Mercedes-Benz Classic

Press Information
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Legendary super sports car: For the first time, a Mercedes-Benz C 111 is offered for sale and paves the way for the further development of the Mercedes-Benz Museum

- Drivable original vehicle with 345 hp (257 kW) four-rotor Wankel engine
- Auction on February 3, 2027 with RM Sotheby's at the Palais du Louvre during Retromobile Paris
- Proceeds from the auction will go towards the future development of the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart and make the Museum accessible digitally worldwide

Stuttgart. Mercedes-Benz AG is putting a unique C 111-II, fitted with an original 2.4-liter four-rotor Wankel engine, up for auction through the auction house RM Sotheby's at the Palais du Louvre in Paris on February 3, 2027. For the first time in its history, Mercedes-Benz is offering a C 111 for sale – a car that was previously out of reach. For at least 25 years, this will remain the only opportunity: Mercedes-Benz has contractually committed not to sell any further C 111s during this period. The proceeds from the auction will go towards the "Mercedes-Benz Museum 2.0" project.

The C 111 is one of the most fascinating vehicles in the brand's history. When it was unveiled at the 1969 International Motor Show (IAA) in Frankfurt am Main, it embodied the vision of taking the design and technical innovations of the legendary 300 SL (W 198) into a new era. However, it never went into series production. In total, only 17 prototypes of the iconic super sports car were made.

"It is reported that prospective buyers even sent blank checks to Stuttgart, yet Mercedes-Benz never sold a single C 111. The desire to own one of these extraordinary vehicles has resurfaced time and time again ever since. To this day, the fascination of the C 111 remains undiminished and it continues to inspire us, as the Vision One-Eleven demonstrates. We are now turning a new page and, for the first time, passing one of these vehicles from our collection into new hands. In doing so, we are emphasizing the unique value of our brand heritage and investing the proceeds in the future of the Mercedes-Benz Museum."

Marcus Breitschwerdt, CEO of Mercedes-Benz Heritage GmbH

Proceeds from the auction will go towards the Museum's future

The aim of "Mercedes-Benz Museum 2.0" is to bring the brand's unique heritage to life for future generations and make it accessible worldwide. To this end, Mercedes-Benz is continuously developing both the Museum in Stuttgart and its virtual offerings. A key component is the Museum's digital twin. This makes the Museum experience accessible regardless of physical location, thereby extending its reach far beyond Stuttgart. It will give people all over the world greater access to the Mercedes-Benz brand heritage. The virtual twin is being developed in collaboration with The Classic Car Trust (TCCT) and its digital platform, Roarington.

"With 'Mercedes-Benz Museum 2.0', we are consistently taking our Museum to the next level. We are continuing to write our company and brand history right up to the present day, creating new exhibition experiences and providing space for topics that are of particular interest to our visitors – from more recent classic cars to the latest innovations. With a digital twin, we are also opening up the Museum to people all over the world. Visitors can also experience the exhibits interactively here. The first results will be visible as early as 2027."

Bettina Haussmann, Director of the Mercedes-Benz Museum

Perhaps the most famous C 111-II of all to be auctioned in February 2027

The third C 111-II ever produced, listed in the Mercedes-Benz Collection as "Car 33," is to be auctioned. The number 33 is only of internal significance. It was built from March 1970 onwards, painted in the color "Weißherbst" and fitted inside with sports seats featuring a grey-and-white houndstooth pattern, a four-spoke safety steering wheel and a vertically mounted "Becker Europa" radio. Contact with the road is ensured by contemporary 8×15-inch light-alloy wheels; on the racetrack in the 1970s, wide 10×15-inch and 13×15-inch magnesium wheels were used. Both sets of wheels are included in the auction. However, given their age and condition, the magnesium wheels are now only suitable for display purposes.

In August 1970, a 345 hp (257 kW) 2.4-liter four-rotor Wankel engine of the M 950 W 48 type was installed in the center of the vehicle. It propels the supercar, which weighs just 2,734 lbs (1,240 kg), to speeds of up to 186 mph (300 km/h). With the number plate S-Y 6200, this C 111-II became part of the test fleet. Among other things, it was used to test a fluidic component designed to ensure even emptying of the two side fuel tanks, which have a combined capacity of 30.6 gallons (116 liters), to carry out temperature measurements in the rear trunk, and to conduct test drives at the Hockenheimring. The rear trunk tub is removable and fitted. The anti-lock braking system (ABS) was also tested back then. However, this function is no longer active today.

