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THE COLLECTIVE

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EDITORIAL

Nº 5
09 2023

BEAT
IMWINKELRIED

Dear Readers,

Recent years have borne witness to the variety of directions in which the luxury market is evolving. The luxury sector has meanwhile become pure paradise for the senses – a rich symphony of high-end materials, of superb craftsmanship, and all in the spirit of exclusivity. Traditional luxury brands have expanded their range of products and shifted their attention towards new target groups. Over the past few years, luxury is evidently no longer solely equated with expensive products. Consumers have rather placed increasing value on emotional ties, experiences, social consciousness and sustainability.

In this connection social media have had a key role to play. The way of social media has radically altered the manner in which high-end products are discovered, perceived and purchased. It is now required of luxury brands that they strike an equilibrium between maintaining their exclusivity status while at the same time delivering a seamless digital experience capable of reinforcing client loyalty and circumventing the effect of fatigue.

One further key factor is the transformation in consumer habits among so-called Millennial and Gen-Z generations. These younger spenders attach increasing importance to experiences rather than to tangible objects, opting for personalised products, genuine narratives behind the products and the possibility to identify with a brand's values.

Whereas most luxury sectors – fashion and watches come to mind, but no less experiential travel, the “well-being” and “longevity” trend and the art market – have responded to these challenges and strengthened their position, with all but a few exceptions the automotive industry in the luxury segment seems to have strayed somewhat from the right path. Somewhat surprising, given that carmakers were once pioneers in collaboration. Back in the 1970s, BMW launched the so-called Art Cars project in collaboration with world-renowned artists.

With the diesel scandal breathing down their necks, however, many manufacturers have been seeking their fortune in electrification... even in the luxury segment. And yet the electromobility sector operates on an overly rational plane. Appeals are made to conscience, while at the same time manufacturers struggle to convey the emotions and experiences today's younger generations are currently seeking. Some manufacturers have yet to realise that in the luxury segment digitalisation is not primarily about lowering sales and marketing costs, and about flooding customers with free advertising.

By cultivating their capacity to adapt, manufacturers would be well-placed to bridge the gap and help usher in a new era of on-the-road luxury. The marketing strategists of luxury car manufacturers must once again identify means of enhancing the experience of mobile luxury, and thereby bolster its emotional charge.

Cordially,
Beat Imwinkelried

Minimal Numbers, Huge Nimbus, Immortal Models: de Tomaso's Astonishing History.

Text: Werner Jessner
Image material: provided

What makes cult director Quentin Tarantino the film-maker he is, is not the subtle plots, the finely honed stories, the elegant camera work, but two attributes: In his screenwriting, the machine-gun tempo of his quotes, where one punch-line follows hard on the heels of the previous, and his staggering eye for detail – from the choice of soundtrack, to his sense of fashion through to the line-up of cars. Consider one the iconic scenes from *Kilo Bill*, where Bill meets Budd outside the latter's trailer in the desert. The things the two swashbucklers discuss (swords), what Budd drinks in the noonday sun (whiskey) are all but lost as the cineaste stares, spellbound, at Bill's car, apparently parked incidentally in the background: What was it exactly?

It's a de Tomaso Mangusta, produced between 1967 and 1971; numbering only 400 units in all, it was by no means a bestseller. And yet, together with the far more successful Pantera, it still succeeded in defining the image of a company for decades. Anyone who felt that a Ferrari or Lamborghini was too ordinary, too common or even too reliable simply went to de Tomaso.

However, anyone who believes that his cars were adventurous has little inkling of the life story of company founder, Alejandro de Tomaso. It would be well worthy of being filmed by Tarantino in all its details and intricacies, with all the drama, the heyday, decline and resurrection of the make in present times, twenty years since his death.

Born in Buenos Aires on 10 July 1928 as the son of a socialist politician (and one of the country's leading cattle farmers), Alejandro de Tomaso quit school at the age of fifteen to work

as a casual labourer. And yet his fate was evidently not overly harsh, since in his twenties he was already racing cars in Argentina – at the time an elite pastime for the rich and beautiful, even in Argentina, which was then ruled by Juan Perón. Only the best was good enough for him: Bugatti, Maserati, where the latter make was to play a decisive role in shaping his destiny.

Besides his career in motor racing, Alejandro, like his father, who died prematurely, was also politically active and financed an independent newspaper, whose aim was to replace former head of state, former general Juan Perón. (He is known as the husband of "Evita" in the eponymous schmaltzette starring Madonna). During the course of the unrest, Argentina became too hot for him, and just prior to the military coup d'état, which removed Perón from power, the salon socialist de Tomaso would emigrate to Italy, the country of his ancestors, in 1955.

It was there that he pursued his racing career, which, despite participating in two Formula 1 races, would be best described as incomplete. While in Bologna, he made the acquaintance of the Maserati brothers, and became a test driver for their O.S.C.A. team. One day, a blonde American woman, about a head taller than him, stood in front of him. Going by the name Isabelle, (her actual name was Elizabeth Haskell) the said blonde was also a racing driver. An opportune encounter, indeed, for her grandfather William C. Durant happened to be co-founder of US automobile giant General Motors. As a biographer was to later remark, "They were married in Florida in 1957 – and thus Alejandro was rid of the worst of his financial worries."



THE STUFF OF FILMS





FOR THE GOOD TIMES.



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detompeo



Pantera GTS

In the years that followed, this fast couple hit Europe's race-tracks, though making little impression in the annals of racing history. In some races, such as the endurance classics at Sebring or the Nürburgring, they even teamed up in the same car. Throughout his career, de Tomaso was to claim two class victories, at Le Mans and at Sebring in 1958.

