

THE COLLECTIVE

N° 2 2022

THE COLLECTIVE N° 2 2022 FEATURING YNGVE HOLEN MARVIN LEUVREY NICK MASON TEREZA MUNDILOVA ZAGATO TIM ZIMMERMANN

MORE THAN A
SINCE 1873. *View.*



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THE COLLECTIVE

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EDITORIAL

N° 2
04 2022

BEAT
IMWINKELRIED

Dear Readers

The magazine “The Collective” is probably the greatest luxury I currently allow myself. The expense is enormous and the magazine will never be profitable. And yet it is a wonderful luxury for me and my heart to have the opportunity to work on this magazine with the finest people I could possibly hope for. After visiting Maximilian Riedel in Tyrol for the last issue, we travelled to Flensburg in mid-October to meet Oliver Berking, owner of the silver manufacturer Robbe & Berking. Incidentally, in 2008 Oliver afforded himself the luxury of founding a shipyard specialising in the construction and restoration of wooden yachts – and without a business plan! In November, Manrico Iachia invited us to Comporta in Portugal to experience a shoot of his collection with photographer Irene Kung. Comporta, a coastal town situated just south of Lisbon, offers a very unique kind of luxury. Between dunes, sea and rice fields, you can go off-line and enjoy “minimalist luxury” true to the motto “less is more”.

Luxury involves an experience the acme of which is to be found in unique encounters with extraordinary people. The return cannot be gauged in terms of monetary value. Indeed, it is invaluable. Among these pages you will discover excerpts of some of our experiences. We prefer not to reveal much. The elegance inherent to true luxury remains undisclosed, much like the sensation of silk in the lining of a breathtakingly fine gown. Perhaps now you understand why at B.I. Collection we conduct our activities in keeping with the motto “Luxury beyond Cars.” We aspire to be more for our customers and to offer more than “merely” being suppliers of high-end sports cars. Our focus is on the experience itself.

Charlie Chaplin once remarked: “The saddest thing I can imagine is to get used to luxury.” There is much truth in this: it obliges us to constantly reinterpret such expressions as “luxury beyond cars” or “experience” and to keep moving forward on our journey. Never stand still. Walk. Keep going.

Besides ongoing reinvention, this magazine is also rooted in a few principles that remain constant: To be different from the customary car and luxury magazines, and to never compromise on quality and aesthetics. We pledge to remain true to these principles.

I wish you inspired and enjoyable reading.

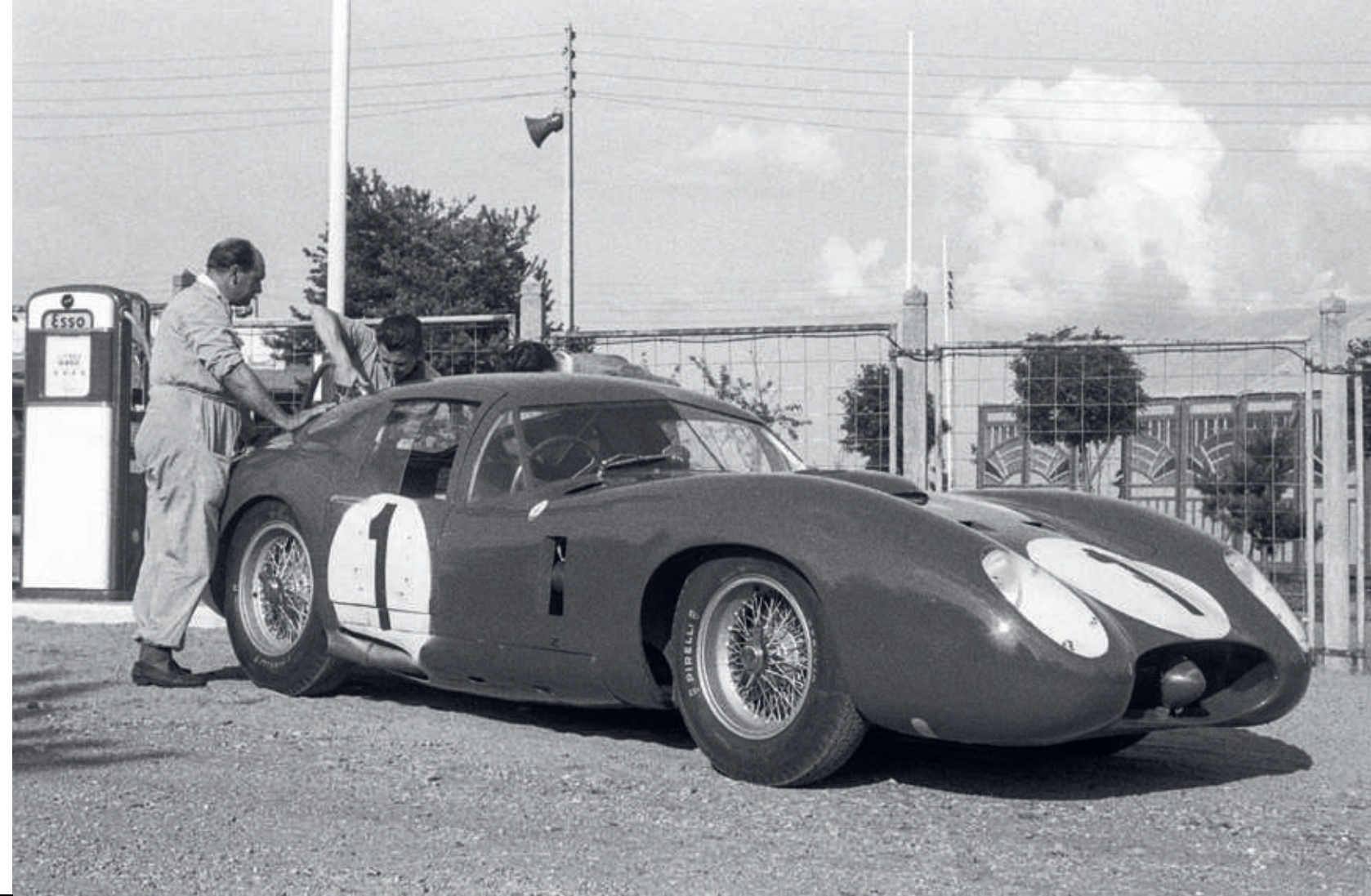
Cordially

Beat Imwinkelried

ZAGATO MASERATI MOSTRO

Text: Beat Imwinkelried

ICONIC NOT NOSTALGIC



Stirling Moss, Harry Schell, Le Mans 24 Hours, 1957

The Zagato design studio has been designing cars for well over 100 years. That the company has remained family-owned is anything but self-evident. Competitors such as Bertone, Ital Design and Pininfarina were either acquired by corporations or pushed out by the in-house design departments of major manufacturers. In my LinkedIn article, I outlined the company's history in greater detail.

This article takes a closer look at the Zagato Maserati Mostro, a particularly beautiful model.

The Mostro was unveiled in 2015 at the Villa d'Este Concours d'Elegance as part of Maserati's 100th anniversary celebrations. In its technical aspects, the Mostro is based on Maserati's Gran Turismo. Over its core, Zagato has placed a carbon fibre body, which is based on the Maserati 450S.

The coachwork was likewise designed by Zagato in 1957 in collaboration with renowned British aerodynamics expert, Frank Costin, and was at the time commissioned by Sir Stirling Moss, who planned to enter it for 24 Hours of Le Mans. Until the 1990s, the Mostro was considered one of the most powerful front-engine racing cars. The car evokes the glorious era of Maserati, when the Modena-based manufacturer shook up the racing world with drivers of the likes of Moss and Fangio.

A total of five Mostro models were produced, designed primarily for the race track. Naturally, all of them sold immediately. The press reported prices in the region of one million euros. One of these five cars surfaced in an auction at Bonhams Paris, in 2020.

That the Mostro has its origins in racing becomes immediately apparent when viewing the inside of the car. The interior is austere, and looks truly exotic in a world in which cars are fast becoming driving multi-media experiences with built-in tablets and huge displays. With the Mostro, the experience of driving takes centre stage.

With the Mostro, Zagato demonstrates how old and new combine in the automotive world, and never feels like a copy of the legendary 450S. Instead, it represents a reinterpretation of classic forms. Zagato itself aptly refers to the Mostro as "iconic" as opposed to "nostalgic."

For my part, I only hope that Zagato continues to manufacture such small-series anachronisms for quite some time to come. They make for an altogether refreshing change at a time when, especially hypercars, vehicles are converging more and more. Thus, I eagerly await the next design from the house of Zagato.

BUGATTI

Interview: Michael Köckritz

BOLIDE

Photos: Philipp Rupprecht

WHAT IF...?

From the inside out – that’s Bugatti. The interior – the 16 cylinder engine: long-since revered as the ultimate work of art, there is precious little leeway for any other wild and wonderful innovations...or at least this was our naïve assumption – until, that is, this Bugatti Bolide pulled up in front of us. Yes, friends, this is how consistent one has to be when paying homage to an engine. In discussion with Bugatti’s Director of Design, Achim Anscheidt: as always a great pleasure.

B.I. Collection: It would be no exaggeration to claim of this Bugatti Bolide, that it is, quite simply, sheer madness! From the point of view of the designer, how much pleasure lies in such a realisation?

Achim Anscheidt: Before waxing lyrical about stylistic features and characteristics, the essential task is first of all to listen; to fully grasp exactly what a car like this is all about. Only then do we respond. This is my responsibility and the standards I demand of my team. In contrast to the arts, design must invariably be seen from the vantage point of function. The same cannot be said of a work of art, namely, as a functionless and unique object. As a rule, objects of design – and here I’m thinking beyond the car – are not intended as objects of pure aesthetic contemplation. In this case, aesthetics and function are differently correlated than they are in the work of art.

BIC: Yet the relation between art and the car is nowhere more pronounced than it is with Bugatti.

AA: This is true. But to assume that the brushstroke defines the company inasmuch as the concept of art is anchored in the Bugatti brand would be wrong. This is the common assumption, but it is not the case. One hundred years ago, as is no less the case today, the engine remains the absolute USP of this brand. I could hold as many design presentations as I like – but the fact remains that if it wasn’t for this engine we wouldn’t be here today. By the same token, this is the very essence of the Bolide project, knowing full well – I have been with Bugatti for the last sixteen years – that that our work has always revolved around this engine. In the case of the Bolide, we have taken this to the extreme, since it was a unique opportunity to allow this engine free reign.

BIC: No brushstroke?

AA: No brushstroke. And neither is it determined by some aesthetic ideal. Instead, we have an artist capable and willing to listen; an artist who, above all else, wishes to grasp the sheer potency of this idea, and to realise his art on this basis. Herein lays the excellence of the Bugatti design: the comprehension of technical correlations and, ultimately, the transformation of these into masterpieces of art. Neither should one fear that technicians assume responsibility for a project, and that designers have little if any say in the matter. On the contrary, one must first tease 110 percent out of the technicians before seeing how one might create a stylistically superlative work of art in terms of design and brand perception.

BIC: What kind of challenges did you face?

AA: The most important thing is to understand that the core aerodynamic structure of the project is entirely different from that of a Bugatti Chiron. We made several compromises with the Chiron to create this interestingly ambivalent version of the ultimate Gran Turismo. Driving the Chiron from Stuttgart to Rome, for example, is a pleasure. Here, however, we found ourselves for the first time in a position to aim uncompromisingly at pure functionality. This was, without a doubt, the greatest challenge, and I must confess it would at times leave me gasping for air.

BIC: Would you elaborate further on this?

AA: Consider, for instance, the very open design of the front end: much like a Swiss cheese, it consists of little else than holes. Yet every square centimetre is defined by its function. And they perform a very different function than they do in the Chiron: Not one single air intake serves the same task as it does on the Chiron. They lead into other ducts, either to ventilate special radiators, to flow around the monocoque in another way, or to feed the intercoolers to the rear of the monocoque. This is remarkable in itself: and combined with this X-graphic, which is very opulent and quite literally leaps out at you, it underscores the spirit of this experiment.

BIC: And what of the name Bolide?

AA: Just between ourselves, we initially favoured the name “X-16” – Experiment with a W-Sixteen-Engine. However, Stephan Winkelmann felt that this had an overly military echo and was too brusque. He prefers simple and distinctive names, such as the Murciélago, Aventador, Huracán and Gallardo, which I can well understand. And, as he freely admits: “I like real names.” So we settled for Bolide.

BIC: So we should better not mention this?

I couldn’t care less (laughs).

BIC: At any rate, it rather neatly conveys Stephan Winkelmann’s ideas.

AA: And feel free to write this. I have no issue with it. What Stephan Winkelmann made possible for Lamborghini, and will now surely make possible once again, is impressive. Besides, I am entirely indebted to him for all the things he made possible for me at Bugatti: Divo, La Voiture Noire, Centodieci, now the Bolide, plus the Pure Sport and the Super Sport 300+ derivatives of the Chiron, are all directly attributable to him.

BIC: An astonishing diversity!

AA: And we approach the whole venture very methodically. When Stephan Winkelmann came over to us in 2017, we presented everything once, even some of the names – Divo, La Voiture Noire – already agreed upon at that time. The others we developed over the course of the process. Besides the models, we decided to highlight the motor shows, especially in





BUGATTI BOLIDE

Geneva and Pebble Beach. We carried out this plan over the past few years – and up to nearly 90 per cent of it. We pursued a pretty radical and consistent course of action.

BIC: Just how great is the danger of overdoing things here?

AA: coachbuilding was, of course, something that enjoyed a renaissance at Bugatti. But I believe that one must play with balance and proportion. We are quite well aware of this. At some point, if all you offer is coachbuilding things are bound to become somewhat routine; it is no longer something special and holds little if any special value in our clients' collections.

BIC: In light of the current developments surrounding the car as such and perhaps its significance in general, do you think the future holds much scope for such ideas? Or will there be a place for them precisely because of this?

AA: In view of the current stage of technological development, I personally find it interesting that Bugatti is involved in some kind of development and thinking in and around this issue. On the other hand, I also believe that in endeavouring not to lose sight of Bugatti clients there is a respect for what our collectors see as a value in their collection. And this might well be the last superlative internal combustion engine, or an internal combustion engine combined with some type of hybrid. And, as we all remember well: back in the mid-1970s, when the quartz watch made its appearance everyone asked who will need mechanical watches in the future? Essentially, this amounted to the starting shot for the success of mechanical watches, and brands such as Patek Philippe or Rolex. Such trends are also witnessed in the automobile industry. People will always appreciate the value of these mechanical gems.

BIC: To think what no one else dares think?

AA: In a way – the “what if” question: There will always be people who value precisely that. This is not an appeal to die-hards, but rather an appreciation for those who would like to introduce values into their families and can explain them two, three or four generations later: “This was State of the Art in 2020. Just look at this!”

BIC: Does the same apply to Bugatti's young customers?

AA: Those clients very familiar with the Bugatti brand, no matter their age, understand perfectly well that engineering a fully electrified Bugatti, for example, is by no means a simple and trivial undertaking. This would be a touch too “MeToo”, to which Bugatti would never subscribe. Never! Certainly, our established clientele would never subscribe to it. But neither would our younger generation of clients, who have since become better acquainted with the Bugatti brand, because they know what makes the Bugatti brand so unique. Only those clients suddenly

in a financial position to afford a Bugatti, but who have not yet engaged with the brand, might be inclined to say: “Yes, Bugatti should also issue an all-electric car with double the horsepower.” But, in my view, this is not how it works these days: Even if we were to create something with thirty per cent more efficiency than any other vehicle, it would only mean that tomorrow or the day after by the latest, everyone else would follow suit. And this is not something we aspire to.

BIC: Somewhat naively formulated, Bugatti stands for superlative luxury. What perception of luxury would you say underpins the brand?

AA: Unfortunately, the luxuriousness of the Bugatti brand is frequently associated with “exuberance” or “ostentation”. In my view this simply doesn't wash. The luxury of the Bugatti brand is one that genuinely originates from within, from the added value of our technical excellence, which is then conveyed to the outside, including the design. This not only has something to do with the USP of the engine and the powertrain, but with the approach to the way we produce cars and the degree of sophistication with which we assemble them in Molsheim. It has rather to do with the way we maintain the estate and the special rapport we establish with our clients. This is a love from within, something that the client discovers and relishes.

BIC: Twenty years from now, when looking back at this engine, what will we think?

AA: The same as holds true of the present: We bow with gratitude and respect to Ferdinand Piëch, who was bold and headstrong enough to develop such an engine independently, and not to design it as a racing car, but to create the ambivalence between “beauty and the beast”. This presupposes tremendous foresight. Any other engineer would have been carried away in the attempt to run down anything and everything on the racetrack with this leviathan of an engine. And yet Piëch said: “Come on, let's build something entirely our own, a car with which one takes a sedate drive up to the opera with one's wife. No roar and bluster, but with composure.” Developing these two figures, the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in one and the same car is a feat I salute to this day, and will continue to salute in the future.