From an early stage, the vehicle became a prominent ambassador of the C 111 project: Car 33 took center stage in the first issue of the German edition of *Playboy*, published in 1972. A year earlier, on the test track in Stuttgart, the renowned conductor Herbert von Karajan had been shown the C 111 project, based on this vehicle. In 1975, it was transferred to the company's own vehicle collection. Since the Mercedes-Benz Museum opened in 2006, Car 33 has been on display in the "Fascination Design" section.

In 2024, Car 33 was restored to running order with great care at the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center in Fellbach. The original patina of the exterior and interior was deliberately preserved, while the powertrain was thoroughly overhauled and a fire-extinguishing system was also fitted in the engine compartment. Later that same year, Car 33 was showcased on the famous lawn at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance as part of the "Wedge-Shaped Concept Cars and Prototypes" special exhibition. When the photographs were taken in October 2026, the odometer read just 24,766 kilometers.

Auction at the Palais du Louvre in Paris with RM Sotheby's

Mercedes-Benz has entrusted the sale to the renowned auction house RM Sotheby's, building on a long-standing and successful partnership: in 2022, the 300 SLR Uhlenhaut Coupe was sold for a record €135 million, followed in 2025 by the W 196 R Streamliner from the collection of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum for €51,155,000. Both auctions took place at the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart.

"We've enjoyed a tremendous relationship with Mercedes-Benz for many years, bringing some of the world's most extraordinary cars to market. The C 111 is a true milestone in automotive history, representing Mercedes-Benz at its most innovative and visionary. Opportunities to acquire a car of this significance are exceptionally rare, and we're proud to continue our great partnership."

Rob Myers, Chairman and CEO of RM Sotheby's

The auction is scheduled to take place on February 3, 2027 in the “Salles du Carrousel” at the Palais du Louvre in Paris, in parallel with the leading international trade fair Retromobile Paris. Bids can be placed at the auction, either by telephone or in person following prior registration.

On the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center website, interested buyers can now learn more online about the terms and conditions of participation, bidder registration and opportunities for pre-inspection.

Gullwing doors by tradition

The futuristic C 111 super sports car was unveiled at the IAA in September 1969. Its iconic gullwing doors are reminiscent of the legendary 300 SL Coupe (W 198), which had itself set new standards in automotive engineering as far back as 1954. Its story is that of a super sports car with the potential for series production, which at the same time served as an experimental vehicle for testing new technologies.

With its mid-engine, glass-fiber-reinforced plastic body and Wankel engine technology – which was regarded as cutting-edge at the time – even the first generation of the C 111 was far ahead of its time. Compared with conventional reciprocating piston engines, the rotary engine promised high power output combined with a compact design, low weight and exceptionally smooth operation.

This was followed in 1970 by the presentation at the Geneva Motor Show of the radically redesigned C 111-II, featuring a more powerful 2.4-liter four-rotor Wankel engine producing 345 hp (257 kW). Weighing just 2,734 lbs (1,240 kg), the C 111-II delivered breathtaking performance for its time: a maximum speed of up to 186 mph (300 km/h) and acceleration from 0–62 mph (0–100 km/h) in just 4.8 seconds were among the most spectacular performance figures in automotive engineering at the time.

Its futuristic wedge shape, “Weißherbst” paint finish and extraordinary technology made the C 111 an icon of the brand. Despite enormous public interest, the C 111 never went into series production due to new emissions standards, high production costs and the 1973 oil crisis. As a result, the C 111 has remained one of the great unfulfilled dreams of automotive history to this day.

Even after the decision not to begin series production, Mercedes-Benz continued to make history with the C 111: in 1976, the C 111-II D, fitted with a five-cylinder OM 617 A turbodiesel engine, set a total of 16 records, including three world records. Over a distance of 10,000 miles, it achieved an average speed of 156.46 mph (251.798 km/h). The successful C 111-III from 1978 was also powered by a turbodiesel engine.