Finally, he felt compelled to build his own car. In 1959, the first Formula 2 car was born bearing the de Tomaso name, featuring a rear mounted OSCA, 1.5-litre engine and prominent logo at the front: the trademark of Mother's Farm set against the Argentinean flag.

Whether Indy, Formula 3, 2 or 1, de Tomaso was to engineer them all in the years that followed. While initially driving his Formula 1 cars himself, in subsequent years he relied increasingly on the work of real professionals, collaborating with them with increasing frequency on technical aspects, namely, with drivers of the likes of Jacky Ickx and Piers Courage, engineers such as Alberto Massimino or Gian Paolo Dallara. For Frank Williams, de Tomaso built the F1 racing car for the 1970 season, known as the 505/38. This car was to go down in racing history, when Piers Courage tragically burnt to death in it at the Dutch GP, an event which was to signal the end of de Tomaso's monoposto ambitions.

The first sports cars were produced in Modena as early as 1963, in conjunction with the racing cars. The Vallenga, the designation of the small, light sports car, ranks among the first mid-engine sports cars ever. As was common in monoposto racing at the time, it featured a central tubular frame and fibreglass body. The Ford engine served as a load-bearing unit, and the Vallenga, weighing a mere 726 kilos, was assembled by Carozzeria Ghia, a company de Tomaso would later acquire. The car was an absolutely low-volume programme; sources refer to 53 produced units.

Yet something fiercer was already stirring in the wings, namely, the clash of two colossal egos – between the hot-blooded Alejandro de Tomaso, and American chicken farmer Carroll Shelby, who knew each other from the world's racetracks. Shelby ended his racing career in 1960 and, like de Tomaso, entered the racing car manufacturing business. His Cobra was little else than an engine on four wheels. Brutal, light, radical, but by now inferior to McLaren's seven-litre Chevrolets. Both sought to counteract this by projects of their own.

The agreement was that Shelby would finance the race car, which would then be sold to other teams. The central, tube-framed lightweight chassis was to be supplied by de Tomaso. The Ford/Cobra engines would also be upgraded to seven litres. This spectacular project was called "P70", Project Seven Litres. To cut a long story short, this car, spectacularly conceived by Corvette Stingray designer Peter Brock, was not to run a single race and was actually abandoned altogether prior to completion. The two egos had clashed and henceforth spared had little good to say of one another. Hothead de Tomaso lost all patience with Shelby, and the fact that Ford was to commission him with the later, highly successful GT40 most likely failed to boost Shelby's ambition for the de Tomaso project. Perhaps it was a good thing that the P70 would never have to prove itself on the racetrack: the appearance of the GT40 and its super-stable trellis frame marked the discontinuation of the central tube frame.

With respect to the Mangusta, the backbone of which was actually taken from the P70, drivers continued to complain of its lack of driving precision – even in normal road traffic. And yet the Mangusta ushered in a turning point in de Tomaso's history: It marked the move away from racing cars and towards luxury sports cars. To this end, the fact that Iso (Rivolta), a company fishing in similar waters, had nudged one of Giorgetto Giugiaro's designs off the bed served him just right. This is the genesis of the Mangusta, whose name signifies a retaliatory response to former partner Shelby: a mongoose, according to de Tomaso, is the only animal capable of defeating cobras. Ford's Dearborn headquarters had also become aware of the Italian luxury carmaker. This culminated in a partnership for a joint sports car, the Pantera. The aim was to use Italian design to attack Chevrolet's successful Corvette. In 1970, the US giant bought a stake in Modena. At the time, de Tomaso's parent company also comprised Ghia and Vignale, precisely the reason why Ford continues to use these names to this day. De Tomaso's network of companies grew. Ghia had been part of the group since 1967, Vignale since 1969. In 1971, de Tomaso discovered his passion for motorbikes and acquired Benelli, and Moto Guzzi a year later. In 1976, the company expanded its portfolio to include the small car manufacturer Innocenti. But the major coup was the takeover of Maserati; of all things, the brand with which he had competed in his first races and which had embraced him upon his arrival in Europe. At that point, only one man in all of Italy was still more powerful than Alejandro de Tomaso, namely, the legendary Fiat boss Giovanni Agnelli.

But the heyday had long since passed. Times had moved on and it was no longer profitable to build elite, small-series sports cars, and all the companies that had been acquired were in a state of financial collapse. Moreover, sports-car customers had grown accustomed to quality standards that de Tomaso's boutique workshop was simply unable to provide. Even the Americans, otherwise fairly tolerant of this, were willing to consider the Panteras only once improvements had been made by Ford. One anecdote about Pantera-owner Elvis Presley is that when his model broke down yet again, he took out his pistol and shot it full of holes, a believable story since the owner of Graceland was in the habit of emptying a magazine into his TV set.

Meanwhile, in Modena, the patriarch's days were slowly running out. The figures were spiralling downwards dramatically. Alejandro de Tomaso sold one share after the other and ever fewer cars. Only the two Pantera series achieved four-digit sales figures, while the Deauville saloon, designed in the style of a Jaguar, produced a mere 244 units over a seventeen-year period, and the Coupé Longchamp some 400.