BUGATTI BOLIDE

MOTOR	W16-engine
CUBIC CAPACITY	7,993 cc
POWER	1,850 hp (1,361 kW) at 7,000 rpm
MAX. TORQUE	1,850 Nm at 2,000 to 7,025 rpm
0-500 KM/H	33.62 s



SHAPES OF BEAUTY

Photography: Marvin Leuvrey















CREDITS
Page 17 BUGATTI CHIRON
Page 18/19 FERRARI 812 GTS / PORSCHE CARRERA GT
Page 20/21 MERCEDES 230 SL / PORSCHE 904 CARRERA GTS
Page 22 FERRARI F50
Page 24/25 BUGATTI CHIRON
Page 26/27 FERRARI LAFERRARI / PORSCHE 959
Page 28 PORSCHE CARRERA GT

THE COLLECTIVE

THE DRUMMER

Text: Werner Jessner

AT THE GATES OF LE MANS

UNITED KINGDOM – MARCH 01: Photo of Nick MASON and PINK FLOYD. (Photo by David Redfern/Redferns)

Nick Mason performing live onstage, playing drums, on In The Flesh ('Animals' album) tour at New Bingley Hall, Stafford



All rock bands need an anchor of calm. In the case of that explosive, experimental, visionary and, above all, cerebral rock group Pink Floyd, such an anchor was the group’s drummer Nick Mason. But even the most mellowed of dispositions will now and then break with character and come roaring out of the blocks and onto the track for some serious, preferably loud and feral, rocking performance of some vintage treasures.

The producers of music journals – wherever they are in the world – are a rare breed. Their propensity to rank music in lists verges on the obsessive. Nick Hornby’s book “High Fidelity”, later adapted as a film starring John Cusack, is a case in point. Whatever else may be said, there is one steadfast feature in these decades-long best-of lists: Pink Floyd’s seventh studio album “Wish You Were Here” released in 1975, undoubtedly occupies a place in the top one-hundred “all-time greats”, albeit that the pundits subtly lambast it in critical reviews. The reason is quite trivial: great success is to the list-writers of the world with the entire canon of pop music at their disposal, an accolade they find almost unforgivable. But in doing so, they overlook a great deal, such as the complexity of Storm Thorgerson’s original four-layered LP cover depicting the iconic photo of the handshake of a flaming man; or gems that would only later unfold their magic, such as the oppressive “Welcome to the Machine.” That said, a tree couldn’t give two hoots when dogs bark at it: Having sold 20 million records, the band members certainly had more than a little to spare during those halcyon days of the music business.

A BAND WITH ATTITUDE

For anyone who does not have the encyclopaedic details of Pink Floyd history at their fingertips, the essential thing to note is the four individuals, who made up the core of band (the fifth member was Richard Wright). The first to mention is lead singer and guitarist Syd Barrett. As brilliant as he was, he was sadly ousted early on in the band’s career following excessive drug abuse. Then there were the two feuding heads on mic and strings, David Gilmour and Roger Waters, whose rivalry for number-one position following Barrett’s departure, while fuelling the band’s work over many years, ultimately culminated in a bitter and irreparable schism. And finally, there was the man behind the wheel, Nick Mason, who set the pace and otherwise held his peace. Mason was to the Floyd what Charlie Watts was to the Stones. The tenor between the two groups was one of mutual respect, though the Stones would ceaselessly lay it on thick about their quasi-proletarian roots, and the Floyd never managed purge from themselves the odour from the halls of higher learning and concomitant class ethos from which they hailed.

THE COLLECTION GROWS

In the wake of the epochal commercial success of “Wish you were here”, Nick Mason wisely elected to plough part of his royalties into a series of hijinks. Being the son of a documen-

tary filmmaker and himself a student of architecture, he had always coveted fine cars. The time was ripe to commit the staggering sum of £37,000 to an early 1960s Ferrari 250 GTO, the equivalent of three Porsche 928s, which debuted the same year. But who walked away from three Porsches in favour of a vintage Ferrari? None other than Nick Mason; and his steering clear of the new models was arguably the best financial decision of his life. By 2018, a Ferrari 250 GTO auctioned for \$48.5 million, in short, the equivalent of 250 handsomely kitted-out Porsche Panameras.

But, doubtless, Nick Mason couldn’t have cared less for them. His garage is well-stocked, above all, with racing cars. Whenever so inclined, he can take a morning drive to the recording studio in a Ferrari F40, or an extremely rare McLaren F1 GTR – the previous owner being none other than former founder of McLaren Ron Dennis – or else in one of his many Maseratis, Bugattis, or Jaguars.

RACER AT HEART

A motoric genius on drums, Nick Mason was no less so on the racetrack. From 1979 to 1984, he competed each year at the Le Mans 24 Hours while recording the legendary albums “The Wall” and “The Final Cut”. Far greater than the results (two withdrawals, one disqualification, 18th place as best result in overall ranking) are those wild, dangerous and downright legendary cars in which Mason, having since been knighted, was to compete: the Porsche 956, BMW M1, March and Lola prototypes. The seed had already been sown by his father Bill, who in 1952 produced a documentary film on the legendary race along the Sarthe. “I longed to compete at Le Mans ever since I was a schoolboy”, commented the future father-in-law of racing driver Marino Franchitti. Catching his breath after his first start, he remarks “I never anticipated crossing the Atlantic in a rowing boat. But there it is.” Pink Floyd finally disbanded in 2015. Mason still delights in his vintage cars. In 2017, at the age of 73, he rammed his £3 million McLaren F1 GTR – one of a total of nine 1996 chassis 10Rs – into the guard-rails at Goodwood. The good news is that this jewel of a car was repairable. It has ever since been the anchor of calm in Mason’s private garage in south England.

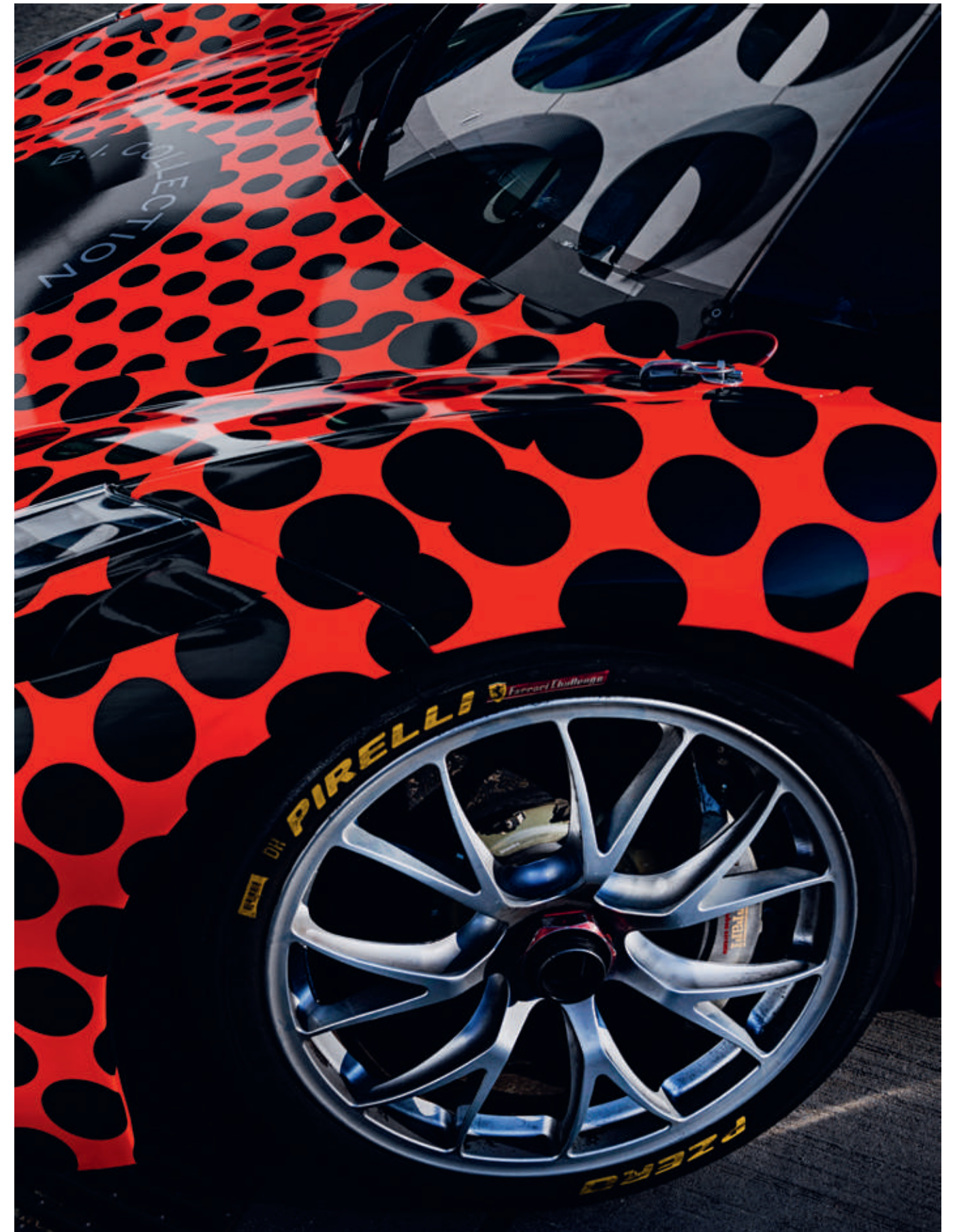
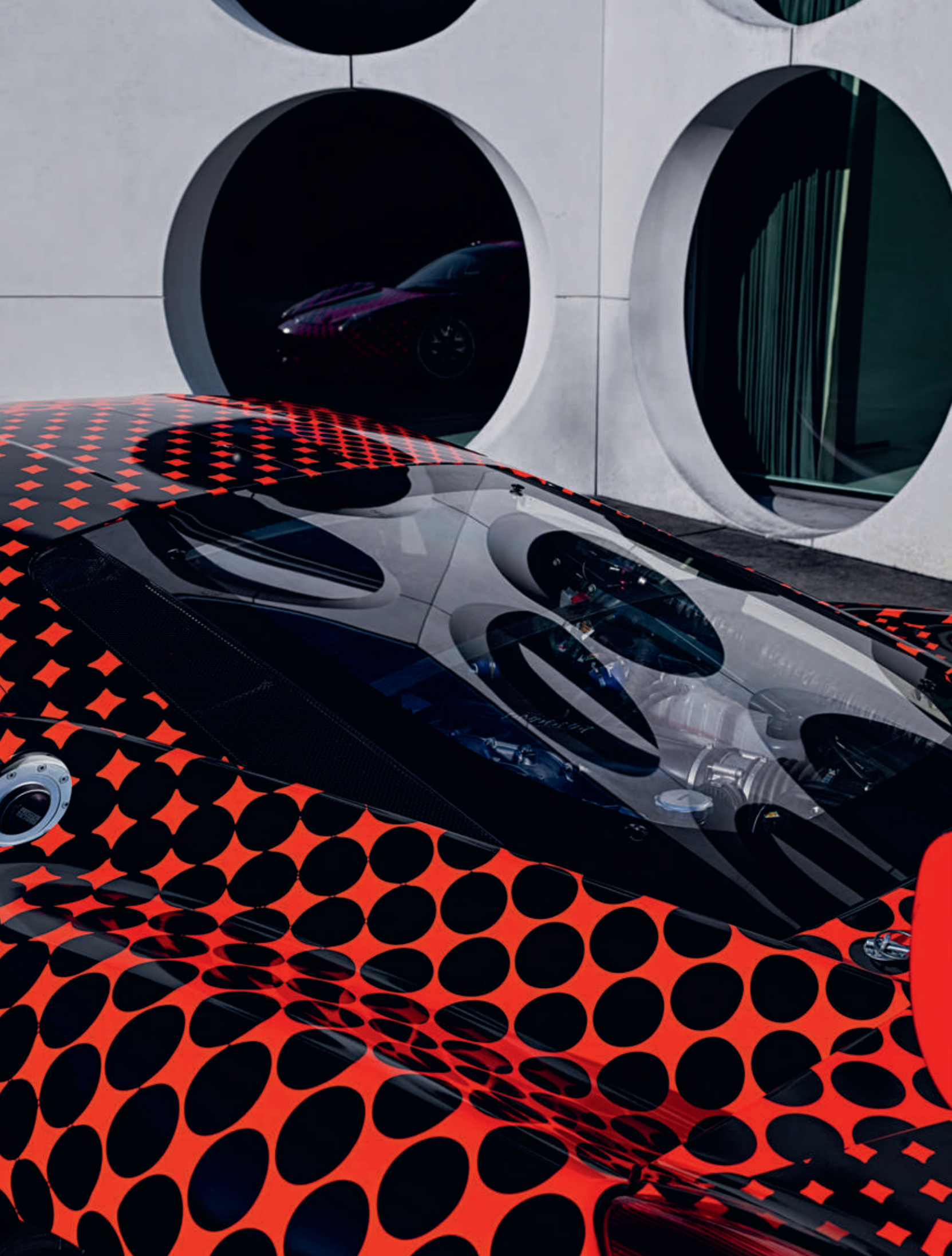


Nick Mason of the Pink Floyd rock band in his Maserati 250F racing car

Nick Mason in his Maserati 250F on the start of a VSCC historic GP car race Silverstone circuit UK early 1980's (Photo by Martyn Goddard/Corbis via Getty Images)

DOTS
DOTS
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a trackday. More information on
our website [bicollection.ch](https://www.bicollection.ch)

THE COLLECTIVE

THE COLORS OF SPEED

THE COLORS OF SPEED



Photography: Vladimir Rys



China Grand Prix, 2017



Belgia Grand Prix, 2018







VR, 2020



VLADIMIR RYS

Vladimir began taking pictures at the early age of fifteen. The City of Prague, in which he was born and raised had a formative influence on his vision and his meanwhile distinctive style. The many evenings spent in the darkroom engendered a great love with one of the classic processes involved in photography that have influenced his work from the outset.

In 1996 he became a staff photographer at Deník sport, the largest Czech sports daily, before landing a position as staff photographer with the football magazine Hatrick two years later. In 2002 he moved to Germany and joined Getty Images, where he remained until 2010.

Vladimir's work covers a wide range of subjects, from sports, reportage, portraiture, and commercial photography.

Since 2005 his primary focus has been Formula One, in which field he is regarded as one of the sport's most influential photographers. His distinctive style refrains from an overuse of postproduction tools, and draws primarily

on his experience in analog photography. This has also brought him great recognition beyond the Formula One paddock. His classic approach to photography remains a benchmark in Formula One photography, even in the digital age.

His distinctive style has brought him numerous awards and a wide range of clients. His awards include "Photographer of the Year 2000" in the Czech Republic, "Photographer of the Year 2010" in Germany, "Formula One Photographer of the Year 2008" of the Red Bulletin Magazine, and "Formula One Photographer of the Year 2014" of the Italian Motorsport Federation Confartigianato Motori.

What inspires him most is that magic moment when eye, light, composition and technical skills converge in a split second to create an extraordinary photograph. He firmly believes that his next image will be his best. Based in Athens and Düsseldorf, Vladimir is a proud canon and f-stop gear ambassador.

MANRICO'S



PARADISE

When setting out to meet Manrico Iachia in the Portuguese coastal town of Comporta, we braced ourselves for an encounter with magnificent architecture and luxurious cars. Yet what this urbane gentleman, former CEO and executive in the insurance sector had in store for us was far more than a guided promenade around his fine estate and automobile collection, for we were given exclusive insights into the veritable tour de force that is his life.

Text: Anke Fischer
Photos: Irene Kung

Having landed in Lisbon, we then proceeded south by car, arriving at our destination an hour later. Comporta, a tranquil coastal settlement on the Atlantic coast, remains visibly marked by agriculture, above all, rice cultivation. Secluded among dunes, sea and rice fields Manrico Iachia's enchanting estate is located somewhat off the beaten track. On typing in the entry code (the model number of a Ferrari), the gates swung open to reveal an entirely unexpected world of thatched beach huts; these former dwellings of erstwhile fishermen and rice farmers some several decades past, are interspersed by an ensemble of detached buildings the facades of which comprise meshed reeds and palm-thatched gabled roofs. Typical of the region, these wonderful examples of traditional architecture have over the course of time retained their charm and evolved into what has now become a truly paradisiacal home.

True to form, the interior of the "Cabanas" retains its minimalist character, while the decor testifies to a heightened aesthetic sensibility and meticulous attention to detail. The hand-woven carpets are of Moroccan origin, while the wooden furnishings and textiles stem from Bali, Senegal and Peru – an outstanding

and unique marriage of the rural and the cosmopolitan, the local and the international. This aesthetic sensibility, otherwise known as the "Comporta style", or "Art de vivre", was the inspiration of Manrico's wife, Vera. Vera is a member of the Espírito Santo family, one of Portugal's most prominent banking dynasties. Manrico and Vera purchased the property together some 35 years ago.