In 1979, the C 111-IV, in its final version with a 494 hp (368 kW) twin-turbo V8, was even faster: on the high-speed track in Nardò, Italy, it set another circuit world record of 251.02 mph (403.978 km/h).

A total of 17 Mercedes-Benz C 111 vehicles were built. One vehicle was used for crash tests; three others were dismantled in the 1970s. The Mercedes-Benz vehicle collection still includes 13 examples of the various C 111 variants. No vehicle has left the possession of Mercedes-Benz to date.

Overview of all C 111s ever built

No.	Model	Color	Completion	First engine	Notes
21	“Hobel” (slicer or plane)	White, later orange	04/1969	Three-rotor Wankel engine M 950	First prototype vehicle with a provisional body
22	C 111-I	Mother-of-pearl white, later Weißherbst	07/1969	Three-rotor Wankel engine M 950	The first “proper” C 111; converted to a four-rotor Wankel engine in July 1970
23	C 111-I	Mother-of-pearl white, later Weißherbst	08/1969	Three-rotor Wankel engine M 950	Converted to a four-rotor Wankel engine in June 1970
24	C 111-I	Mother-of-pearl white	08/1969	Three-rotor Wankel engine M 950	Side-impact tests in June 1970
25	C 111-I	Weißherbst	08/1969	Dummy engine	IAA exhibition car; fitted with an M 117 V8 engine in July 1970 and a four-rotor Wankel engine in April 1972
26	C 111-I	Mother-of-pearl white, later Weißherbst	09/1969	Four-rotor Wankel engine M 950	First C 111 with a four-rotor Wankel engine
31	C 111-II	Weißherbst	03/1970	Four-rotor Wankel engine M 950	First C 111-II; converted into a diesel record-breaking car in 1975/76; record-breaking run in Nardò in June 1976
32	C 111-II	Weißherbst	03/1970	Dummy engine	Exhibition vehicle at the Geneva Motor Show
24 a	C 111-II	Weißherbst	07/1970	Three-rotor Wankel engine M 950	Replacement for Car 24, built to C 111-II specifications; used for bodywork testing and fitted with a three-rotor Wankel engine; converted to a four-rotor Wankel engine in 1973
33	C 111-II	Weißherbst	08/1970	Four-rotor Wankel engine M 950	Second C 111-II in the test fleet, fitted with a four-rotor Wankel engine
34	C 111-II	Weißherbst	10/1970	Four-rotor Wankel engine M 950	Third C 111-II in the test fleet, fitted with a four-rotor Wankel engine
35	C 111-II	Weißherbst	12/1970	M 116 V8 gas engine	Final C 111-II from the original series; converted to a four-rotor Wankel engine in May 1972 and refitted with an M 116 V8 gas engine in 2013/14
36	C 111-II	Weißherbst	07/1975	Four-rotor Wankel engine M 950	First C 111 with a plastic floor assembly

37	C 111-II	Weißherbst	10/1975	Five-cylinder turbodiesel OM 617 A	Second C 111 with a plastic floor assembly; originally intended for diesel record-breaking runs, but never used for that purpose
41	C 111-III	Metallic silver	10/1977	Five-cylinder turbodiesel OM 617 A	Record-breaking run in Nardò in April 1978; converted into a C 111-IV at the end of 1978; further record-breaking run in Nardò in May 1979
42	C 111-III	Metallic silver	02/1978	Five-cylinder turbodiesel OM 617 A	Record-breaking run in Nardò in April 1978
43	C 111-III	Metallic silver	07/1978	Dummy engine	C 111-III Exhibition Vehicle