De Tomaso suffered a stroke in 1993 and had been confined to a wheelchair from then on. His wife and Santiago, one of their three sons from his first marriage, assumed control of the business and attempted a new start thanks to the funds of the American Kjell Qvale. The outcome was the Qvale Mangusta, essentially not a bad car with the traditional Ford technology under the bonnet. However, by 2002, after 292 cars had been built, it was over. The tireless de Tomaso made one last attempt to build a new Pantera, but it was too late: On 21 May, Alejandro de Tomaso passed away in Modena. This was followed a year later by the demise of his company. His beloved

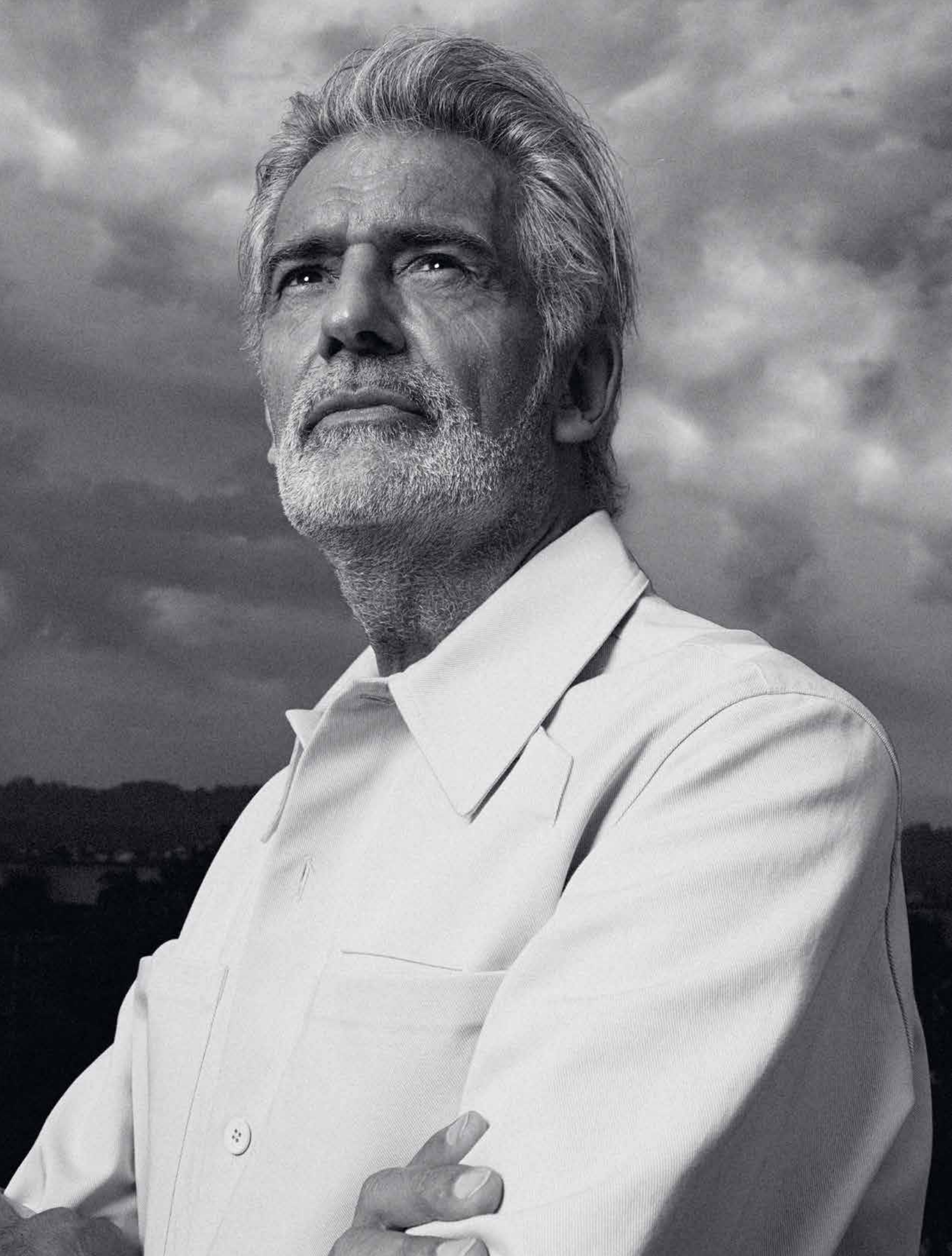


wife Isabelle departed Italy for America, where she devoted herself to horse breeding.

The grand name then switched hands several times before being acquired in 2014, by the Chinese company ITV (Ideal Team Venture). And now, following a two-decade hiatus, a de Tomaso is set to roll back onto our roads: This hypercar, the so-called P72, is powered by a 700-horsepower Ford engine

and is equipped with a carbon chassis rather than a torsion-stiff central tube frame. Incidentally, production is no longer in Modena, as the old de Tomaso workshops are now only something for friends of lost places: the P72 is currently being manufactured by HWA in Germany, all 72 hand-picked specimens. Elegant, exceptional, spectacular: the old patriarch would have doubtless approved.





BEHIND THE SHAPES OF BEAUTY: ALFREDO HÄBERLI

ALFREDO

Photography: Sven Germann
Interview: B.I. Collection

HÄBERLI

We met with star designer Alfredo Häberli on the occasion of the Art Car he designed for the Porsche Centre Zurich. Our discussion turned on sculptural form, on the demands placed on art and design, and on the question as to whether cars have souls.

B.I. Collection: When as a child you relocated to Switzerland from Buenos Aires with your parents, you brought with you a chest of toy cars. The story is that these toy cars inspired your ambition to become a designer. Did the chest also contain a toy model Porsche 356?

Alfredo Häberli: Actually, as far as I know, Matchbox never made Porsches. My all-time favourite was an Iso Grifo designed by the then very young Giorgio Giugiaro at Bertone. Several years later I discovered that all my favourites were designed by Giugiaro – including those box-like cars such as the Golf GTI and the Fiat Panda – and I later read up more on Bertone's designs. But it was this Iso Grifo that was one of the reasons for taking up design.

BIC: But why, now some 75 years after its launch, do you think the design of the 356 SC is still so timeless?

AH: In my view, this is mainly thanks to the sculptural form. Porsche designed the 356's coachwork, consisting of just five components with very few joints. I detected these sculptural shapes again, once we had disassembled the car completely and sanded it down to a matte finish. This is an altogether unique design that I found very striking, comparable to the sculptures of Jean Arp or Constantin Brâncuși.