The area suffered severe economic decline during the revolutionary years. Thereafter, the 58 square miles of forests, rice fields and arable land of the Herdade da Comporta fell into private hands and was used largely for duck hunting. Manrico's revelations tell the tale of how this site emerged from a former state of dereliction into the magical place it has become today. At the same time, this raises questions as to the significance of luxury and what it is capable of achieving in our day and age.

"I WANT TO BE PRESIDENT"

Manrico Iachia was born in Bologna in 1952. Leaving home at the tender age of seventeen and relocating to the Trieste region, he resolved to pursue his own ambitions. His inner





drive to actively influence situations, to change things, along with an innate proclivity to “be on top”, had shown themselves at an early age. His prominent Bolognese family held original shares of Generali Insurance and thus maintained close ties with the company. As first-born son, Manrico assumed responsibility for his mother and younger brother following the premature death of his father at the age of 50. The connection to Generali Insurance together with the proximity of his eminent family, prompted young Manrico to relocate to Paris where he commenced with his career in the insurance sector. In the wake of his father’s passing, Manrico swiftly established contacts and business ties in the French capital. During this period, he made the acquaintance of the former mayor of a Parisian commune with whose law firm he was to initiate a long-term cooperation. This lawyer, later to become Minister of the Budget before assuming the position of Minister of the Interior and the Economy, and ultimately becoming President of the French Republic, was none other than Nicolas Sarkozy.

LIKE A FISH IN WATER – AT THE CONCOURS D’ÉLÉGANCE OR ON THE RACE TRACK

The next milestone in Manrico’s career took him to the British capital, where Generali had sent him to assist in revitalizing the London branch. Manrico successfully developed the network there and gained a foothold in cabinet circles around Margaret Thatcher. At that time, London’s streets were inundated with automobile classics – Bentleys, Jaguars, Astons, a spectacle that was to further stoke Manrico’s passion for world-class luxury cars. He acquired a second-hand blue Bentley, which he entered for the Bentley Owner Club’s Concours d’Élégance. While in Paris, he became the proud owner of a Ferrari 308, and in his early races he competed on legendary circuits with the Ferrari Club de France. When in the company of fellow passionate car-enthusiasts, Manrico was “like a fish in water.”

AMERICA NEXT – WHAT A CRAZY LIFE!

Manrico was commissioned to head up the Washington DC-based Europ Assistance USA (a company offering worldwide medical assistance services), Generali being its main shareholder.

Manrico’s initial move was to relocate the head office in Washington to New York. His office was located on the 86th floor of the World Trade Center. Now 32 years of age, Manrico soon recognized the necessity of having at his side a highly accomplished and experienced chairman, and thus managed to persuade his friend Alessandro Codero di Montezemolo to get on board. Alessandro (second cousin to Luca di Montezemolo) and his wife, Catherine Bradle, were among the elite of New York and Southampton society. Doors were thus eased open and a sensational deal was struck with American Express. This marked the worldwide launch of medical services as part of the insurance on plastic cards. A helicopter bearing the logo “Europ Assistance” took to the air and saved lives across the globe. Three months later VISA came knocking...

Playing as hard as he would work, Manrico’s private life in New York was no less impressive. After business hours, he

would be in the habit of returning to his apartment to rest a few hours until midnight; donning a dinner jacket, he would then head off into the city’s nightlife. His play proved highly effective: while well-heeled gentlemen would be wining and dining the beauties of the scene, Manrico would be recharging his batteries prior to making an appearance at Studio 54 around midnight; bright-eyed and bushy tailed, he would then relieve these meanwhile fatigued gentlemen and entertain the ladies. It was on one such fateful night that Manrico was to meet his future wife. Vera, who had been working for Andy Warhol for the past nine years, epitomized that very rare aesthetic synthesis of art and design. Two opposing worlds converged, and Manrico followed Vera into the fabulous world of the Warholian party scene. Trading tails for jeans, he was whisked up into the novel and inspiring world of art and music, all the while cultivating his passion for classic automobiles.

LUXURY IN THE WILDERNESS

Manrico and Vera resolved to marry three months later. They flew to Portugal, here Manrico hoped to receive the blessing of Vera’s mother. On this fateful weekend, however, the mother was hosting a lavish party for several distinguished families. Though entirely at ease among such distinguished Italian guests as the Agnellis, Pirellis and Brandolinis, Manrico was obliged to request a new appointment with his mother-in-law-to-be. A somewhat busy lady, she would have no appointment free until three days hence; thus, Vera and Manrico headed off to Comporta, the region of Vera’s youth. Although the landscape was overgrown and the small huts dilapidated, they were each of them enthralled by the natural light and luminosity of the sky. The white undulating sand dunes extended for miles; waves would erupt and break from a turquoise sea. Glancing around, they came across the ruins of two small thatched cabanas owned by an aged couple. Their hearts were set on buying these dwellings there and then; after paying the owners \$500, they then made their way back to the home of Vera’s mother.

At the appointed hour, Vera’s mother, now seated at her desk equipped with diary and pen in hand, Manrico announced his intention to marry her daughter. The response was dire: “Not on my life”; at this point, Vera, who had been anxiously waiting in the wings, vehemently intervened and with overwhelming success. Six months later, the knot was tied at what was to be the wedding event of the year.

“WE’LL JUST FLY THE CESSNA AROUND THE WORLD TRADE CENTER!”

Once returned to New York, they continued to enjoy the hustle and excitement that was the hallmark of their lives. Accompanied by Vera, Manrico would navigate his Cessna along the Hudson River, an airborne outing which finally culminated in a “figure of eight” circumnavigation of the World Trade Center. “Those were the days,” Manrico recounts with wistful, glistening eyes. We were the both of us fully occupied, happy and at the height of our careers. While Andy Warhol’s sudden passing was a tragedy for Vera, it marked a turning point in their lives and subsequent decision to return to Europe. Hence, once back in Paris, Manrico re-joined Generali while Vera began collaborating with renowned



interior designer, Jacques Grange. Their activities were perfectly complimentary: in Paris each one pursued fascinating projects – Caroline of Monaco commissioned Jacques to design the interior of her yacht and with Vera as his assistant, while they meanwhile set about creating their very own paradise in Comporta. Turning their two, twenty-nine-year-old cabanas into their home involved bulldozing away the debris, laying sandy pathways, and installing thousands of metres of plumbing and electric cable. Photo shoots by Vogue and visits by Jacques Grange and Ayn A Khan followed the completion of the building work; their visitors would gush on beholding this “paradise of simplicity”. Manrico would later seek out properties for others, such as Jacques Grange, Vera's mother and Philip Stark.. Vera augmented her own resort by introducing additional cabanas, meanwhile perfecting her peerless style of interior design. Manrico was hard at work, devoting himself with no less élan to his beloved automobiles; he restored these classics to perfection with the aid of English mechanics, who he had also commissioned to install a garage in close proximity to his home. During this time, he also took part in rallies and motor shows.

MANRICO'S ARTEFACT “THE SILVER BENTLEY”

Manrico has been on the road with his legendary Bentley R Type Continental – licence plate ABC 12 – since 1990. Originally midnight blue, Manrico had the lacquer stripped and the light alloy body polished up to shining, radiant silver. His itinerary of motoring exploits with this Bentley, are inscribed on the passenger door:

- Louis Vuitton Classic China Run 1998
- 1000 Millas Argentina 1998
- Louis Vuitton Bagatelle 2000
- 50th Anniversary Silverstone Louis Vuitton 2002
- Louis Vuitton Classic Boheme 2006

This very same Bentley was reported stolen in Argentina some 23 years ago, while being freighted by ship. Opening the doors only to behold an empty container came as a ghastly shock. After considerable commotion, umpteen enquiries and numerous telephone calls, an anonymous caller came forward one year later to explain where the vehicle was located.

Thankfully, this superlative specimen is now safely restored to the ranks of Manrico's collection in Comporta. Manrico commissioned the construction of a building adjacent to his estate especially designed for his passion; not only does it house examples of his classic cars, motorbikes and racing bikes, but also countless memorabilia, photos and artefacts, all of which bear remarkable testimony to his life.

HIGHPOINT AND WATERSHED

Following a seven-year period during which he would commute between France and Portugal, the opportunity arose to launch a branch of Europ Assistance in Portugal. In collaboration with Espírito Santo, this branch rapidly expanded and prepared the way for a breakthrough to the Brazilian market. This was promptly followed by the establishing of additional branches in Argentina and Chile, all of which Manrico launched and directed. A seat on the Board of Directors of the holding in Paris brought with it further responsibilities in the Asia region. As President and CEO of Portugal, South America and Asia, he toiled around the clock, circumnavigating his professional universe five times a year.

Having meanwhile fathered two daughters and a son, his home in Comporta had by now blossomed into an outstanding resort, all the while his fascination for collecting classic cars never for one moment waning.

His wife Vera became gravely ill; after her passing, Manrico, by now 65 years old, discontinued his professional career to care for his children. The pain he felt for Vera at the time, he remarks, and witnessing the pain suffered by his children, brought about a transformation. Today, Manrico lives between Comporta, Lisbon and Gstaad, where he is a self-confessed “business maniac” committed to the further development of the Gstaad Yacht Club. During our visit to Comporta, we were in the privileged position to immerse ourselves in Manrico's world, to make the acquaintance of this exceptionally gifted businessman, gentleman and bon vivant, who, forever driven by his own remarkable standards and achievement, keeps the reins tight in his hands according to the motto estote parati!

IRENE KUNG

In Comporta, Manrico invited us to experience for ourselves the extent to which he has surrounded himself with wonderful personalities and how these invariably become an integral part of his life's work. For our weekend visit, he requested close friend and renowned photographer, Irene Kung, that she accompany us. Not only did she capture the many moments in her own unique style but co-created them. Her rich imagination, her affinity to Manrico and her own inimitable style all lend a highly personal quality to these photographs.

Irene Kung is a Swiss photographer and painter. Her pictorial compositions of monuments and trees, which ensured her international renown, are suffused by her very personal and signature style. Her photographs have been on display in both group and solo exhibitions held in venues in North America, the United Kingdom, Italy, Switzerland, France, Argentina, China and many other countries throughout the world.

Among her projects are:

Civilization: The Way We Live Now, Seoul, Beijing, Melbourne, Marseille, 2020/21 Beijing

Genesis project, 2018


Art Project for Porsche 911, 2018

Homeward Selection from the Wieland Collection, New York 2016


Bulgari Y Roma, Madrid 2016

Milan World Expo, Milan 2015

Henri Cartier Bresson and the Others, Milan 2015




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CARS & DREAMS





Vehicle PORSCHE TAYCAN



Chiffon shirt SAINT LAURENT PARIS
Wool kilt COMME DES GARÇONS through OPIA
Trousers EVAN KINORI through OPIA
Boots BALENCIAGA



Sunglasses ANDY WOLF
Silver earrings AEYDE



Blazer with back lacing VINTAGE GUCCI



White leather harness YVY
Trench coat AURALEE through OPIA



Potent leather top and skirt VINTAGE JUNYA WATANABE



Vehicle PORSCHE TAYCAN



Turtleneck jumper in silver · RAF SIMONS

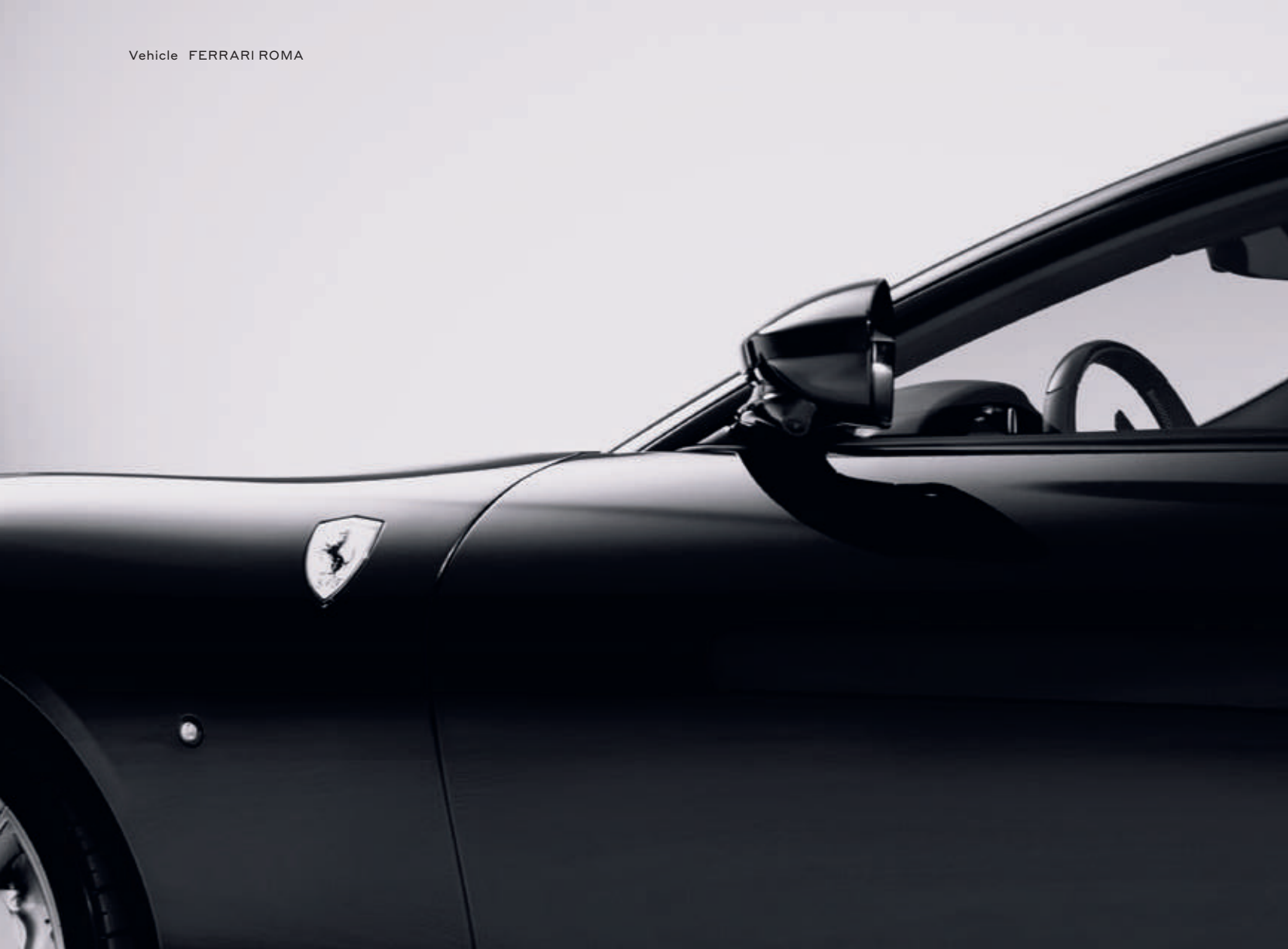


Leather top · YVY
Skirt · VINTAGE COMME DES GARÇONS
Heels · AEYDE





Perforated dress VINTAGE CHRISTIAN DIOR



Vehicle FERRARI ROMA

CREDITS

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Creative Direction CHARLES BLUNIER & CO.
Digital Operator FELIX GUNDLACH
Photo Assistant NURA DEON
Postproduction STUDIO GESSNER
Stylist TIM TOBIAS ZIMMERMANN
Hair + Make up DELIA SCIULLO @STYLE COUNCIL

MODELS

LAURA @MINT ARTIST MANAGEMENT
ASSAN @VISAGE MANAGEMENT

THE COLLECTIVE

PROJECT MAYBACH

PROJECT MAYBACH

A project by Mercedes-Benz AG with Virgil Abloh









A design unlike anything that has been developed by Mercedes-Benz, every element of Project MAYBACH has been built from scratch. Abloh, collaboratively with Gordon Wagener, has interpreted Mercedes-Maybach's luxury identity with a new design language and pushed the boundaries of function, style, and collaborative creativity. Inspired by the great outdoors and recontextualizing a traditionally urban brand within a distinctly off-road environment, the 2-seater, battery-electric off-road coupé combines huge Gran Turismo proportions, large off-road wheels and distinctive attachments.

Key for both Abloh and Wagener was a responsible vision of future design. Complete creative freedom – untethered by production requirements – enabled the design teams to conceptualize what the future of electric travel could look like. Under the transparent surface of the show cars front hood for instance are solar cells that increase the imagined range of the Project MAYBACH.