Technical specifications: C 111-II Car 33, as of 1970

Model	C 111-II
Year of construction	1970
Internal number	33
Engine	Four-rotor Wankel engine
Engine type	M 950 W 48
Fuel	Premium gasoline
Displacement	2,400 cc (equivalent to a 4,800 cc reciprocating piston engine)
Output	345 hp (257 kW) at 7,700 rpm
Torque	289 lb-ft (392 Nm) at 4,000–5,500 rpm
Compression ratio	9.3:1
Engine weight	478 lbs (217 kg)
Clutch	Dual-disc clutch, Fichtel & Sachs MF 215/2
Transmission	ZF 5-speed manual transmission DS-25/1
Ratios 1st/2nd/3rd/4th/5th/Reverse (:1)	2.857/1.72/1.21/0.92/0.705/2.86
Final drive ratio (:1)	4.22
Overall gear ratio in 5th gear (:1)	2.975
Wheels (road)	8 J × 15 H, ET 20
Wheels front/rear (racetrack)	10 × 15 H, ET 0 / 13 × 15 H, ET 30
Tires (road)	215/70 VR15 90W TL Michelin XWX
Tires front/rear (racetrack)	430/1160 × 15 / 530/1360 × 15 Dunlop CR82 Comp 204 Racing
Fuel tank capacity	30.6 gal (116 l)
Maximum speed	186 mph (300 km/h)
Acceleration 0–62 mph (0–100 km/h)	4.8 sec
Wheelbase	103.1 in (2,620 mm)
Front/rear track width	55.5/55.3 in (1,410/1,405 mm)

Track width with road tires, front/rear	56.9/54.7 in (1,445/1,390 mm)
Length × Width × Height	174.8 x 71.9 x 44.1 in (4,440 × 1,825 × 1,120 mm)
Curb weight	2,734 lbs (1,240 kg)

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Mercedes-Benz Classic on social media:
https://www.instagram.com/mercedesbenzmuseum
https://www.facebook.com/mercedesbenzmuseum

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Mercedes-Benz anniversary year “140 Years of Innovation”
Since Carl Benz filed the patent for the first automobile 140 years ago and Gottlieb Daimler built his motorized carriage shortly afterwards, Mercedes-Benz has dedicated itself to constant innovation and to creating the world’s most desirable cars for customers. This ambition has driven every innovation – from the world’s first automobile in 1886 to the biggest product launch program in the company’s history that is currently underway. With its passion for performance and pioneering power, excellence and an unwavering commitment to customer service, the brand has consistently shaped the future of mobility. The result goes well beyond engineering achievement – it creates the unmistakable feeling that runs through everything Mercedes-Benz does: Welcome home.

Mercedes-Benz is celebrating 140 years of innovation: Three new S-Class sedans went on a transcontinental journey to 140 locations worldwide as part of the “140 Years. 140 Places” tour. Each place highlighted the brand’s technology, heritage, pioneering spirit and worldwide presence. Along the way, customers, fans and colleagues got to join in the celebrations right up to its grand “Homecoming” finale at the Mercedes-Benz Museum. Highlights of the tour can be found on our “140 Years of Innovation | Mercedes-Benz Media” special.

Mercedes-Benz Heritage GmbH
“Heritage Creates Future” – committed to this guiding principle, Mercedes-Benz Heritage GmbH, as a wholly owned subsidiary of Mercedes-Benz Group AG, is responsible for the entire range of historical topics of the brand with the three-pointed star with various divisions.

The Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart is one of the best-known and most popular automotive museums in the world, comprehensively presenting the fascinating history of the automobile since its invention in 1886 and bringing the history of the brand to life for a wide audience in a unique way. Other historical sites relevant to the brand include the Gottlieb Daimler Memorial in Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, the birthplace of Gottlieb Daimler in Schorndorf and the Carl Benz House in Ladenburg.

The Mercedes-Benz Classic Center in Fellbach serves as a center of excellence for classic cars with the three-pointed star. In addition to an exclusive vehicle trade business, the experts offer services and restorations for classic Mercedes-Benz vehicles and are the first port of call for genuine parts. With access to original vehicle documents in the archives, which document, preserve and maintain extensive evidence of the history of the company and the brand, Mercedes-Benz Heritage GmbH has a globally unique and unrivalled knowledge base.

In order to bring the special history of Mercedes-Benz to life, Mercedes-Benz Heritage GmbH takes part in a large number of renowned historic automobile events and trade fairs all over the world. Classic cars from the collection of over 1,000 vehicles are available for this purpose. In addition to communicating the brand’s history, the focus there is also on the exchange with the recognized Mercedes-Benz brand clubs and the classic community.