BIC: Your Art Car features a decidedly minimalist design. Was this an essential part of your personal approach to design? What role was played by the 356's design?

AH: I felt a tremendous honour when I was asked to do this. A piece of sculpture of such iconic design

should not be touched, such is the formal quality and minimalism of the work. Initially, I had a different concept for the project; but then the Porsche Centre Zurich persuaded me to really give it a try. So, I thought, all right, I'll paint it myself. I tried to highlight these beautiful forms, to emphasise them and give them even more weight. With respect, but with restraint too, namely, holding back and leaving the car as it is. So, at a distance, you don't even see that it has been painted. Only once you get closer do the brushstrokes become visible.

BIC: On the subject of brushes, was it the car and its era that determined the choice of technique?

AH: I studied the 365 and discovered that each body is a one-off. Back then, the doors were moulded and welded by hand, each one with its own number to match the bodywork, and the same applies to the boot and engine cover. My design aimed underscore this craftsmanship – particularly in an age when Art Cars have become very noisy. They have to function with a small screen and especially on social media. I sought to counteract this while simultaneously updating the 356. For this reason, I opted not to work with foiling, and instead dared to stick to the original coachwork.

BIC: You refer to the Porsche 356 as a sculpture. Are there, in your view, any other brands or models in automotive history that deserve this title?

AH: I think Porsche is exemplary in this respect. One









reason is, perhaps, that it wasn't car designers who were at work, but engineers who asked themselves, "What can we leave out?" The designs are pared down, streamlined, minimised – something one still perceives to this day. The Taycan, too, has this sculptural feel and has hardly any joints. Italian carmakers, Ferrari and Maserati, for example, have also produced so many marvellous sculptures. I like virtually everything dating from the 1960s, the period in which cars really became modern.

BIC: The title of the project is "The Weight of Lightness." Had this already been decided upon from the outset, or does it characterise the completed work?

AH: In most cases the title emerges only during the process by way of an intuition over which one simply has no control. With this project, too, the title occurred to me only once I had come to terms with the quality of the sculpture. I asked myself whether this model could be adapted to the here and now? I discovered that weight, or lightness, was once one of Porsche's central concerns, a detail which has since been overlooked. I found it essential to think again about how light the 356 is – and how fast. Seventy-five years after going into production, the 356 is an exemplary vehicle that still drives as it did when new. Yet I confess I felt the weight of history bearing down on this iconic project.

BIC: You have designed watches, furniture and numerous other objects. Why, above all, do cars evoke such deep passions?

AH: Well, not all cars appeal to me, only those that have soul. Perhaps it's also the sense of freedom when you're alone on the road: the rush of wind, the complexity of sounds, the scent of sensuality. With cars so also with fine art: when visiting an exhibition, only some paintings and sculptures touch me, while others do not. I don't even have to know the reason why. Something just happens in me. I demand the same from my own designs. Nothing goes out until I can say that it's now right, the design conveys something. Something occurs which inspires me to pose a question; it either moves me, or I simply find it beautiful. This is what I mean by soul – whether in reference to lamps, watches, furniture or even cars.

BIC: The Art Car you designed is scheduled to be auctioned at the end of the year, and will find a new owner.

How do you perceive your work, more as a practical object or as a work of art?

AH: I refrain from drawing any sharp distinction between fine art and commercial art. A painting also has a function; it should touch me, it should enrich my life. And the same holds for a car, even though it's an industrial product. The major difference is that car design entails many industrial restrictions.

BIC: What is your car of choice for private use?

AH: I drive three. A new Porsche 928, a 1977 911 and a Saab 900 Cabriolet.

BIC: That would answer my further question about whether you choose your cars according to design or to functionality. In some senses, the Saab 900 is also an icon, as are the two Porsches.

AH: What I find fascinating about the Saab 900 is that it is also very functional. I've owned one since the 1990s, one of the last models to be manufactured.

BIC: In what colour?

AH: Black in beige. A four-seater – a treat to drive in any season; a sort of polarising passe-partout. The Porsche 928 similarly features fantastic sculptural qualities. Designed in 1978, it is still considered avant-garde to this day.

BIC: Which colour does the 911 have?

AH: Platinum diamond, or put simply, golden; inside cork, natural leather and velour, thus a great seventies look. The choice of colour stems from the previous owner, and I must say it took some courage to acquire it in this colour combination. Today, I couldn't imagine anything else; platinum diamond is perfect in the countryside as well as in the city. The car is fascinating, but is at the same suited to everyday use, also with respect to its dimensions. Thus, "Weight of Lightness" also aptly describes the 911. The Saab is also slim, and yet broad enough. I feel comfortable, I have enough room. A car must not only appeal to my emotions, but must be suited to everyday use, especially since I am quite tall. The 356 also provides a surprising amount of space. In Italian cars, unfortunately, I often bang my head: Emotionally sensational, indeed, though I'm afraid to say that this is where the fun runs dry.