Never afraid to spark conversation through provocative design, Project MAYBACH channels Abloh's passion to challenge the status quo and re-write the rule-book of aspirational design. The X-Factor nature of Project MAYBACH results not only from its breathtaking size – almost six meters long – and characteristics, but above all from its unique contrasts; most notably through how naturally authentic Mercedes-Maybach design elements are harmoniously combined with a new Outdoor Adventure design motif.

The power of Abloh's work is perceptible not only in the product design itself, but in the exploratory discussions which the work inspired. The Project Maybach show car was inspired by the way in which nature can be potentially explored within unique, luxury settings. The teams at Mercedes are indebted to Abloh for the stimulus he provided for probing the power of cross-industry dialogue and for the vision of a better and more inclusive future.



YNGVE

A Pie Chart of Our Time

Yngve Holen is as much archeologist as surgeon, the latter being all the more germane given his predilection for slicing out individual regalia – such as from car rims or headlights – ideally by means of a scalpel; true, with a blunt blade, but this is what he does! The Norwegian-German artist was born in Braunschweig in 1982, and is based in Berlin. He has devoted considerable time to probing the complex of human tensions that unfold at the nexus of technical and industrial achievements, and – by extension – their relation to the objects which both result from and surround him. For the latter harbour technical and historical information, offer all manner of salvific promises and subject our cognitive attitudes to constant change. And the same holds, not least, for our own perceptions of subjectivity. Welcome to this highly technologized world, which constitutes Yngve Holen’s artistic resource and that, in his works, assumes an at once nerdy, cannibalistic and poetic aspect.

Photos: Kunsthalle Basel/Yngve Holen
Text: Roger Meier

“It’s kind of ridiculous with cars... I mean it’s a stupid concept, you sit in that kind of metal kind of frame, and you’re just driving around, like in a city... and like [suddenly] bump into something... and your perfect curve is like fucked up...” is what essentially sums up Holen’s thought about the automobile. Whether he was referring to car design or to the performance of drivers when talking about the “perfect curve” is something left unanswered. Admittedly, there must be other publications better suited than the present one to come crashing in with such a quote: my sincere apologies for this lapse. But – and I feel obliged to give you advance warning – the worse is yet to come!

Some six years ago, the Kunsthalle Basel hosted an exhibition of Yngve Holen’s work. This was to be my first encounter with the artist’s work. The exhibition was held during Art Basel, namely, in mid-June 2016. The turnout to the exhibition VERTICALSEATS was accordingly high and international throughout the week in question. The title references the concept of low-cost airlines such as Ryanair, namely, that they would in future be providing even less expensive modes of transport in the form of standing seats on the plane. Less space would allow for more passengers to travel at the same time. Thus not only would travel be cheaper, but it would also far better for the environment, at least if we are willing to believe their marketing departments (paper endures even in our so-called “digital modernity”). This somewhat dystopian vision, namely, of the cheap-flights-anywhere-and-everywhere variety, has yet to become reality – thanks, in part, to the current EU safety standards – and is unlikely to become so in the future. But who knows? Many technical transformations have become reality over the last three decades, and in spite of the fact that we have long allocated them to the imaginative works of science fiction authors. Since the nineteenth century – in a nutshell – advances have been geared to the actual needs of people and their pursuit of optimisation. During and concomitant with flourishing industrialisation, this brought its fair share of ills – as far as the environment was concerned, for example – but it was a good thing; an increasing number of machines were developed such as rendered hand-washing virtually obsolete and thus made daily life considerably easier. And yet, for some time now we have been progressively transforming ourselves in a manner analogous to these technologies of our own making. Moreover, though vehemently opposed to surveillance, we are not necessarily adverse to control: we happily key in data on our smartphones all for the sake of the allegedly pleasant life that beckons. Or, at least, so we assume. And with each slice of “freedom”, so the bar of control increases – that of others – over us.

Not entirely of this world, and yet very much a part of it! They “glared” straight into your eyes at the Kunsthalle Basel: those single, dazzling car lights and headlights mounted on the wall at eye level, almost like kinetic sculptures. Luminous, flashing, at times even blazing into one’s face, “cut out” and disconnected from our habitual way of seeing. Almost like organs extracted from an artificial body. An overwhelming spectacle, and yet lacking the hull, namely, the car itself. This medley induces emotional overload, fascination and something akin to fear; a balancing act of attraction and repulsion. Expressed

symbolically, is it this “perfect curve”, which, as Yngve notes, “is fucked if you ram into anything”? Quite possibly. At any rate, we should recapitulate this specific “impact”, subject it to further analysis and identify and quantify any potential damage so as to prevent possible trauma.

Once regaining composure in the wake of this singularly unique visual experience, it is just this poignancy that seizes the viewer, and indeed, defines the “genuine” Yngve Holen. All of a sudden, boundaries ceased to be evident; what had been once familiar was, for us, now reduced to a conundrum when beholding the sculptures displayed in the series (title to follow!), whereby our customary habits of seeing and perceiving virtually dissolved tout à coup into nothing. Or at least into a nothing we could classify. A vegetative de-limitation occurred to which we were, and still are, rendered defenceless. Somewhat surreal and bordering on the embarrassing; we cannibalise something that we ourselves, as homo sapiens, have created and that we encounter countless times a day, not least due to the fact that more and more of us now live in cities. And so, cars are simply part and parcel of our lives, dammit! Why, then, this reaction since all we are faced with here are individual car headlights? Leaving to one side the fact that these anthropomorphic “eyes” do, indeed, glare out at us, are perhaps even monitoring us (who says that no camera has been installed?), this experience makes things no easier, but simply more cannibalistic. Furthermore, what sets it apart here is the generic combining with the individual, together with the industrial production of the object in conjunction with the organic; it is thus rendered no less frightening, but also no less fascinating – but neither any less intriguing.

Yngve Holen did after all present it to us in the space to the far rear of the Kunsthalle, that is, an entire car and not merely its headlights. A Porsche Panamera. In its entirety, yet as dissected quartet of more or less evenly sized parts. Cut once horizontally, once vertically, twice transversely. The Panamera, the Pie Chart of our Time? Inoperable, the bolide now stood as four-part sculpture in the space. The vehicle in question represents the Herculean pimp Porsche par excellence; a kick-ass penis enhancer, so to speak, capable of effortlessly (over) gratifying its own clichés – and, in most cases, the shittier the truer – yet no less capable of doubling up as family saloon. It could. Though the fit is somewhat skewered. Even in the case of non-sawed examples. The act of quartering also afforded a glimpse beneath the car’s shell. The protective membrane, the coachwork, was opened as violently as it was marked by enormous precision; and the otherwise potent hp-count within, such as the engine and gearbox, were laid completely bare. Somewhat reminiscent of an archaeologist, it would seem that Holen wishes to convince himself that what the manufacturers promised is actually all there; furthermore, he seems to want to remind future generations of present-day technological achievements. Thus, to decry this work as mere consumer criticism would be far too short-sighted, indeed jejune. Naturally, at this point one might argue, along with Sigmund Freud, that fetishism is rather the operative term here – something which again brings us back to the penis, or else, should one not possess one, envy. So much for Freud’s theory. But this is also what Holen is about, if only marginally.

HOLEN



Left

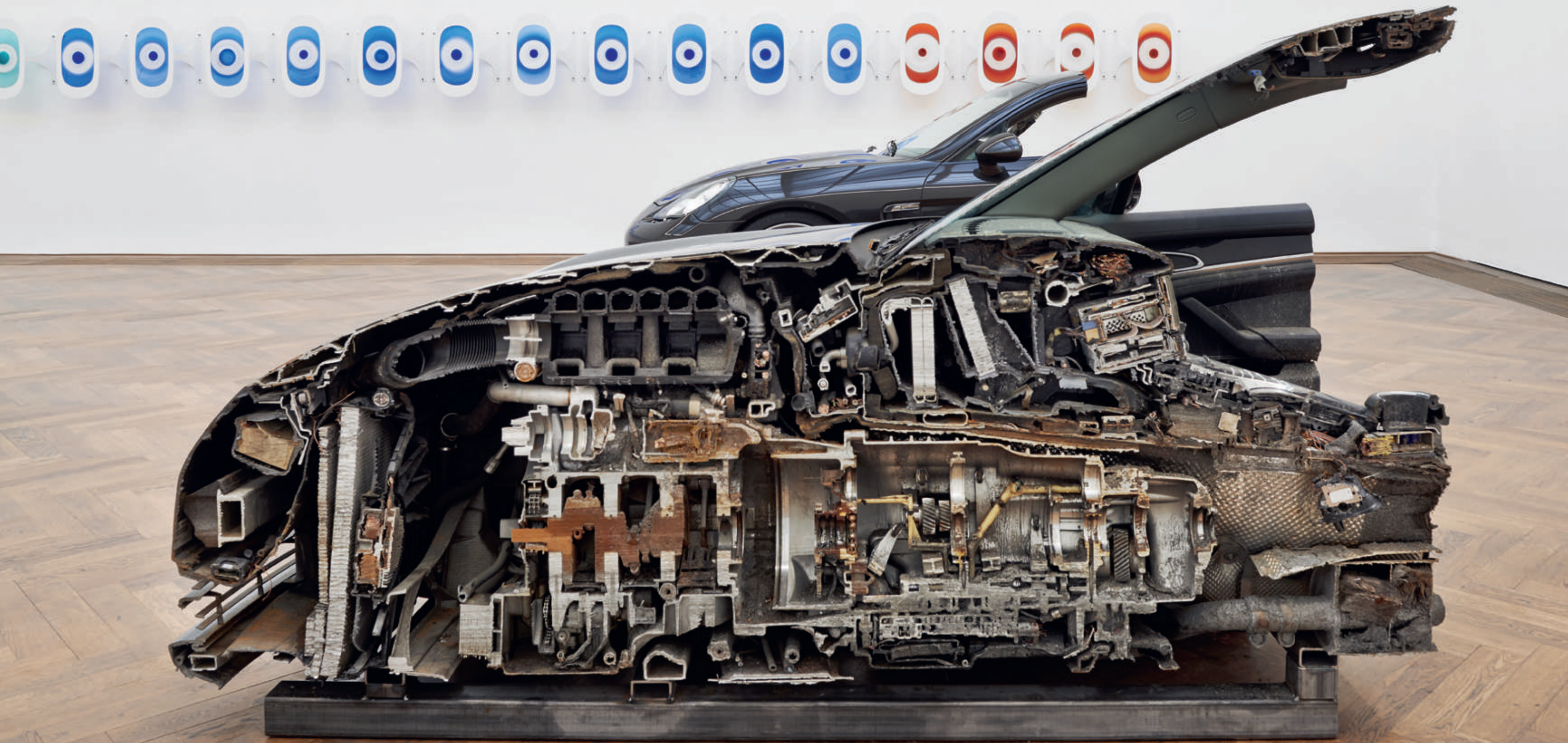
Yngve Holen
LEICHTMETALLRAD, 2017
Car wheel, aluminium on
plastic socket
56 x 56 x 12,5 cm
Courtesy Yngve Holen
Galerie Neu, Berlin
Modern Art, London
Neue Alte Brücke, Frankfurt



Right

Yngve Holen
SNOWFLAKE, 2017
Car wheel, aluminium on
plastic socket
56 x 56 x 12,5 cm
Courtesy Yngve Holen
Galerie Neu, Berlin
Modern Art, London
Neue Alte Brücke, Frankfurt







Today, at the time of writing – 11 March 2022 – marks the final day of Yngve Holen’s exhibition *Foreign Object Debris* at the X Museum in Beijing, his first solo-exhibition in Asia, and his twelfth solo show since Basel. (The general consensus: Yes, he is successful.) Regrettably, embarking on a lengthy journey to China before drafting the present text was not feasible. Oddly enough, here again – as in Basel – the exhibition’s title alludes to aviation. *Foreign Object Debris*, or FOD for short, refers to objects in inappropriate places likely to cause damage. Yngve declines to say whether the choice of title had anything to do with the museum’s geographical location. Yet what remains certain is that FOD could be read as a parenthetical abbreviation for his thoroughgoing artistic research into the “man-machine complex” and the mind-body paradox. Furthermore, for the last two years or so, in addition to countless other subjects and the ongoing development of car parts – the focus meanwhile being less on headlights and rather on the rims of various existent, part imagined cars – heroic supermen also now feature in Holen’s works. Indeed, these appear to wield superhuman powers oscillating as they do between man, machine, reptiloid and serpent. As always, they were produced by means of cutting-edge manufacturing processes. Could it be that such superheroes are actually saving us from these apparently misplaced objects? Or, perhaps even from the consumer world itself or, conversely, are they responsible for such a world and hence for our own ruin? Are we soon to become like them, or more like those half-cows that alternatively adorn the walls as black reliefs or are printed in a photo-

graphic fashion to give a fleshy look to the flooring? Are we at all still biometric? And if indeed we are, then perhaps as unprotected game only to serve as easy prey? Are you really that dystopian, Mr. Holen?

Yngve Holen concluded his studies in sculpture at the Städelschule in Frankfurt as Meisterschüler in 2010, early on combining in his art the everyday with the technical-industrial. His work is influenced and inspired by a wide variety of fields; transport, security systems, industrial food technology or, for instance, plastic surgery. The sources are multifarious, convoluted and, not seldom, “geekish.” Yet his works are of concern to us all – including the works themselves – and without intending to be so: for they question not only the appearances of products, but the (intimate) relationships of the human body to these things and to its own subjective perception of the intrinsic and the extrinsic. Holen’s oeuvre encompasses primarily sculptures and research-based publications that probe the substitutability, limitation and complexity of the human body in consumer culture. Holen juxtaposes traditional materials such as metal, marble, glass or wood with state-of-the-art industrial substitutes and technologies, such as carbon fibres, 3D printing or water jet cutting. And, last but not least, he elucidates contemporary engineering by himself becoming an engineer and thus – and thanks to a certain tinkering carried out in collaboration with experts in various other fields – often discovers far better solutions than those all too often served up to us with the promise of salvation. And often without our consent.



Yngve Holen will never be without work. And he is certain to capture our interest by time and again holding up a mirror to us: surely this must be one of the core tasks of art, insofar as one might ascribe such a function to it at all. Yet Yngve’s view of the world is as unrelenting as it is steeped in poetry, implicitly underscoring as it does the explicit in reference to the incessantly evolving social and industrial phenomena of our time.

Previous spreads

Yngve Holen
Installation view
VERTICALSEAT
View on CAKE, 2016
and Window seat 10–21 A, 2016
Kunsthalle Basel, 2016
Courtesy Yngve Holen
Galerie Neu, Berlin
Modern Art, London
Neue Alte Brücke, Frankfurt/M.
Photo: Philipp Hänger/KH Basel

Left & right

Yngve Holen
VERTICALSEAT
View on Hater Headlight, 2016
Kunsthalle Basel, 2016.
Courtesy Yngve Holen
Galerie Neu Berlin
Modern Art, London
Neue Alte Brücke, Frankfurt/M.
Photo: Philipp Hänger/KH Basel

Following spread

Yngve Holen
Foreign Object Debris,
X Museum, Beijing, 2021–2022
Installation view
Brain Activity, 2021
Bronze, aluminium, 128 × 55 × 55 cm
Courtesy the artist
and Galerie Neu, Berlin

ROGER MEIER

Roger Meier (*1984) holds an MA in art history, German language and literature studies and philosophy. Throughout his career to date, he has worked at various art museums and institutions, among others, the Brussels Antiques and Fine Arts Fair, the Kunstmuseum Basel, the Kunsthalle Bern and the ETH Zurich. He has worked in a consultative capacity at the Neutral Plus agency and in the art market, most recently as Gallery Director at Galerie Freymond-Guth. Since 2018, he has been working primarily in the field of art and marketing, with a special emphasis on the communication of exhibition conceptions. Meier is a frequent contributor to a wide range of publications on the subjects of art, architecture, design, fashion and society. He lives and works in Zurich.



The Collective

Exhibitions
Agenda 2022

James Barnor: Accra/London – A Retrospective
13 March – 31 July 2022, Lugano



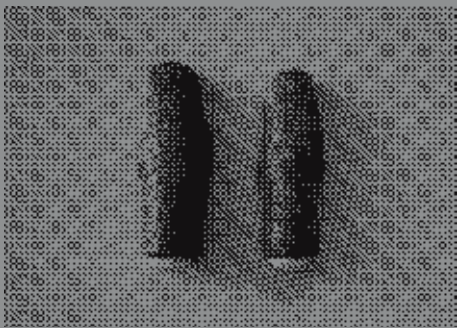
James Barnor, *Sick- Hagemeyer Shop Assistant Accra*, 1971
© James Barnor/Autograph ABP, London

MA SI is holding one of the most comprehensive and complete retrospectives ever given over to Ghanaian photographer, James Barnor (Accra, 1929). The exhibition, conceived by the Serpentine Gallery in London, documents Barnor’s lengthy career during which the artist explored the full range of photography genres: from studio portraits to journalistic features, from fashion pictures to street photography. Guided by his candid and a spontaneous eye, Barnor’s photography recounts the social and political transformations that have marked the history of his country, as well as that of the African community in London. The exhibition, highlighting the years 1950 to 1980, features works from the artist’s private archive and includes many unpublished images.

