

1966 Ford Mustang Hardtop Coupe

Few cars achieve a truly legendary status within American culture. However, for many true car enthusiasts, those who believe the automobile is more than simply a tool for getting from A to B, the Ford Mustang holds a special place in their imagination. Featured in innumerable films, music videos, and magazines since its introduction in 1964, nothing epitomizes the spirit of the American muscle car more than its creator, the Ford Mustang. Michaan's Auctions is proud to offer a **1966 Ford Mustang Hardtop Coupe** (\$1/1,200) in our January Gallery Auction on Friday, January 19th.

Over a period of 50 years, the automobile had risen from a novelty,

unaffordable to all but the wealthiest families, to an accessible tool for the middle-class worker. While early proprietors such as Carl Benz (of Mercedes-Benz), and the Duryea brothers, advanced the basic engineering necessary for functioning cars, it was the Ford Motor Company's introduction of the mass-production assembly line which would revolutionize the auto industry.



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Henry Ford founded his self-named Henry Ford Company in 1901 but left after a dispute between himself and his financial backers over Ford's interest in motor racing led to a dissolution of the partnership. Henry M. Leland would take over the remnants of the company, which would be rebranded as the Cadillac Automobile Company, while Ford took his remaining \$900 and sought out investors for the Ford Motor Company, which was founded in 1903.

After a number of hand-made early models, in 1908 Ford introduced the Model T, and with it, the new era of mass-produced cars. By using assembly lines instead of artisan production, Henry Ford was able to reduce the labor needed to produce a single car. Retail prices dropped accordingly, and by 1925, a Model T could be purchased for only \$260 (about \$4,570 in 2023), making owning a car a realistic

possibility for workers both at Ford's factories and others around the country.

Following the success of the Model T and mass production more broadly, Ford was in an excellent position to pursue the luxury market, which he capitalized on by purchasing the Lincoln Motor Company in 1922, and in 1939 the company established the Mercury brand to compete with General Motors. The company's position improved to an even greater extent following government contracts around the world during World War II, which allowed for the quick development of its longest-lasting nameplate, the Ford Mustang.

The Ford Mustang began development in September 1962 and launched in April 1964, a remarkably fast turnaround. The chief engineer, Donald N. Frey, had a simple series of instructions for his development teams,

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the Mustang would be a four-seater, weigh less than 2,500 pounds, and cost less than \$2,500 (\$24,749 in 2023). This was achieved by borrowing existing components from other models (the Mustang only received a unique chassis in 2005), which had the added benefit of reducing the amount of training needed for assembly line workers.

The car was launched at the 1964 New York World's Fair, three days after the first vehicle was sold to Stanley Tucker in St. John's, Canada. A two-door hardtop and convertible were available, with a fastback added later in the year. It received favorable reviews in thousands of newspapers in the first weeks and broke numerous sales records. By October 1965, Ford sold its one millionth Mustang.

The **1966 Ford Mustang Hardtop Coupe** (\$1/1,200) on offer at Michaan's January Gallery Auction,

represents an early, and classic, edition of America's most iconic automobile. Only in its second model year, the 1965 version includes several improvements over the 1964½ model year, including the addition of an alternator and a new engine design featuring increased horsepower. While the car offered for sale, is a restorer's special and is currently in need of significant parts and repairs to be made operable, Ford Mustangs of this vintage are favorites amongst car restoration hobbyists and professionals alike. This is represented in their value, which continues to well exceed its interest-adjusted original sale price.

A 1966 Ford Mustang Hardtop Coupe (\$1/1,200) will be offered at Michaan's Auctions January Gallery Auction on Friday, January 19th, which features numerous cars in excellent condition in addition to fine

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examples from the Fine Art and Asian Art departments. The auction is led by a 2023 Tesla Model X in Plaid Trim with only 3,901 miles, as well as a 1955 Ford Thunderbird. Also included is a Large Gilt Bronze Figure of an Immortal, a notable oil painting by Joseph Henry

Sharp, and a 14k yellow gold charm bracelet.

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