MORE THAN A
SINCE 1873. *View.*



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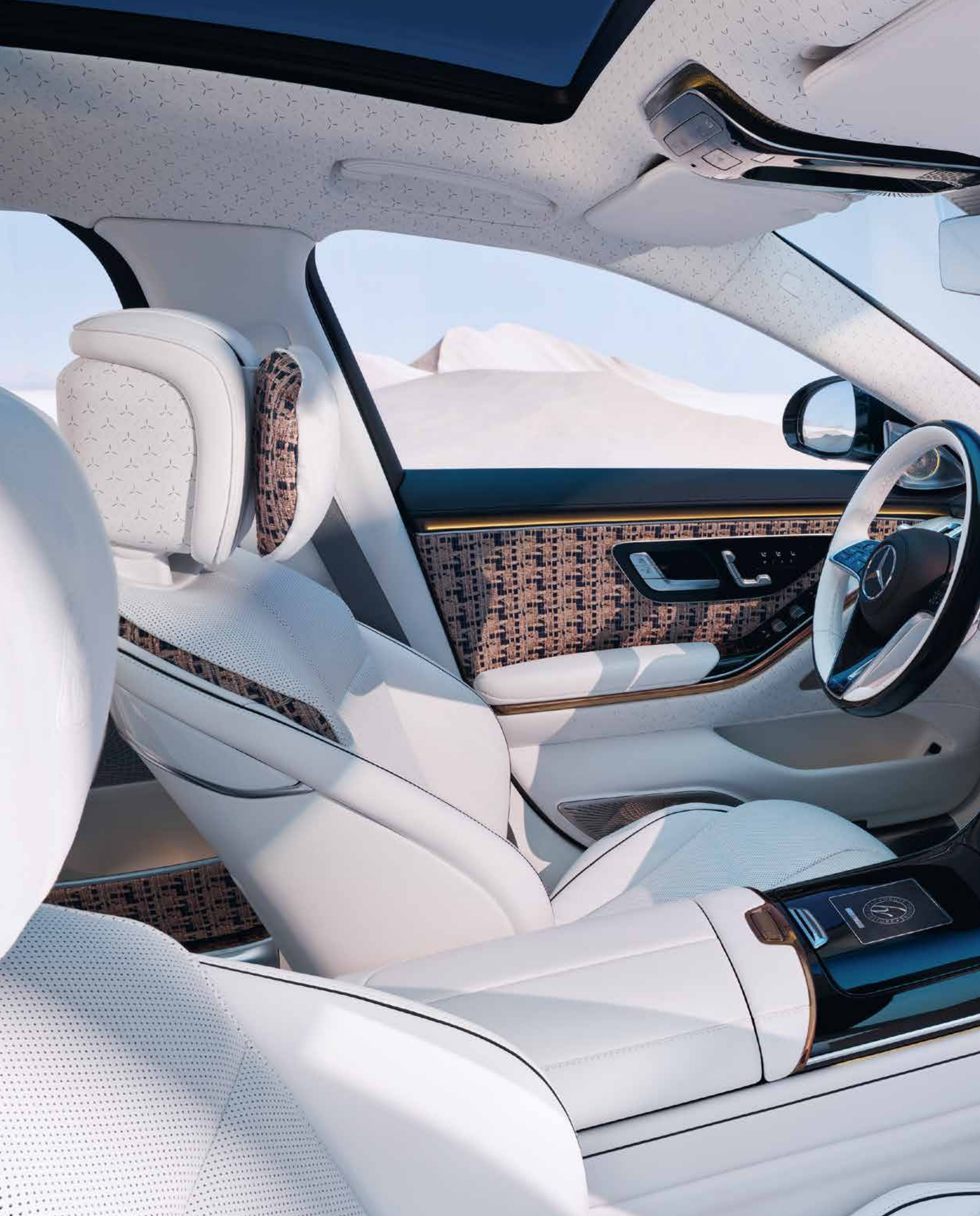
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The background is an abstract composition of sharp, intersecting planes in various shades of blue, ranging from deep navy to light sky blue. The planes create a sense of depth and movement, with some surfaces reflecting light to create bright highlights and others falling into shadow. The overall effect is modern and architectural.

HAUTE



VOITURE





The limited-edition series Mercedes-Maybach S-Class Haute Voiture is a collectible piece designed for select occasions. Merging the aesthetics presented earlier this year, but now with new meticulous design details that elevate the customer experience. Mercedes-Maybach presented the new model for the first time during an event in Dubai on December 12, 2022. The vehicle was revealed following a curated fashion show by local couture designer Atelier Zuhra. In attendance were VIP guests, media and influencers.

TAILOR-MADE DESIGN INSPIRED BY HAUTE COUTURE

In line with the Concept Haute Voiture, the series car exterior is characterised by an exclusive two-tone paint finish: a combination of metallic nautical blue on top, with a light shimmering rose tone in the lower section and nautical blue metallic rims. An additional highlight now includes surround lighting with animated projection: When the doors are opened, animated Mercedes-Benz or Mercedes-Maybach patterns using LCD technology light up and elegantly illuminate both the front and rear entry areas.

The exterior is effortlessly translated into the inside of the vehicle through the extended use of dark nautical

blue and rose gold tones, with additional crystal and glossy opal white features. The interior showcases the most exquisite attention to detail, perfectly underlining its Haute Couture inspiration. A high-quality fashion-inspired bouclé fabric remains a constant throughout the model, in blue, beige, rose gold and gold shades, with additional intricate details featured within the seat covers and cushions. Highlights of crystal white leather embrace the passengers throughout the consoles, doors and scatter cushions. The floor mats are made of linen and mohair. Rose gold coloured champagne flutes seamlessly integrate the display in the spacious rear alongside an Haute Voiture badge in the door panel. Also original to the series car is the blue tone leather piping within the consoles.

MBUX VISUALISES THE FEELING OF CATWALK GLAMOUR

The MBUX infotainment system picks up on the splendid exclusivity of the interior. Sparkling glitter clouds and a variety of accents in shimmering rose gold emphasize the catwalk atmosphere. In the profile selection menu, the driver is greeted with a magnolia blossom and sparkling particles. Twelve different avatars are adorned with fine accessories and elegantly dressed, for example in a dinner jacket, tailcoat or evening gown.









SISTER

GASOLINE

GAGA

SINGS WELL, DRIVES WELL:
STEFANI JOANNE ANGELINA
GERMANOTTA, BETTER
KNOWN BY HER STAGE NAME
LADY GAGA, IS A LATECOMER
TO THE WORLD OF CARS.