A Serpentine Gallery project. After Lugano, the exhibition is scheduled to be held at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

James Barnor: Accra/London – A Retrospective, initiated and hosted by Serpentine Gallery, London. Curated by Lizzie Carey-Thomas, Chief Curator at the Serpentine, and Awa Konaté, Assistant Curator at Culture Art Society (CAS).

Pedro Wirz: Environmental Hangover
21 January – 1 May 2022, Basel



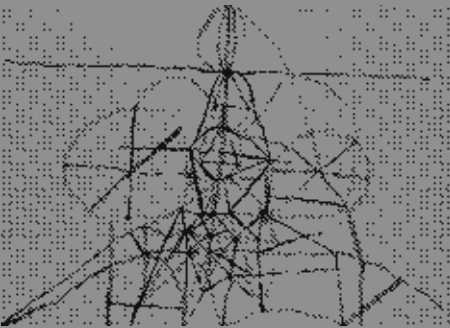
Pedro Wirz, *Sour Ground VII*, 2020. Photo: Pedro Wirz

At the Kunsthalle Basel, Pedro Wirz (b. 1981) has created an immersive installation populated with sculptures inspired both by organic materials and the consumer world. Taken as a whole, they serve to transform the Brazilian-Swiss artist’s interest in cultural history, science, handicrafts and folklore into a form of commentary on our current environmental crisis, which is as stunning as it is sobering.

Prior to ending a job in communications at a toxic waste disposal site and attending art school in Basel, Wirz spent the better part of his youth in the tropical Vale do Paraiba in Brazil.

It is precisely this shifting ecology, demography, mythology and superstition of the region from which he draws inspiration. Having grown up with an agronomist expert on soil substrates, and a biologist researching the implications of contaminated waters on the DNA of regional amphibious lifeforms, the artist became fascinated in equal measure by natural science and folklore. Among the latter, the phenomena of fear, awe and mystery are drawn on to apprehend aspects of nature otherwise impervious to rational knowledge. Drawing on this two-fold interest, in his works Wirz pursues a compressed, material-filled dissolution of space and time.

Polly Apfelbaum, Josef Herzog
5 March – 10 June 2022, Lucerne



Josef Herzog, *without title*, undated, Aquarelle on paper, 70 × 100 cm
Josef Herzog Estate

The world of Polly Apfelbaum (born 1955) is uncompromisingly colourful. The works of this American artist defy conventional definitions of art in that her canvases are as much carpet as patchwork quilts or ceramics. Sculpture and painting share fluid boundaries. Woven yarn thus replaces the drawn line, the painted brushstroke and her pictures are hung on the wall, placed on the floor or decorate the space.

The drawings of Central Swiss artist Josef Herzog (1939–1998) feature rampant, proliferating structures and formations executed with precision and energy. Josef Herzog undertakes a rigorous investi-

gation of the properties of lines, reducing them to their essence in ever novel variations. Excessiveness and fascination are closely intertwined in his work.

What Polly Apfelbaum and Josef Herzog have in common is their concentration on and exploration of the inherent potency of colours, planes and lines. While both these artists unfold an overwhelming diversity, their work is consistently non-figurative.

Curated by Laura Breitschmid and Fanni Jetzer, the exhibition is scheduled to be on show at the Museum of Art Lucerne.

Louise Bourgeois × Jenny Holzer
The Violence of Handwriting Across a Page
19 February – 15 May 2022, Basel



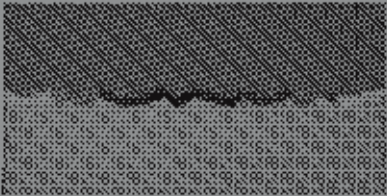
Louise Bourgeois, Garment from Performance «*She lost it*», 1992
© The Easton Foundation/licensed by ProLitteris and VAGA at the Artists Rights Society (ARS) NY

A major contemporary artist of her generation, Jenny Holzer (b. 1950) is curating an exhibition on Louise Bourgeois' oeuvre (1911–2010). Bourgeois is widely regarded as one of the foremost seminal artists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Holzer gained international renown for her exploratory and subversive approaches to the use of public language by adopting unconventional forms in her works: from street signs and T-shirts to projections and LEDs. Influenced by a keen interest in psychology, Bourgeois' work explores human emotions: love, desire, addiction, sexuality, rejection, jealousy and abandonment.

By way of this unique encounter between two extraordinary personalities of American art, the Kunstmuseum Basel presents Bourgeois' work from Holzer's perspective.

Holzer approaches Bourgeois' art through her wide-ranging writings: Bourgeois' archive covers decades of journals and correspondence as well as several hundred psychoanalytical texts. For the exhibition, works covering all of periods of Bourgeois' oeuvre are thematically grouped in the halls of the new building: sculptures, installations, paintings, drawings, prints and texts.

Verena Loewensberg
23 February – 19 June 2022, Geneva

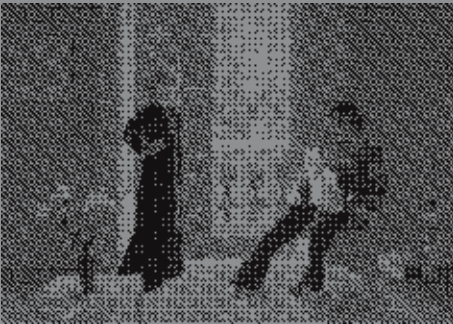


Verena Loewensberg, *untitled*, 1974
40 × 80 cm, oil on canvas

Along with Max Bill, Richard Paul Lohse and Camille Graeser, Verena Loewensberg (1912–1984) was a central figure of the Zurich Concretists, whose art, according to Bill, was “the purest expression of harmonious measure and law”. The only woman in the quartet, she advocated a less dogmatic interpretation of concrete-constructivist rules. With her proclivity for an experimental interpretation of the rules of concrete painting and a keen sense of balancing calculation and intuition, Verena Loewensberg's work constitutes something like the poetic core of the Zurich Concretists.

The exhibition at MAMCO is patterned on the artist's development. Drawing on the relationship of her entire generation to the grid system as rational organising principle, the exhibition charts the growth of this movement from the 1950s, highlighting the significance of music and applied art in Loewensberg's early pieces. It also illustrates the artist's more liberal approach to the use of form and colour, culminating in her series of the 1970s and 1980s, which reflect the inspiration behind two contemporary movements, serial art and radical abstraction.

David Hockney: Moving Focus
7 July – 30 October 2022, Lucerne



David Hockney, *Mr. and Mrs. Clark and Percy*, 1970–71
Acrylic on canvas, 213.4 × 305 cm
Presented by the Friends of the Tate Gallery 1971
© David Hockney, Photograph: Tate

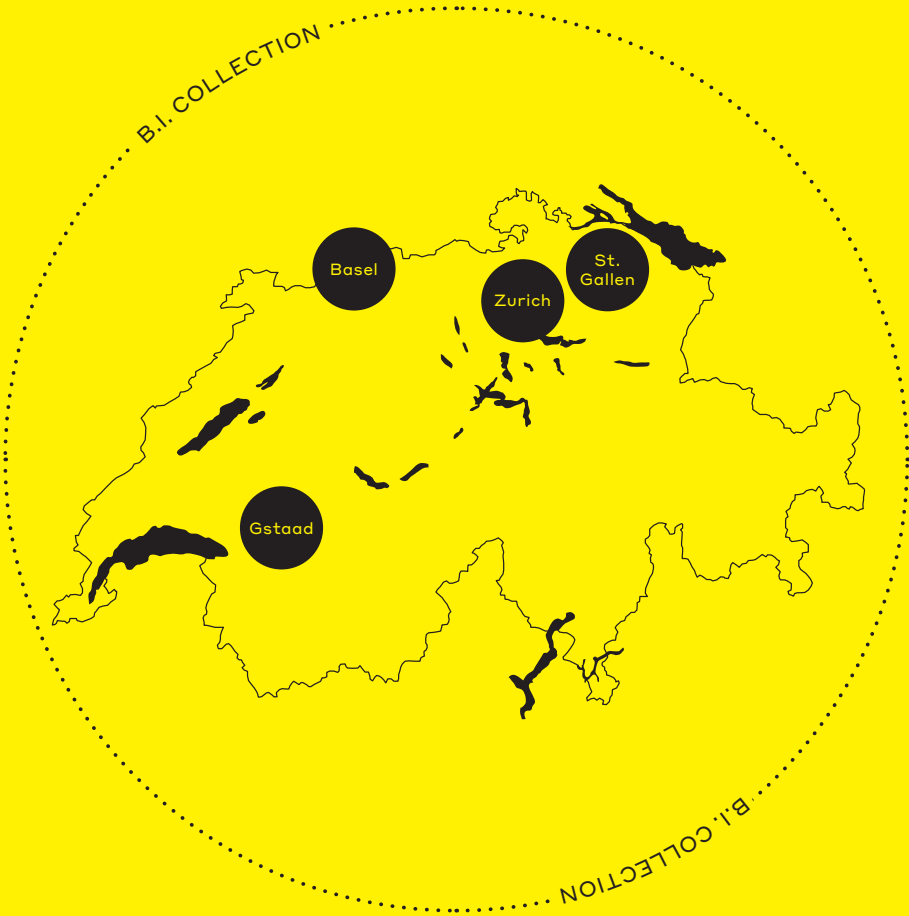
Among the most influential artists of our time, David Hockney's work has exerted a sustained formative effect on the history of contemporary painting. Undaunted by such terms as “style” or “handwriting”, the artist reinvents himself again and again, capturing his environment from the most diverse perspectives in a wide range of media and with constant inquisitiveness.

The exhibition at the Kunstmuseum Lucerne (in cooperation with the Tate), features works from the 1960s through to the present, thus spanning the artist's life in London, Los Angeles, Normandy and his journeys throughout Europe and the Arab world. Alongside early ex-

perimental compositions that date from his London period, the exhibition showcases two series of drawings: his well-known naturalistic portraits of family and close friends, abstract works, and multi-perspectival paintings and prints from the 1980s. One recurring theme is the artist's homosexuality, which finds expression in the portraits of his lovers, male nudes, or in the subtle allusions and references to the gay community. The centrepiece of the exhibition is the monumental landscape painting *Bigger Trees Near Water/ Ou Peinture Sur Le Motif Pour Le Nouvel Age Post-Photographique* (2007), Hockney's largest work to date.

Services & locations

Collecting
Beat Imwinkelried –
A guide for
car collectors



A guide for car collectors

Collecting is, above all else, a passionate affair. Every collector has at one time or another felt an intense thrill coming over him when viewing a remarkable work of art, a first edition of an historic book or a rare classic car; there is a moment of ultimate exhilaration which goes hand in hand with the acquisition of an object without which you could not possibly survive.

There are few people who resolve to become a car collector overnight. More often, they are inclined to buy one car, then another, and only over the course of time realise that they are now in possession of a constellation of automotive artefacts that has meanwhile become a significant collection. Or they unexpectedly inherit a valuable collection of classic cars, and while not seeing themselves as “collectors”, the inherited collection may even form the bulk of their net worth. Others describe themselves as being “gripped by collector’s fever” and declare their passion for collecting as an obsession or an unbridled passion. No matter how and for what purpose one acquires cars, there is more to car collecting than simply attending an auction and acquiring an expensive car. Besides capital, it requires careful deliberation, time, space for storage and some degree of specialist knowledge.

ACQUISITION

The purchase of cars – whether from a dealer or through an auction house, directly from the owner, or some other means – is what forms the heart of collecting. However, knowledge of who to buy from and at what price, are arts in themselves which one can develop gradually. Although most car collectors do not collect solely for investment purposes, most at least wish to see how price relates to value and whether they are investing their money wisely. Many people are interested in purchasing something set to increase in value over time – or at least holds its value. Generally speaking, the more one spends up front, the more money one saves over the vehicle’s lifespan.

This already starts with the question of what to collect. Collecting is highly personal, a reflection of oneself. Some may start with a specific theme or collecting strategy. Others simply buy very much opportunistically. While some focus on a specific make, such as Ferrari, Porsche or Bentley, others opt for a geographical category, such as “English classic cars.”

The following are the various other factors to consider when acquiring your first collector’s car:

- 1 Availability of replacement parts. This is important since you will want to ensure access to parts that are both reasonably priced and readily obtainable.
- 2 Support and classic car clubs. Classic car clubs exist all over the country for all the major types of vehicles. Whether one is a DIY enthusiast or simply wishes to join a club to discuss your passion

- for the car, it is always good to know that there are other people in much the same position as you. Many such members are more than willing to offer advice or even take a hand in the project themselves.
- 3 Selling. Although you may be in buying mode at present, you may well wish to sell your car one day. It is, by far, easier to sell a first-class classic car with a well-established pedigree than a gimmicky vehicle that, though very special, is of little interest to anyone.

PURCHASING FROM A DEALER

Professional dealers ought to be well-versed with the car and its history. As a rule, the car should come with comprehensive documentation and a full list of all service and maintenance work that has been done. When it comes to very rare and valuable collector’s items, good dealers will not just sell the car, but will ensure that it is in the right hands. Their aim is not simply to sell to anyone with spare change, and certainly not to a suspected speculator, namely, to a buyer intent only on making money from the purchase and selling it at the next auction.

The same holds true for modern cars in limited series such as the Ferrari LaFerrari, the Monza SP1 and SP2, a McLaren Speedtail, a Mercedes AMG Project One and the Daytona SP3. In such cases, the manufacturer and the dealer – as the extended wing of the manufacturer – stipulate the signing of a right of first refusal as condition for obtaining access to the most sought-after collector’s cars. This right of first refusal is designed to prevent car buyers from selling the collector cars within a specified period of time (e.g. 18 months) and generating a speculative profit from it. Car buyers known for selling such vehicles rapidly and profitably could be blacklisted by certain manufacturers.

The advantages and disadvantages of buying from a dealer may include the following:

ADVANTAGES

- Good dealers will subject their stock to a pre-sale inspection. A reputable dealer will have no objection to you thoroughly inspecting the car and to bringing in an external inspector to check that the car they are offering is the one you are buying.
- You are in a good negotiating position. While the dealer will attempt to get you to agree to a price increase, he will also seek to persuade the seller to accept a price reduction; he simply wishes to close the deal.

DISADVANTAGES

- Dealers are brokers. Which means that you may be indirectly paying a higher price since the seller pays the broker a commission of 3 to 6 % of the total selling price.

TRADE FAIRS AND CLASSIC CAR SHOWS

There are several established trade fairs and car shows, such as the Rétromobile in Paris. For the collector, making purchases at such fairs has the advantage of “one-stop shopping” and the chance to inspect and compare different cars from a variety of dealers and from different regions at one location. However, collectors ought to be on guard against making hasty decisions in the heat of the moment. As a rule, collectors searching for good deals in a competitive market will fail to find what they are looking for at classic car fairs. That said, most fairs and exhibitions provide collectors with exceptional educative opportunities well worth investigating. And, in fact, many collectors visit fairs primarily to research and make contacts, rather than to do business.

PURCHASE AT AN AUCTION

Classic car auctions are quite seductive. The crowds, the buzz and the prospect of securing a good price for your dream car all sound tempting. The vast majority of cars sold at auctions have had at least one previous owner. Often the underlying reason for the sale of a car is one of the four Ds: Death, Divorce, Debt and Development. The last D, development, namely, is when a collector is looking to expand his or her collection by selling a car in exchange for another.

Anybody with a big enough chequebook can bid for a car. No special connections are required. Estimated prices, hammer prices and sales prices are publicly disclosed. While some may enjoy the thrill of the sales room and savour the auction experience to the fullest, others prefer remaining anonymous and retain the services of a consultant. Online auctions are becoming increasingly popular, no doubt fuelled by the pandemic. The buyer should at all times be aware of any incurred fees, taxes and duties involved in auctions.

Here are some of the pros and cons connected with this option:

ADVANTAGES

- The advantage of auctions is that they are effective markets and the pricing is very transparent.
- Auctions are an excellent means to sell premium cars that may have otherwise never graced a dealer’s showroom. Indeed, several of the most sought-after (i.e. costly) cars have been sold at auctions, rather than by a private individual or dealer.
- Often auctions may be attended by phone or internet, thus providing you with the opportunity to acquire a car from the other end of the world.
- You can buy a car at auction that has little or no margin: If only a few buyers are bidding for your car, it is possible to get a bargain.

