

IMPORTANT DESIGN SESSION 1



Auction

09 December 2007
noon ct

Wright

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PAUL LEWIS

pair of Airomobile models and ephemera

USA, 1934 | enameled aluminum, rubber
6½ h × 17¾ w × 8 d in (17 × 45 × 20 cm)

In one innovative machine, the Airomobile incorporated American mid-century interests of invention, automobiles and economy. Conceptually comparable to the Volkswagen, its contemporary, Paul Lewis developed the teardrop-shaped car in 1937 with the aim of creating an affordable, well engineered family car. These models were constructed in a Colorado foundry, and perhaps used by Lewis to present the design to Carl Doman and Ed Marks of Doman & Marks, who went on to manufacture the full-sized functioning car in their Syracuse, New York factory. Despite some production difficulties, Lewis was dedicated to the overall form and the three-wheel design as they both idealized the streamline aesthetic. A singular example of the car was actualized and used by Lewis to promote the car around the country in hopes of obtaining dealers and individual buyers. Ultimately, the Airomobile did not flourish on the market, but Lewis' design remains a unique contribution to the automotive industry and to American streamlined design. This lot is accompanied by several pieces of ephemera including three vintage photographs, three original advertising brochures and correspondence between Lewis and the makers, Doman & Marks.

Estimate: \$20,000–30,000

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