Text: Werner Jessner

AND YET, WHATEVER
SHE DOES SHE DOES
THOROUGHLY — AND WITH
VERY SPECIAL TASTE.

When, near the end of her music video “Perfect Illusion” Lady Gaga rolls over several times in the California desert, the keen viewer is happy to see that she does so all by herself, and in shorts and top – and not in the open Ford Bronco from the late 1960s, with which the said video opens. With shredded roof, lap belt, dodgy wheel-tyre combinations, modified front, this beefed-up, first-generation Ford Bronco is not the sort of car you’d want to crash, not even for a video. The utility vehicle, introduced in 1966, was in any case never programmed for show business, but rather for hard graft. The design was thus rustic: simple U-profiles replaced bumpers, and leaf springs ensured something akin to comfort. The axles supplied a light truck, while the antique six-cylinder engine featuring hanging valves fought a tough contest to determine which moved faster, the Bronco itself or the fuel gauge needle. Its coolness originates from the illusion of being able to go anywhere, if you really want to. The surfer dudes who tossed their boards into the indestructible – because only rudimentarily equipped – interiors before heading for the beach, were not the only ones to discover this, but also various film outlets from “Charlie’s Angels” to “Terminator” to “No Country for Old Men.” And if Keanu Reeves drives a 1970 Bronco with co-star Sandra Bullock in the film “Speed”, then why not Lady Gaga together with Bradley Cooper on the set of “A Star is Born”? The black Bronco featured in the video is not even hers. She has a far more stylish one: light blue in colour, and manufactured in 1967, not one screw was left unturned to ensure just the right appearance: A five-litre Cobra HD engine, reinforced brakes, an off-road gearbox, and a fat sound system. If the tabloids are to be believed, it is with this that she is said to have hit the Mercedes of producer Marc Ronson – of all people – whereby the rough bronco certainly came off better than did the Benz.

Overall, one may well agree that Ms. Germanotta has a predilection for discreetly modified US cars. The year 1979 was, perhaps, not the most impressive year for the cult Chevrolet El Camino pickup. The 1968 vintage, where it is hard to tell front from back – at least at a first, side-angled glance – would have been far more stylish. In any case, the thorough-going reworking of Lady Gaga’s Chevy pickup has rendered the vehicle unrecognisable. Her black-painted model lacks neither the historically incorrect, oversized wheels with polished chrome rims, lowered chassis nor the stripping of all logos and trim.

The door buckles even had to be removed. Just the right thing to transport the meat gown in the back with which she shocked the world’s public at the 2010 MTV Music Awards, while still managing to keep the interior clean.

Her blue, 1969 Chevy Nova SS, by contrast, still appears relatively original. Initially marketed as a mid-range model, the Nova has gone on to win top film honours, whether in the action series “Fast and Furious” or in Quentin Tarantino’s “Death Proof”. Its sporty image is attributable to the fact that, thanks to a modular system, practically any engine could be transplanted into the Nova, which could then be fine-tuned almost at will. The factory already supplied 380 hp. A three-speed gearbox was all that was required to deliver the power to the road. The acronym behind the name, incidentally, stands for “Super Sport” and incorporates stiffer springs, trim strips and all those little touches that transform every car into an American icon even when stationary – indeed, much like its owner.

But in what, the reader may ask, does Ms Gaga drive to work? Surely the poor lady wouldn’t torture herself through traffic jams sans air-conditioning, power steering and assistance systems? Well, fear not... she wouldn’t. In the automobile fleet for cultivated basic mobility, there are also vehicles suited for long distances, such as various Mercedes or a Rolls Royce Phantom of the most recent generation, a huge vehicle with a length of almost six-metres and powered by a 571-horsepower, twelve-cylinder engine. (Music giant Gaga herself, by the way, is a mere 1.55 m tall.) In 2014, she auctioned her first Rolls Royce, a 1990 blood-red, third-generation Corniche Convertible, replete with a 6.6-litre engine and walnut dashboard for MusiCares, a charity that supports artists in need. The opening price was \$16,000, but the car finally went to a fan for a whopping \$125,000.

Life entirely without a convertible simply isn’t an option because of essential Insta-posts with the top down, so afterwards Miss Gaga laughed her way into a Porsche Boxster, the smallest and most affordable Porsche. Rear, mid-engine and flawless handling, superb visibility, a great engine sound, this is the perfect vehicle for the young, successful woman – and by far more relaxing to drive than the other new addition to her fleet, the midnight-black Lamborghini Huracán, with which she drove up to perform before 71,500 fans during the half-time break



at the 2017 Super Bowl at NRG Stadium. But as perfect as the performance was: Super Bowl LI will forever be associated with the greatest comeback in American football history, at which the New England Patriots defeated the Atlanta Falcons in the first overtime in Super Bowl history, and not with Lady Gaga's 325 km/h car.

One would not be entirely off the mark in attributing Ms Germanotta's love of cars to stylistic preferences. As a child of New York, raised on the Upper East Side, for the most part she had little use for vehicles. She obtained her driver's licence at the age of 30 and lived entirely without a garage: "I rented a flat. When I left it, I had virtually all the possessions on me. That's how little I have", she said, before eventually managing to pass her driving test in 2016 and got rolling in her first car, a light green, 1967 Ford Mustang. Attentive readers will pause and skip back a few lines: What about the Rolls Royce convertible she had sold at auction two years earlier? Well, it was registered in her name (to be precise, in her name as well as her father's); but Stefani Germanotta used it exclusively for chauffeuring in true, old-school diva style.