DISADVANTAGES

- The buyer is given only limited opportunities for inspection. Besides being allowed to walk around the car and possibly hear

- the engine turn over, there is no opportunity for a full inspection. Only once having bought the car are you going to discover all its hidden surprises, and remember: at an auction there is no such thing as a refund.
- The seller and buyer premiums attaching to the purchase price may raise the price of the vehicle by 10–25% over that of a private individual.
- Moreover, there is also the uncertainty about whether it will actually be possible to obtain the sought after vehicle.
- Besides, in the heat of the auction it may be tempting to overbid.

Judicious collectors should set their personal bidding limit prior to the start of the auction.

CONSULTANTS

To establish their collections, some collectors opt to work with a consultant. But why collaborate with a consultant when it is such a joy to go on a voyage of discovery oneself? There are three principal reasons for this. The first is education: Novice collectors, or those with little time on their hands, appreciate the shortcut. The consultant handles the research and legwork, talks to dealers and travels to fairs. The second could be access. New collectors may lack contacts. The third is that collectors may remain in the back-ground and wish to remain at low profile throughout the process. It is common practice that consultants charge a specified percentage of the transaction value. Regardless of how they charge, consultants should only receive payment from one source, preferably the buyer. The practice of “double dipping” is considered unethical.

DOCUMENTATION

The essential parts of the documentation of a collection vehicle are as follows:

- Vehicle type: Which manufacturer are we dealing with? Which model? Which series?
- Chassis number: This is the most essential key for vehicle identification. After the chassis number, the vehicle’s other key items, such as the engine, must be identified by the number and match the original parts on first delivery (so-called “matching numbers”)
- Description: a detailed visual description of the exterior and interior paintwork. This field should also contain detailed descriptions of the materials.
- Engine description: Since the engine is the centrepiece of many collector vehicles, a fairly detailed description of the engine ought to be included.
- Dimensions/weight: Lengths, wheelbase, etc. should be specified either in inches or centimetres.
- Provenance: The ownership history of the vehicle should also be identified. Provenance is an important piece of information

- regarding any car on the secondary market and has an impact upon its value. For example, if Mika Häkkinen sells his McLaren P1, Senna and Speedtail, these three McLaren will command a “Häkkinen premium.” Every known previous owner should be listed. Condition: The overall state of the car should always be included. In Europe an established rating exists, using grades 1, 2 and 3. Such ratings should be supplemented with basic terms to describe the condition.
- Location: This field concerns the actual physical location and current registration. This may be relevant for cross-border transactions, namely, with respect to taxes, customs duties and VAT.
- Restoration history: All documentation and records related to the vehicle’s restoration history should be entered into the vehicle’s file. This would include condition reports, restoration invoices and relevant images/photos.
- Concours history: Should the vehicle have been exhibited at concours and classic car fairs, then this should also be indicated in the vehicle file.

INSURANCE

The wording of the insurance policy defines the insurance cover. This will state what types of damage are covered and what is excluded. Collectors should keep in mind that an insurance policy is a negotiable instrument and that the annual renewal of the policy provides a further opportunity to benefit from various opportunities.

Most collectors do not handle business directly with the insurance company, but with a broker. When entering into a business relationship, the broker’s fee should be discussed and there should be full transparency.

In most cases, collectors look for an “all-risk” policy, i.e. a policy providing coverage for all incidental physical loss or damage (e.g. fire, accidental damage, water, loss, etc.) unless specifically excluded. Exclusions often include catastrophic events (9/11, earthquakes, etc.).

In the event that the vehicle is not registered, the insurance cover must be checked in greater detail. More specifically, one should verify whether the vehicle is insured regardless of location, or restricted to the owner’s property. Furthermore, ensure that the policy provides “worldwide” coverage, particularly if the owner wishes to participate in rallies in more exotic countries.

SHIPPING/TRANSPORTION

When buying, restoring or for any reason transporting a collector car to another location, one of the first matters you should consider is transportation. Thousands of cars are transported on trucks every day. However, assuming the car has a certain value, it is not only recommended that one select a specialist transport company so as to

ensure damage-free transport. All cross-border transportation may incur import and customs charges, and the rates and methods of tax collection vary from country to country. Furthermore, in some countries value added tax (VAT) is levied. It is highly recommended that you work with professionals familiar with the tax and customs regime and who are also experienced in dealing with the relevant formalities. The transfer of vehicles from the USA to Europe or from EU countries to non-EU countries in particular, can be tricky to handle.

When selecting a freight company, one should pay attention to the existence of a subcontracting clause. Although a valuable car may be placed in the hands of a reputable haulage company, a collector should not assume that it will remain there and not be passed on to a subcontractor. Another highly relevant point is the storage by the freight company. Does the freight company share a storage space with other companies? And how is the facility protected?

One such company specialising in this field is CAR Classic Automobile Relocation Logistics Ltd. in Thörishaus, near Berne.

STORAGE

Not all collectors have sufficient space to store their cars at their homes. They frequently entrust their cars to the hands of specialised car storage facilities, sometimes referred to as car lounges or car hotels. Collectors should carefully choose their storage facility by visiting all potential storage facilities and clarifying the following questions:

- What security arrangements are in place at the storage facility? Who has access to which area?
- Who works at the facility? Does the facility employ specialist staff?
- Are adequate fire protection systems in place?
- What are the methods used to control temperature and humidity?
- For what purposes are the adjacent buildings used?
- Do the personnel ensure adequate privacy and confidentiality safeguards? The collection business thrives on information – who owns what? – and such information must not be disclosed to third parties.

Moreover, it is of considerable added value if the storage company also offers technical services, especially in view of the fact that the cars are often not frequently driven. Ideally, the storage facility can also provide technical maintenance of the cars, check-ups and washing/cleaning and carry out tyre services.

As part of our B.I. Collection group, we maintain several service providers at various locations highly specialised in the storage of collector’s vehicles.

To conclude, we shall address the issue of parting with a collection. There are numerous reasons that prompt collectors to part with cars or even an entire collection. Collectors’ tastes and interests tend to change. Perhaps a car is no longer suitable for a collection and is sold to fund a new acquisition. The collector may attend an auction and become passionate about a Ferrari 275 GTS. Or two less valuable cars are swapped to fund the acquisition of a single, more valuable object. A car may be sold to pay off debts or raise capital especially in cases in which there has been a substantial increase in value.

Legacy planning is about the management and disposal of assets consistent with one’s personal wishes before or after death. Collectors are frequently no less structured when it comes to their art collections. Surprisingly, the same applies to valuable cars or even an entire collection.

In selling or transferring ownership of a car, all relevant information is required and the car must be documented. The documentation should ideally be updated and completed in advance of entering the market.

Given that collectors must know the current value of what they are parting with, the second step in relinquishing a valuable car is to obtain an appraisal. For all the following steps, an up-to-date appraisal cannot be overestimated. In many cases, owners approach the market with unrealistic expectations of value or with already outdated auction results. Frequently, such an approach may be regrettable, since it does do not lead to successful transactions, yet the market is aware that the car is for sale.

For this reason, we recommend developing a strategy or an outline plan for the sale of a collection. Each relevant sector of the market ought to be analysed. It could be that one car is best suited for selling by auction with an internationally renowned “big name”, while another car is best sold through a dealer or a smaller, local auction house.

After a decision has been made to put up a car for sale, the key issue is how and when it should be sold. Firstly, a collector should check what type of market segments and/or geographical markets an auction house or dealer specialises in.

At auction sales, the seller benefits from attracting the attention of several potential buyers at one time, which can spur bidding and help boost prices. Often the auction house works with marketing campaigns and advertisements. Finally, the auction marketplace is fairly transparent.

The downside is that the seller has to adhere to an auction calendar, which is not always convenient. Selling at auction is occasionally not

without risks either. Since auctions are public forums, some collectors may fear the public. And if the car is well known, some people might wonder why it is being auctioned. If a high-profile and valuable car is not sold in public, the object may be considered “burnt” and may be difficult to sell at the estimated price, at least in the near future.

A collector who intends to sell a car at auction ought first to obtain competing offers from different auction houses. Specifically, what kind of valuation would they provide for the vehicle? What kind of fees will be charged? How is the sale to be marketed? The seller and the auction house must also reach an agreement as to the lowest price at which the car should be sold.

Selling through a dealership affords a higher degree of privacy than selling at auction, and facilitates the sale of a vehicle at any time. It may provide a greater degree of control in that a car can be “placed” within a network or offered to a “suitable” buyer. However, it may sometimes take months for a dealer to find a willing buyer for the asking price.

There is a distinction between a reputable dealer and a broker. The desired privacy may vanish within twenty-four hours once the information about the tendered vehicle circulates among a handful of brokers only interested in “selling” the car for an additional CHF 30,000 worth of commission income.

Dealer consignment contracts should specify a period of three months to one year. The dealer needs sufficient time for having a fair chance to sell the car and the seller ought to be able to reclaim the car within a reasonable deadline. The parties will wish to revise the market environment, the desired price range and the terms of the consignment contract should the car not have been sold.

Consignment contracts ought to specify who is liable for costs, such as transport and insurance. At the end of a specified period of time, the dealer is entitled to charge a certain amount for vehicle storage.

A good dealer maintains long-term personal relationships with private collectors based on trust and expertise, which in turn helps ensure high quality consignments, but at the same time allows them to retain their “own” market within their extended customer base. A strong dealer network sells up to 80% of the consigned vehicles within their own network.

A FEW CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE TOPIC OF CAR COLLECTING ...

Collecting cars has often been likened to a journey. This journey begins with the quest and proceeds through to acquisition, owner-

ship and – finally – yielding. Without collectors, there would be no classic car and collectors’ market. There are many types of collectors each of whom enters the market for their own reasons.

Given the volatile nature of financial markets, classic car buyers have come to realise that they can actually profit by investing in a classic car collection (whether incidentally or intentionally) and utilise it as a wealth diversifier. This appreciation is arguably most important when it comes to disposing of one’s car collection at some stage. To find the best way to sell at the right time for the right price requires an in-depth understanding of the business and the market.

Keeping all this in mind, my final remark is to simply get behind the wheel and drive. Indeed, one of the worst things you can possibly do to an old car is to just let it sit around. Take it out for a drive at the weekends in the morning and again in the afternoon. It’s good for the car and is a lot of fun for you.

PERFECTION TO THE ENTH DEGREE

Text: Anke Fischer
Photography: Robbe & Berking / Jan Kulke

Robbe & Berking have been crafting silver into objects of art that have brought a shine to dining halls, restaurants and yachts throughout the world for almost 150 years. The second mainstay of this north German company is it's lovingly restored or replicated yachts. To better understand the inspiration behind this fascination for silver and wood, we met with the company's CEO, Oliver Berking, in Flensburg.

Whether talking of silver spoons or wooden boats, for Oliver Berking they are both are lived passions and man-made works of art that make the world of Robbe & Berking resonate. While exuding tremendous vigour and tenacity, Berking's entrepreneurial talent is rooted in an instinctive sensibility. Coupled with his flair for establishing networks and inspiring enthusiasm, is his success at evoking bygone eras. What's more, Robbe & Berking is living testimony to the fact that unique, handcrafted luxury products of the highest quality can, and still should, be produced in Germany. This is true both of the silver manufactory, the world's market leader in silverware, and of the Classic shipyard, regarded as the absolute ne-plus-ultra of wooden yachts of the 12mR size class.

Robbe & Berking owes its leading status on the world market to a maxim coined by Oliver Berking's great-great-grandfather: "Others may be less expensive, but none are superior to ours." Now in its fifth generation, this Flensburg-based family business is currently headed by Oliver Berking. He has been steadily expanding the manufactory since he took the helm in 1985, ensuring that all steps of the production process are performed exclusively in the company's own workshops. "Today, we are by far the largest manufacturer of silver cutlery in the world – and with only 150 employees."

THE LONGEVITY OF TRADITION OVER SHORT-TERM TRENDS

Eighty years ago there were still three manufacturers in northern Germany alone, explains Oliver Berking during our tour of the production facility in Flensburg, which became operational in 1874. Some 20 tonnes of silver are manufactured here each year for the various collections, which include a total of 4,000 different items. Robbe & Berking lists 30 different silver and silver-plated cutlery designs, each comprising 50 individual pieces, from oyster forks to sugar tongs. Fifty steps comprise the production process – involving cutting, grinding, polishing and two quality controls – before the finished spoon is available for sale. Candelabras and a host of other superb table accessories are also manufactured, thus complementing the consummate table service.

The more than 2000 master moulds used to make the steel cutting and embossing tools for the range of cutlery patterns are meticulously handcrafted and stored in the workshop's "Fort Knox." Since 1991, Robbe & Berking has been issuing a repurchase guarantee, which ensures that all silver and silver-plated supplements can be repurchased at least until the year 2040. This longevity is the hallmark of success, in that only the most exquisite patterns and designs are manufactured. As Berking points out, the company has no compunction about refraining from following trends, but rather designs collections guaranteed to endure for generations to come. This emphasis on continuity is perceived as being especially important among those who appreciate tradition and value, both private customers and collectors, but no less so hotels and restaurants, which rely on consistency and elegance.

"JUST DON'T START SPECULATING!"

The discretely stamped silver seal on the reverse side of the silverware not only indicates the items' origin – the former imperial crown symbolising Germany, the crescent moon

indicating silver – but is also the mark of refinement: in other words, whether the cutlery is silver or silver-plated. The difference between 925-sterling silver – pure silver being too soft and the low copper component providing stability – and silver-plated cutlery, is that it translates into a price roughly four times greater. Moreover, silver is a commodity traded on the stock exchange the price of which is subject to constant fluctuation. Oliver Berking adheres to his father's advice, who once enjoined: "Just don't start speculating!" Berking determines the timing of his silver orders – purchasing exclusively from German suppliers – on the basis of years of experience and intuition. Moreover, he keeps a vigilant eye on stock-market fluctuations and liaises with the production department.

Silverware does not constitute a financial investment, yet Robbe & Berking has been offering purchasing and selling services for gold and silver bars as well as coins since 2009. Sales values are regularly indexed to current values in international gold and silver markets. The almost 150 years' experience in the precious metals business in conjunction with the sales network comprising eleven branches in major German cities, all testifies to being more than a considerable advantage. This signals that the luxury brand remains committed to its customers and is on course for lasting success.

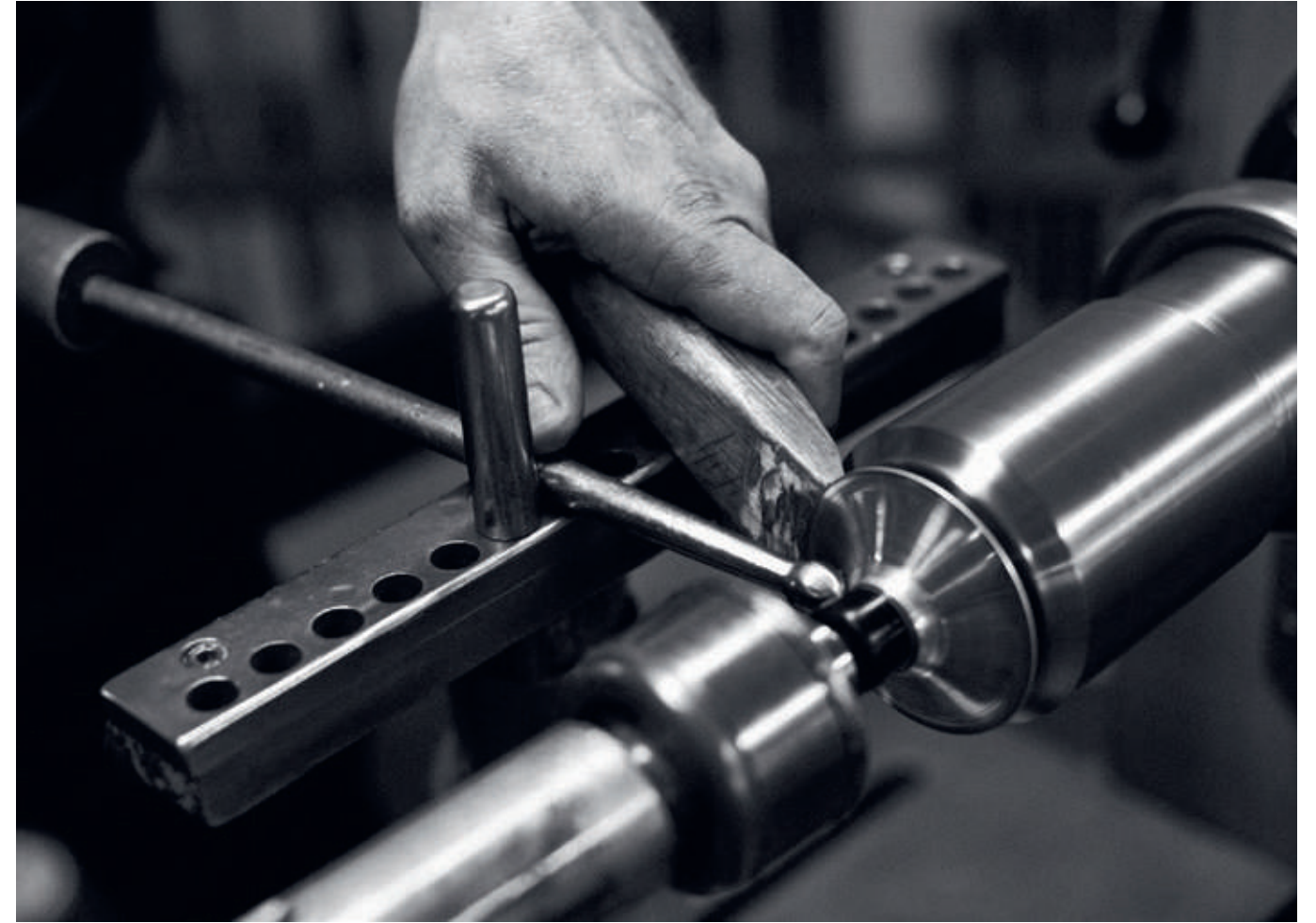
PARTNERSHIPS & INNOVATIONS

Well over half of the world's 200 largest yachts are outfitted with Robbe & Berking silverwork. Taken together, the restaurants which rely on the manufactory's range of products represent hundreds of Michelin stars. Similarly, numerous luxury and first class car brands maintain relationships of outstanding cooperation with Robbe & Berking. One such brand is BMW, which has achieved a masterpiece of craftsmanship for its BMW Individual in the BMW 7 Series. Over ten kilograms of sterling silver were "bespoke-fitted" for the interior and exterior trimmings, as witnessed in the hammer-finished Martelé door handles or the enamelled BMW emblem.

