, the 3500 GT was an important competitor in the luxury *gran turismo* market. Its coachwork was crucially important to its success and Touring's selection by Omer Orsi was a critical endorsement of, and challenge for, the *carroziere*, which Touring met with distinction.



Maserati 3500 GT 002 was first delivered to Texas and was subsequently sold to its second owner in Chicago where it remained for over 30 years. It was acquired from the second owner by Mr. Alfredo Brener for his important collection of significant Maseratis. With low miles and a known history, it has never been restored and still has its original paint and interior. The marque experts associated with Mr. Brener's collection believe that it has never been disassembled and is, except for normal service parts replacement, exactly as it was completed in 1958 by Touring and Maserati. Both the paint and interior are in good, sound condition with the elegant patina which only continuous sympathetic care and attention can confer. It is reported to drive very well, and has been carefully checked and serviced. It is fitted with chromed wire wheels and the transmission is still the original four-speed with its characteristic crank-shaped lever. Significant differences from the Geneva Show car reveal the evolution that was underway from prototype to production. The vent windows and inset side marker lights of the prototype have been removed, but the batteries are still located in the engine compartment.

Highly original automobiles like this are avidly sought by collectors today, and only rarely do such important examples as this Maserati survive in untouched and original condition. An extremely important milestone in the history of one of the greatest marques in automobile history. This car was built in the year in which Juan Manuel Fangio won his historic fourth driver's championship in the Maserati 250F. Superbly original, this unique Maserati 3500 GT Touring coupé will be an outstanding addition to any collection, a welcome participant in the most important events and is a unique opportunity for a new owner to continue Mr. Alfredo Brener's stewardship and preservation of this significant Maserati.