Naturally, Madonna, Whitney Houston, Queen and Michael Jackson count among her musical idols. With respect to cars, however, she shares the stage with one of the greats from the other end of the musical spectrum, namely, the Grunge and Americana-God Neil Young. Both drive – space permitting – a Lincoln Continental convertible, the car in which John F. Kennedy was assassinated. At five and a half metres long, flat,

impressive from every angle, this Lincoln features four doors – the forward-opening rear pair known as suicide-doors; a seven-litre, eight-cylinder, electric soft top, an orgy in paint, leather and chrome. But Neil Young, 41 years Lady Gaga's senior, was miles ahead in one respect: in 2010, he had this thirsty, eight-cylinder petrol engine replaced by an electric drive, renaming the car LincVolt, even before electric drive became socially acceptable on a large scale. And Lady Gaga? Well, the gasoline sister now has an electrically powered Tesla Model X among her fleet.

THE COLLECTIVE

NEO CLASSICS

PHOTOGRAPHY & SET DESIGN: MATZO & MATZO



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CH 1524 Au 750













PAGE 39
LOVE BRACELET

PAGE 40
JUSTE UN CLOU BRACELET

PAGE 41
GRAIN DE CAFÉ BRACELET

PAGE 42
GRAIN DE CAFÉ EARRINGS

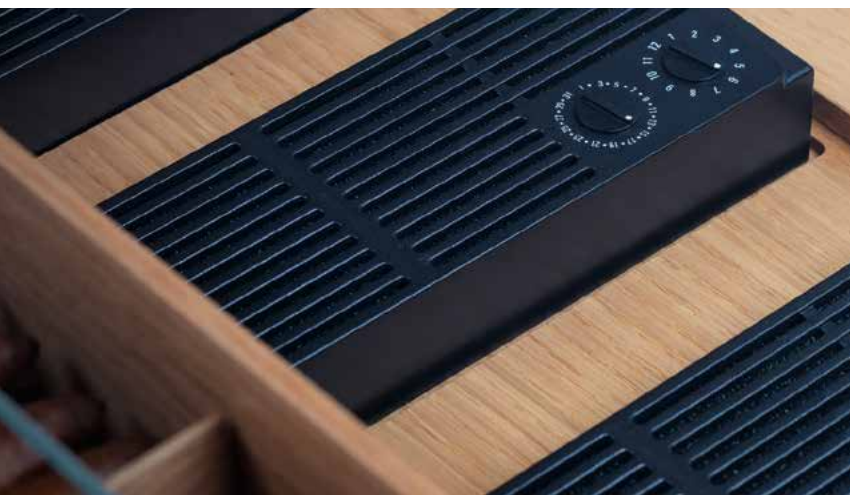
PAGE 43
BAIGNOIRE WRIST WATCH

PAGE 44
GRAIN DE CAFÉ RING

PAGE 45
TRINITY BRACELET

Davidoff

URBAN ARCHITECTURE HUMIDOR
EIN STILVOLLES ZUHAUSE FÜR IHRE SCHÄTZE



THE COLLECTIVE

VOLUME 1: AMOS FRICKE

THE CURA



ATED ONES











PHOTOGRAPHER: STUDIO AMOS FRICKE
LIGHT: LIGHTHAWK
POST PRODUCTION: STUDIO GESSNER

B.I. Collection (BIC): How and when did your passion for exceptional vehicles originate?

Adrian Gattiker: This goes way back to when I was thirteen years old. I was taught how to drive the Mercedes L319, Opel Blitz or Land Rover vans used by my father's chauffeurs on the company's factory premises. These truly unique vehicles stuck in my mind and were the original inspiration of my passion for exceptional and historic vehicles.

BIC: And how did you first start developing your collection? Where you inspired by any single event or particular model?

AG: Paul, a good friend and classic car aficionado, suggested that I ought to purchase a first-class car since my enjoyment of historic vehicles would otherwise be short-lived. Bearing in mind this sound advice, I acquired a manual, dark-blue Ferrari 412 in pristine condition and with a spotless history. This was an excellent introduction to the classic car scene and reinforced my belief that making high-quality investments is worthwhile. And yet, for me, the F 412 lacked sportiness. So, in search of the right car, I then replaced it with a yellow, 1970 Maserati Ghibli.