"I am more at ease today than I have felt in a long while in the field of product development," says Oliver Berking as we pass his most recent masterpiece, one of his workshop's, mahogany-fashioned bar trollies. This wonderful design is a veritable feast for the eyes, which, thanks to the silver bar collection that features everything from champagne glasses to whisky tumblers, is a finely styled augmentation for both private residences and business premises. The cutlery box for the conveyance of silver cutlery from the cabinet to the dining table has similarly proven a great success. Berking remarks that the company plans to continue conquering the world, including the Chinese market. At the same time, the company is currently developing a new web shop accessible anytime and anywhere.

AN IMPOSSIBLE MISSION

Together with Oliver Berking, we now find ourselves inside the shipyard building at Flensburg's city harbour, which he acquired in 2008 – albeit without a business plan. Berking's second passion, wooden sailing yachts, has its roots in the restoration of the "Sphinx." The classic 12mR regatta yacht, originally built in 1939 as a flagship for the Norddeutscher Regatta Verein NRV, one of Germany's foremost sailing clubs,





was a major success. She was subsequently in service for 50 years with the German armed forces as a training vessel for naval officer cadets.

The “Sphinx” was listed for sale in 2005. Together with two of his partners, Oliver Berking resolved to prevent the boat from leaving the Flensburg fjord: Submitting a joint bid, the partners ultimately won the auction. From 2006 to 2008, Berking and his specialist staff undertook a thoroughgoing restoration based on the shipyard’s original specifications. At the time, very few believed the undertaking would prove successful. “The members of the restoration outfit were dismissed as a bunch of lunatics who would wreck the vessel”, Berking recounts through a beaming smile. By endeavouring to retain the knowledge acquired during the restoration, Berking and his team laid the foundation stone for constructing the wharf. They have been restoring classic motor and sailing yachts, along with replicas of exceptionally fine, long-lost classics ever since. More recent constructions are also replicated with loving attention to detail and tremendous élan.

Whether using original or recent plans, traditional or contemporary construction methods, they are always made of wood and handcrafted.

FLensburg’S EXPERTISE

“Researching lost yachts and their original construction plans are among our most important vital tasks,” explains Oliver Berking. Thus, several famous racing yachts in the 6- or 12-metre class have already been rescued, namely, restored or replicated. Among them is the final design of legendary Norwegian yacht builder and Olympic sailing champion, Johan Anker, which was finally completed in the shipyard following a 76-year hiatus. None other than the Norwegian King Harald V appeared in Flensburg for the laying of the keel in 2015.

“We have yet to make a profit from the new construction projects,” Oliver Berking reports. “Our library houses millions of pages of plans and information, which facilitates defining the construction with the client, clarifying legal aspects and making estimates to the best of my knowledge and conscience. In the final analysis, there is invariably far more involved. And yet there is a world market for this small but vibrant demand for exclusive, first-class and newly manufactured or restored collector’s pieces. The experience of the silver manufactory bears testimony to this. Ultimately, I envision further establishing Flensburg as a centre of excellence for classic yacht construction.”

Meanwhile, Berking’s zeal for classic racing yachts attracts an influx of around 100,000 visitors to his premises each year. Since 1995, the company has also hosted the Robbe & Berking Sterling Cup, an annual classic regatta on the Flensburg fjord held in cooperation with the Flensburg Sailing Club. In 2019, Oliver Berking even managed to host the “Induction Ceremony” of the legendary America’s Cup Hall of Fame in his Flensburg shipyard. Since 1992, over 80 Cup legends have been inducted into this select circle; with all but a few exceptions, the induction ceremony has always been held in the USA. Guests from around the world flocked to the premises of the Robbe & Berking Yachting Heritage Center and brought major international publicity to the Flensburg shipyard.

WINTER GUESTS WITH A SHARED HISTORY

In the shipyard’s winter depot can be found legendary yachts by renowned owners and builders, some of which have close ties due to special events, such as “VIM” and “Gretel”, notes Berking. VIM was commissioned in 1939 by US entrepreneur Harold Vanderbilt at the New York shipyard Olin Stephens, and had already then distinguished herself by virtue of her state-of-the-art design. The yacht achieved countless regatta successes, which have endured to this day. Among other things, VIM won the twelve-metre class of the Robbe & Berking Sterling Cup 2021.

The Australian yacht Gretel, the design of which was based on VIM, was built 23 years later by designer Alan Payne as a challenger for the 1962 America’s Cup. The teams of the two yachts trained together in preparation for the Cup; ultimately, the Americans won the day.

In the years that followed, the super-fast “Gretel” likewise served as a sparring partner for several other teams, later being sold in Europe where she continued to sail for many years in Italy. She was discovered in Italy by the Robbe & Berking Classics yacht yard, where she has since berthed at the Flensburg shipyard. “Our aim is to restore the ship to her original condition of 1962,” explains Oliver Berking. “The Gretel is a unique specimen in yachting history and must be preserved by all means.”

THE ALLURE OF VANISHING TRADES

Robbe & Berking Classics is more than a shipyard; it is also museum, library, restaurant, yacht broker, and small publishing house. With all these attractions, Berking welcomes guests to embark on a journey to Flensburg and experience the glamour of life in, on and around the water. Here, too, everything is pure passion, from the detailed historical fittings to the most important international collection of antiquarian yachting literature housing some 9600 works. The perfect experience is completed by dining at the Italian restaurant.

At our final lunch together, Oliver Berking’s pioneering fervour and boundless passion reveal themselves once again. “So, this is what runs through the story of my life: both are trades that show that what I feel passionate about actually no longer exists. There is no real need for a wooden boat or a silver spoon, these are simply luxury items. We represent what people would commonly associate with the good old days. The world is changing and yet times of crisis have invariably afforded ample food for thought.”

A SHORT HISTORY

The Flensburg silver manufactory was founded by Nicolaus Christoph Robbe in 1874. Supported by his wife Luise, he began to make superbly crafted silver cutlery. In 1897, he appointed a highly gifted journeyman by the name of Robert Berking. Berking fell in love with Henriette Robbe, his master’s daughter, married her and acquired a 50 percent share in the small company. Over the ensuing twelve years, they steadily expanded the Robbe & Berking silver workshop.

Robert Berking died in 1908 at the age of 35 due to a bathing accident. Since his four children were at the time too young to succeed him, the young widow assumed responsibility for the business. Henriette Berking was supported by her father Nicolaus Christoph Robbe and her brother Arnold Robbe. The eldest son Theodor took over the company in 1925. Within barely 40 years, he

transformed the small workshop into a renowned silver manufactory in northern Germany employing a staff of 100.

During the Second World War, most employees were called up for military service. And when demand for silver cutlery plummeted, the manufactory kept afloat by producing war medals. From 1949 onwards, Robbe & Berking profited from the economic upswing that began with the newly introduced currency reform. The number of employees rose steadily, with the result that by 1956 the company was finally able to relocate to a larger plant. In 1958 Robert Berking took over the helm from his father. Over the four decades of his tenure, he transformed Robbe & Berking from a regional supplier confined to Schleswig-Holstein and East Frisia into Europe’s leading manufacturer of silver cutlery.



REALLY FAST

REALLY FAST

Text: Kurt Molzer
Photos: Ferrari



This is a tale fraught with highs and lows; it opens with our author nearly being denied passage to Italy for a scheduled test drive of the Ferrari SF90 Stradale Assetto Fiorano – something which might well have led to an unprecedented disaster. All went well, of course, – very well, indeed!

If, in the end, there was not ...

I'm flushing hot and cold and now have a pulse that's just rocketed up to 150. It can't be true, but it is. I'm living out a nightmare. The ground attendant of Austrian Airlines at Vienna airport refuses to let me board for the flight to Munich with subsequent connection to Bologna. I'm scheduled to test drive the 1,000 hp (!) Ferrari SF90 Stradale Assetto Fiorano – my solo dance with the devil. I've been anticipating the event for what feels like an eternity. But the ground attendant remains adamant: she has absolutely no clue about what she's putting me through.

I brought with me a negative Covid test – but not the registration for admission to Italy. They had told me at the Foreign Office that I might just as well register once arrived at my destination. I must act now, gamble everything on one card. I lean over the counter and assume a Robert De Niro grimace witnessed in the nasty scenes of "Taxi Driver". With an intense gaze fixed directly into the young lady's eyes, I let her know that "If I fail to be on this flight, something disastrous is going to happen." Gobsmailed, she gasps for breath, wrestling in vain for words. Dealing with psychiatric passengers is evidently something for which they failed to give her adequate training. "Don't misunderstand me," I add, "I wouldn't touch a hair on your head. This is all to do with me. I'm about to disembowel myself... Do you understand the meaning of that old-fashioned word, young lady?"

Visibly distraught, the young woman reaches for the phone: She's about to call the police, or so I suspect. But she has her supervisor on the line and is explaining my case. A supervisor is the last thing I need, right now. But he apparently means

well with me. He instructs me to register online right away via a mobile phone. The attendant hands me an internet address. I begin keying in and get to the website. The list of questions is endless. Field after field has to be filled out. What next? What was the temperature in your cheek – bottom left – during the last solar eclipse? It's driving me up the wall. At one point I can get no further: "Your entries are invalid." I abandon all hope. The ground attendant now says she must proceed to close the flight. "Call your supervisor one more time," I answer, only afterwards realizing that this must have come across as a threat. At this stage, I have literally become Robert De Niro. But she does actually call. I would bet anything that she wouldn't have. "The gentleman is having trouble entering his data," she speaks into the receiver. Half a minute later she hangs up and says: "You may fly, but at your own risk. In Munich though, they will most likely send you back again. Lips quivering, I breathe in loudly. "I doubt it", I reply, and begin to board the plane.

Why all the drama? Neither in Munich nor in Bologna am I asked for any registration. Once safely ensconced in the Executive Spa Hotel in Fiorano, I tell myself: "Stop getting so wound up, it wears on your heart. If push came to shove, you could have easily travelled by car. The real action on the Circuito only begins tomorrow." I retire to bed and continue reading a chapter of my book "The Unknown Kimi Räikkönen". After such a demanding journey, it's a great relief to read. Ferrari's last F1 world champion (2007) gives a blow-by-blow, highly entertaining account of his bouts of heavy boozing and how he was pie-eyed for a fortnight prior to the 2013 Spanish Grand Prix. I'll take a whisky from the minibar before nodding off.



The next day I quite literally tread sacred ground: Pope John Paul II visited in 1988 and bestowed his benediction. The Ferrari test facility in Via Gilles Villeneuve, a three-kilometre circuit with the corresponding infrastructure, is a stone’s throw away from the main Maranello plant. I am now standing – in the middle of the circuit – on the Piazza Michael Schumacher and in front of a whitewashed, two-story house fitted with red shutters: This was the former residence of Enzo Ferrari, the lone Commendatore, the Godfather of Maranello, the tyrant, the master of intrigue, the misanthrope, the genius. One begins to wonder whether the old man hadn’t long-since gone stone deaf from the constant clamour of engines. Three million euros are parked in front of the building’s entrance – six prime specimens of this infernal beast around which everything revolves today. In silver, blue and red, where the price per unit amounts to a handsome 491,670 euros. Quite frankly, I find the word unit price completely inappropriate when in reference to one of the world’s most expensive supercars; one might just as well refer to a celery root, a rubber duck or a toothpick holder, but regrettably I can’t think of an alternative term at this point. But while on the subject of figures, just out of sheer curiosity I did a quick calculation before starting out on this trip, which runs something like this: How much labour would an average carpenter in Germany have to put in to purchase such a car? The answer is 24 years. Provided, that is, he sacrifices his entire net monthly income of 1,700 euros. In that this would be patently unfeasible, I calculated further: it would entail the carpenter starving and freezing himself to death in the process, that he would be unable to afford a mere sandwich or a pair of C&A’s most cut-price polyester pants. Assuming the said carpenter would be able to set aside 500 euros per month, at what point would he have saved the coveted 491,670 euros? Within 82 years. Sadly, this would be untenable since by that time the carpenter would be long-since dead and buried. Now, you might then say: “But the carpenter wouldn’t be able to buy this Ferrari even with a fat, million-dollar inheritance since only select customers would be able acquire it anyway.” Wrong. Unlike the LaFerrai, the Assetto Fiorano is not limited. Then what’s the bottom line? Hope dies last!

Incidentally, there is just one other person around whom everything revolves here: me! I owe this to my black, long-sleeved Niki Lauda shirt. Our champion in the Ferrari 312T, born in 1975, writ large across my chest. At such a test drive for journalists in Fiorano, this is as good as it gets as an Austrian. All smiles, they give me the thumbs up, pat me on the back – all chassis and motor engineers, aerodynamicists, men and women from the press department. A mere glance at me sets them off into raptures. Two Ferrari-red-shirt-and-pants-wearing mechanics even break into a round of applause. One yells over to me: “Sembri molto veloce!” (“You look pretty fast!”). Why, then, do these words suddenly inspire a sense of unease? Quite simply because I’m now under pressure. They no doubt imagine I’ll run the other motoring journalists into the ground, reduce them to simpering extras. I’m their number-one favourite. But, what if this front-runner suffers a major crash and wipes out half a million euros in one fell swoop? Should this happen, they will hound him off in disgrace, as is the custom with Ferrari. Thus, this number-one favourite now seeks distraction in conversation with one of

the Ferrari hostesses. The proud bearer of a symmetrically formed, Nefertiti-like forehead, she inquires whether he is not Italian and has fallen among the group of German-speaking journalists by mistake. But no, everything was quite true, he was a transalpine valley shitter, a merda del burrone and had no idea from whom he had inherited those lawless-looking dark shadows under his eyes. The hostess, who could easily be the daughter of this number-one favourite, cups her hand over her mouth and bursts into laughter. This was the first time, she says, that she had ever heard this word – merda del burrone. In fact, it’s a German term of abuse for Austrians, the number-one favourite explains, and since he lived in the Federal Republic of Germany for several years, it had naturally become part of his everyday language, which, as she had just noted, had gone so far that he now even refers to himself as a “Schluchtenscheißer” (a valley shitter).

While these two continue their tête-à-tête, let’s now turn our attention to the car. First of all, its history: about two years ago, Ferrari unveiled the SF90 Stradale, a plug-in hybrid powered by four engines. Maranello has never produced anything worse for the road: 340 km/h, 1,000 hp, powered by a V8 biturbo (780 hp) and three electric motors with a total of 220 hp. Incidentally, this first four-wheel drive Ferrari – when running in purely electric mode and in reverse gear – is, in fact, front-wheel drive. I could write half a book-length treatise about the avant-garde equipment that’s been packed into this hyper-Ferrari, though my eyes would doubtless glaze over from sheer tedium. At this stage, I’d far rather quote the marvellous words of my colleague Matthias Mederer, who last year had the opportunity to drive the hyper-car (the cause for my bloodied, envy-driven chewed fingers): “Accelerating at full speed with the SF90 Stradale has a certain element of physical madness about it. The synergy of electric unit and turbo charger yields such instantaneous torque that, at least when driving down a country road, the first thing that springs to my mind is: this is way too much power!” At Ferrari, they were of a different opinion: “What exactly is too much power? We couldn’t give a flying hoot about Mederer gossip! There’s still room for improvement, we’re still doing some fine-tuning!” The upshot is the Assetto Fiorano. “Assetto” means “trim”, meaning that the SF90 Stradale has been trimmed for the racetrack (Fiorano). In other words, with shock absorbers derived from GT racing; carbon fibre door panelling and underbody; titanium suspension and complete exhaust system; carbon fibre rear spoiler (providing 390 kg of downpower at 250 km/h); and Michelin Pilot Sport Cup2 tyres have a softer compound and fewer tread grooves – in other words, they’re semi-slicks. The Assetto Fiorano weighs 30 kilos less than the standard model (the total weight currently at 1,540 kg). I’m quite well aware that the term “standard model” is completely off the mark when applied to a Ferrari, signalling something more like a 1.6 litre Kia Optima. I was struggling for a more fitting word. Unfortunately, I couldn’t find anything more suitable. Precisely to what this delightfully exhilarating, utterly perverse upgrade of an already outrageous road-going sports car might best be compared leaves much food for thought. The appropriate analogy then sprang to my mind. It would be the equivalent of a) adding four new spires to Milan’s cathedral, b) filling the Sahara Desert with additional sand and c) transferring ten million dollars to Amazon founder Jeff Bezos’ personal bank account for the Bezos’ benevolent fund.

“The car feels significantly lighter in the curves than it actually is. It’s amazing how little you feel the weight. The car is extremely responsive.”

I walk from the Piazza Michael Schumacher over to the pit where my German and Austrian colleagues are gathered, all seven of them. They go through today’s schedule once again. We are to drive separately, always with a lead car up front. Four laps in the morning to familiarize ourselves with the pace at moderate to fast speeds. After lunch, four fast laps. Telemetry data from each lap is to be recorded, but no timing. It would make little sense since, owing to noise restrictions, we are not allowed to go full throttle on the 100-metre section of the start and finish stretch. But just pause for a moment and wrap your head around that: Ferrari, this most legendary of myth-bound sports car manufacturers and the most successful team in F1 history, with over 200 GP victories and 15 drivers’ and 16 constructors’ world championships, is prohibited from going full throttle on its home track during the day whenever it sees fit. Frankly, I don’t know whether to laugh or cry. Could there be any clearer proof of the state of motorsport? And yet, there is something to be said for it. I feel less under pressure if time is not measured. Then again, telemetry data is very revealing. It pinpoints exactly when you brake and when you step on the gas again. There’s no possible way of talking yourself out of it (“I was anyway too late on the brakes, but the car’s understeering is really severe”). Forget it, and just keep your mouth shut. Far better that way. You’re only making matters worse for yourself. The telemetry doesn’t lie. They’ve all already figured out that you’re a sissy better suited to attend crochet classes.

Let’s go, I’m the first. A blue Assetto Fiorano is ready and waiting in front of the pit and with the door open. I don a crash helmet, squeeze down into the cockpit and fasten the

four-point harness. What a pleasant foretaste! And the next moment, it’s utter sensory overload! This fully digitised, sci-fi dashboard and multifunction steering wheel features touch buttons for the four drive-mode settings: eDrive, Hybrid, Performance and Qualify, as well as rotary controls for Wet, Sport, Race, CT off, ESC off. An engineer squats down next to the vehicle and gives me a briefing. He eagerly enquires whether I would like to drive the electric mode, which, he adds, is something quite special in a Ferrari, something one should have experienced at least once. “Over my dead body,” I blurt out without hesitation. He grins wryly. A brief pause of silence ensues. “Just a suggestion,” he mutters... Then that’s settled. I didn’t travel to Fiorano to drive an electric car. Do I go to a coffee bar to get a rubber dinghy? Maximum power, unleashing all power reserves – nothing else is acceptable here. So now, engine setting to “Qualify”. But how does the thing actually start? There’s no start button anywhere to be seen. The engineer gestures to an “Engine-Start-Stop” inscription on the steering wheel. I press down against it with my thumb. I’m curious – what does 1,000 hp actually sound like? Not as bad as you might think. Initially muffled (it’s a turbo and not a naturally aspirated engine). Low basic frequency. Deep. Full. Agreeable. Unflustered. It passes through the body like a Tibetan sound bowl massage. Just don’t close your eyes or it could become all too pleasant, with the Dalai Lama, donned in brightly-coloured gown and threadbare slippers, appearing in my mind’s eye; hardly advantageous when on the Pista di Fiorano. But to avoid trivialising the issue: The fact of the matter is that the sound of the Assetto Fiorano is the sovereign articulation of a supreme entity which, as it were, reduces the society of sub-1,000 hp

(in other words, anything and anyone) to a mere rabble of roaring, screeching, low-grade and complex-laden thoroughbred plebeians.

I roll out onto the track and tail the lead car – likewise an Assetto Fiorano, driven by a heavy-bearded young man by the name of Francesco. Francesco is one of Ferrari’s test drivers. In my book this is one of the sassiest jobs in the world, ranking somewhat above crocodile hunter or model scout. At a moderate pace. To start off with, I’m stunned at barely being able to recall the course. This is the third time I’ve driven here, though some time ago, the last time was with the 575M Maranello in driving rain, a ride astride a razor’s edge. My first impression of the Assetto Fiorano: the engine follows your foot to a T; a throttle response that couldn’t be more immediate. And what of those one-and-a-half tonnes? Barely perceptible. As Ferrari F1 driver Charles Leclerc remarked of the standard model: “The car feels significantly lighter in the curves than it actually is. It’s amazing how little you feel the weight. The car is extremely responsive.” Chas, what have you to say about this one, with its 30 kilos less! Easy going with 1,000 hp is the astonishing realisation following the warm-up. This was, I admit, overshadowed by the premonition that this afternoon things would be tough going.

This is followed by a series of lectures held by engineers in the air-conditioned room of a single-storey building diagonally opposite the villa of the deceased Godfather. Most of the banter is about technology, but no one really cares to listen since they’re all geared up for the drive. We then head off for lunch at the Cavallino restaurant in Maranello. The Commendatore used to be a regular guest here; the waiters wear black suits, and the entrance area houses a picture gallery featuring heroes of days gone by. Niki Lauda also appears among the faces...of course. One of the waiters compliments me on my shirt. He greets me with “Ciao, Niki!”, and asks me to pose in front of the gallery wall, positioning me to the exact centimetre next to a framed black-and-white photograph of Niki Lauda before taking a snapshot with his mobile phone. The journalists spot this. The pressure weighing down on me is by now enormous. I wolf down the tortelloni with extreme difficulty. Just as I’m about to take an espresso, a WhatsApp message comes through from my seventy-two-year-old father: “Thought I’d let you know that I’ve just driven a Fiorano on the Playstation in 1:24 – with the Ferrari 488 GT3 on the last track. I’m still running circles around you.” I’ve frequently written about my father, former motorsport photographer of this magazine. So far I’ve failed to mention that back in the 70’s, Senior was also a lightning-fast Alfa Sud Cup driver. Just for the record, this senior gentleman is by no stretch a mere Playstation aficionado.

Back at the test site. I’m now seated in the car and strapped in. The engine is running. A microphone is attached to my crash helmet. I’m in radio contact with Francesco in the lead car. He asks whether everything is okay and if I’m all set. “Yeah.” Had he asked a quarter of an hour earlier, I would have to say “I’m scared.” I’m not ashamed to admit it. “A car is only fast enough once you’re in front of it in the morning and afraid to open it up,” says Walter Röhrl. But now all is good. I’m the personification of the unfazed. After buckling

up, I must have fixed on the steering wheel of this prancing horse for a few seconds and noticed that, as a result, my inner cosmos was by this time emptied of troublesome thoughts of titanic, ungovernable forces commanding immense cornering speeds, or of a braking manoeuvre initiated far too late, and had now become a kind of turbo-catharsis; and all of a sudden, things seemed to crystallise, and it became clear that this otherworldly Ferrari was not my adversary, and certainly not the devil, but my ultimate master in what was, perhaps, the last stage of a long journey to the very limits of physics. Thus disciplined, I taxi onto the track behind Francesco, rolling past the medical car and the fire brigade. Hopefully, neither of these will be needed. To ensure a long and healthy life, I leave the traction control activated. Naturally, I’d turn it off if it were only a matter of spinning around all day to better familiarise myself with the car. Francesco is going to adjust his pace according to mine. The distance between us should not be less than 50 metres. Should he notice that I’m getting closer, he’ll shift harder. In this way, we can push this game further and further. In theory, there is no limit. I am amused by one insolent thought: What would actually happen if I managed to overtake Francesco? Would I then be given his job at Ferrari, and he mine at the ramp? Or would they say in Reutlingen, “What do we want with a traumatised test driver from Maranello?”

Full throttle! What is now about to happen turns my musings on fast driving on their head: It will induce a complete revision of everything I have ever written, said, or thought about sports cars. Much of this will from now on cease to have any validity. But first things first: Full throttle it is. I hit 200 in six seconds! Six seconds! The term acceleration ceases to have little more than auxiliary rhetorical value. Firing would have to be the operative term. It’s akin to firing off a shot. But how should you navigate a projectile? Six seconds – another comparison: You can put on a pair of socks in six seconds, I timed it; this is a tremendously short period of time. Imagine, if you please, putting on a pair of socks during which interval a car propels itself from a standstill to 200. It’s difficult to imagine. Breaking slowly would be prudent. There’s a right curve after the start and finish. But why is Francesco still not braking? He must be out of his mind; I’ll be knocked out at the first bend! Well, now I brake, since otherwise I’ll be flying up and over the Maranello hills. Nothing would be more humiliating than the number-one favourite crashing at the first bend. I’m aware that they’re monitoring my drive from the pits. The Ferrari slams down its brakes with such savage force that it’s difficult to believe – much like the gallows rope around the neck of a falling hoodlum. The gap to Francesco increased immediately following the bend. I now really have to step on the gas, since he’s really not slowing down up ahead. A chase ensues, and as soon as I’m back on his tail he pulls away once again. A game of cat and mouse on the Pista!

I very soon realise that this Ferrari not only takes off and decelerates without mercy, but that it accumulates an unimaginable amount of grip. My confidence grows bend by bend, and at the beginning of the second lap something incredible happens: I’m headed back towards the right-hand bend after the start and finish at a speed in excess of 200 km/h. Usually I’d think: time to brake and downshift. But now its: Stay

there and shift up! Have I completely gone off my rocker? I'm thinking the wrong way! This car is driving me out of my mind! I jam full on the brakes! Too late! I gasp for breath and get way too close to the tail of the lead car! Just in time! I await the radio message from Francesco – “Are you insane?” or some such – but, thankfully, there's no comment, since it would have rattled me no end. But he perhaps ought to have said something, because amazingly, and in spite of committing hara-kiri, I'm becoming increasingly harum-scarum. This thing sits like a floorboard, without as much as a single millimetre of torsion. “This is no dull, understeering car, but one designed to be slightly oversteering. Even so, the car is easy to control,” a few more remarks by Charles Leclerc about the “regular” SF90: Chas, I muse, if that's not an understatement I don't know what is! But essentially it's true, by no stretch of the imagination does this Ferrari mess around.

And I step on the gas, maintaining as short a distance as possible. Francesco clicks up a gear. We're becoming steadily faster. Occasionally I grit my teeth and pray I don't get torn to shreds. At one point some dust flies up caused by a run over the curbs. Most of the time I lose in tight corners since I brake too little too late and end up swerving around, and emerge from the corner at too slow a pace. I'm furious. “Jesus, bollocks n' bull!”, I yell from the cockpit. “What was that?” asks Francesco. “Sorry, nothing.” But what the hell does slow mean anyway? I'm repeatedly perplexed by this otherworldly thrust. Last round. I'm now fully aware of being nowhere near to exhausting the full potential of the Assetto Fiorano. I would like to. But to do so, I'd have to break out the crowbar. Shall I?

Actually, I've only wrecked one test car, albeit very thoroughly; it was a Corvette C6 on the A3 towards Cologne that aquaplaned with approx. 190 km/h on the clock. I was pretty shaken up, took my hands off the wheel and prepared for impact, or rather for admission to the eternal beyond. Fortunately, the collision was only on the driver's side, which scraped along the edge of the crash barrier. What can I say? The left side of the Corvette was stripped down to the bare bodywork, virtually a work of art; but the comedian from the press department failed to catch on, saying that the performance had been “suboptimal” and that many moons would have to pass before I'd secure another test drive. But he sounded pretty aged on the phone back then, which must have been something like fifteen years ago, so he's either retired or else long since gone. Somebody else must have taken over the job, so it's high time for a Corvette again. But now, as mentioned, the last lap on the Pista di Fiorano. The crowbar? Yes or no? But crowbar doesn't necessarily entail crashing. Although? No, I'll let it drop, just go to my edge, and leave the Ferrari's limits unexplored. It is all too far away, sometime in deep Utopia. Nevertheless, this is the lap of my life. My Supreme Master has on several occasions lured me to my perdition, only to drag me back at the eleventh hour. I drive as fast as present limits permit – faster and more extreme than ever before.

After the final lap, I step out, remove my helmet and hand it over to the hostess with the Nefertiti forehead. A shorter, wiry-looking chap – black hair, mid-forties – makes his way over to me: It's Raffaele de Simone, Ferrari's senior test driver.

He gestures with his head and says: “You are fast. You are really fast.” I really have to contain reign myself in. Firstly, not to ask that he repeat what he said so I can record it on my mobile phone, and secondly, not to ask him whether he might like to be my best friend. I simply reply, “Grazie, che piacere”, just before my eyes – for fuck's sake – well up and become all watery. By the beard of the Prophet, never in my entire life have I received a more gratifying compliment! But that's not the end of the story. While the others are now doing their laps, I sit somewhat wistfully on a folding canvas chair within sight of the pit and ponder the words of Hansi Hölzel alias Falco, my compatriot. His 1986 hit “Rock Me Amadeus” was the first (and so far sole) song in the German-language ever to reach number one in the US charts. Rather than being genuinely happy, Falco had said to his manager: “This is my acme. But what will come after this? The great fall, no doubt.” I now feel a bit like Hansi did back then: “what comes after 1,000 hp, I ask myself.” I remain seated for quite a while, until things quieten down on the track and then saunter over to the single-storey building where the lectures are being held today. Discussion of the telemetry data is on the agenda. One thing is clear from the outset: the man who braked later and was back on the gas earlier goes by the name of Timo Völker; he writes motoring stories for the bourgeois-conservative Austrian daily “Die Presse”, and bears striking resemblance to an absent-minded professor of philosophy. I'd better abdicate after all. Or else hand in my driving licence.

FERRARI SF90 STRADALE

MOTOR	Plug-in hybrid powered by a V8 biturbo and three electric motors
CUBIC CAPACITY	3,990 cc
SYSTEM PERFORMANCE	1.000 hp (735 kW)
MAX. TORQUE	800 Nm at 6,000 rpm
0-100 KM/H	2.5 s
VMAX	340 km/h

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PORSCHE AESTEC GTS

Text: Nina Trembl

Manufactured between 1963 and 1965 and officially marketed as a GTS due to Peugeot’s trademarked centre zero nomenclature, the road-legal Porsche 904 racing car was to reign supreme as the superlative vehicle of its class. The truly outstanding feature of this 650-kilo lightweight, powered by a two-litre boxer engine, was that it proved as successful in hill climbs as it was on the racetrack. It is not for nothing, then, that the acronym GTS symbolises this sporty all-rounder of all Porsche model series.

One novel feature for the carmaker at the time was its exterior skin consisting of synthetic material additionally glued and fastened with screws to a steel box frame. The design, penned by “Butzi” at Porsche, emerged more or less of its

own accord: The mid-engine design was as striking as the aspiration to render this racing car optimally aerodynamic.

The fact that only 116 original GTS exist has meant that, today, this model has become virtually priceless – something which makes the prospect of re-thinking a GTS all the more appealing. With painstaking attention to detail and high-quality finish, a carbon interior, Fuchs wheels and cutting-edge technology under the hood, the Porsche experts at Werl’s Flat Six Engineering have made it all possible: based on the Boxster series 986 and 987, the Aestec GTS marries the breath-taking beauty of its historical predecessor with the high-performance and comfort of an outstanding sports car.

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The first of its kind



DER NEUE MASERATI MC20 - EIN WAHRES OBJEKT DER BEGIERDE

Fuel consumption combined (l/100 km): 11,5 // CO₂ emissions combined (g/km)*: 261 // Efficiency class: G

*CO₂ is the main greenhouse gas responsible for global warming. The average CO₂ emission of all (cross-brand) vehicle types offered in Switzerland is 169 g/km. The CO₂ target value is 118 g/km (WLTP).