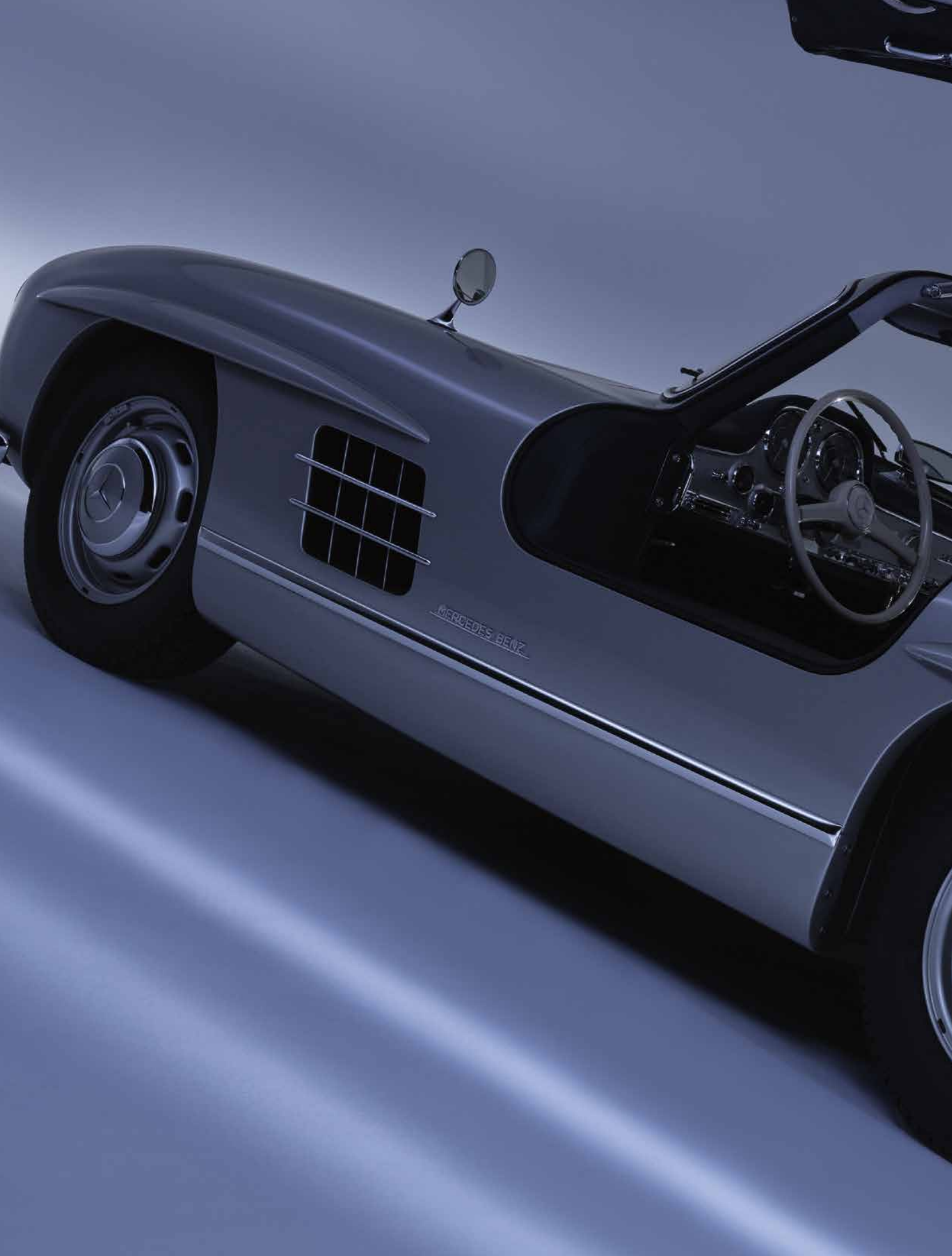
BIC: What strategy did you follow when developing your collection?

AG: From the outset, my undivided attention centred on the Mercedes 300SL (W-198), known as Gullwing and Roadster, manufactured between 1954–1963. Back in 2008, I had the opportunity to acquire a Mercedes 300 SL "Lightweight" – a so-called aluminium Gullwing – from an architect couple from Gstaad, which had been in the family for some 40-odd years. It was more by chance than anything else that I stumbled upon this jewel, of which only 29 were built originally for racing. My ultimate goal was a 300 SL Roadster, which I was also able to acquire later. Over the years, I expanded my collection with other exceptional and rare Mercedes models.

BIC: Are there any vehicles in your collection of particular significance to you?

AG: Occupying first place are those vehicles which I drove at special events such as the Mille Miglia or the Goodwood Festival of Speed. Then come the models which have a particular acquisition history. Like the Roadster, which the previous owner was the first to register and in whose possession it remained for over









40 years. It took me thirteen years before I was able to buy it, and it was during this period, during countless visits to restaurants, that I learned of its fascinating story. Sadly, the owner passed away after eleven years and numerous meetings without me being able to acquire this much-prized possession; and so, I was obliged to continue negotiations with his widow. The silver Mercedes 300 SL Gullwing, on the other hand, was a so-called “barn find.” I was alerted to the vehicle by friends at the Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Club, which was located in a barn near Winterthur. The car had remained stationary at the same location for over 30 years and was covered with all manner of objects; defective vehicle components were stored inside the vehicle. It took us over a year to gain the trust of the owner’s family and to finally inspect this unroadworthy vehicle. It took an additional two years of negotiations and confidence-building measures before the family owners finally consented to the sale.

BIC: Are you familiar with the racing history of your vehicles?

AG: Indeed, I am – with the unique 300 SL “Light-weight”, for instance, which had been painted in Bavarian blue at the client’s request. French racing driver René Cotton achieved several successes with this model, such as the overall victory in the French Mont Ventoux Hill Climb. In Tour de France acceleration races, he even beat Sir Stirling Moss several times. René Cotton’s widow permitted me access to the extensive family archive in Nice, and provided me with old pictures, ranking lists and some background information on the car and its driver. I also had the opportunity to meet the son of his co-driver and navigator at the time. His recollections and stories also contributed considerably to the reappraisal of the vehicle’s history.

BIC: And how do you maintain your vehicles?

AG: All my vehicles undergo annual servicing in compliance with the concept “Condition Based Maintenance”, whereby the degree of maintenance work is assessed according kilometres driven and the vehicle’s overall condition. Work is carried out by qualified

technicians. The Mercedes vehicles are also taken to the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center in Stuttgart-Fellbach every few years, where they are serviced and checked. This also guarantees originality. Minor, in-season repairs, are carried out by a retired Sauber F1 racing mechanic.

BIC: Have you ever sold any of the vehicles from your collection? And if so, was it hard to let them go?

AG: Before establishing my own approach to collecting, I sold a number of Maserati and Lamborghini. It was, of course, no easy decision, especially with the Lamborghini, but I was keen to focus on one brand. For me to sell with a clear conscience the buyer needed to meet certain criteria.

BIC: Where and how can you most enjoy your collection? What role do events play?

AG: I take great pleasure both when viewing them more closely with friends, and when driving them at rallies or on racetracks. This is, after all, precisely why the cars were built – and one still has a sense of this today.

BIC: Do you have specific objectives for the further development of your collection?

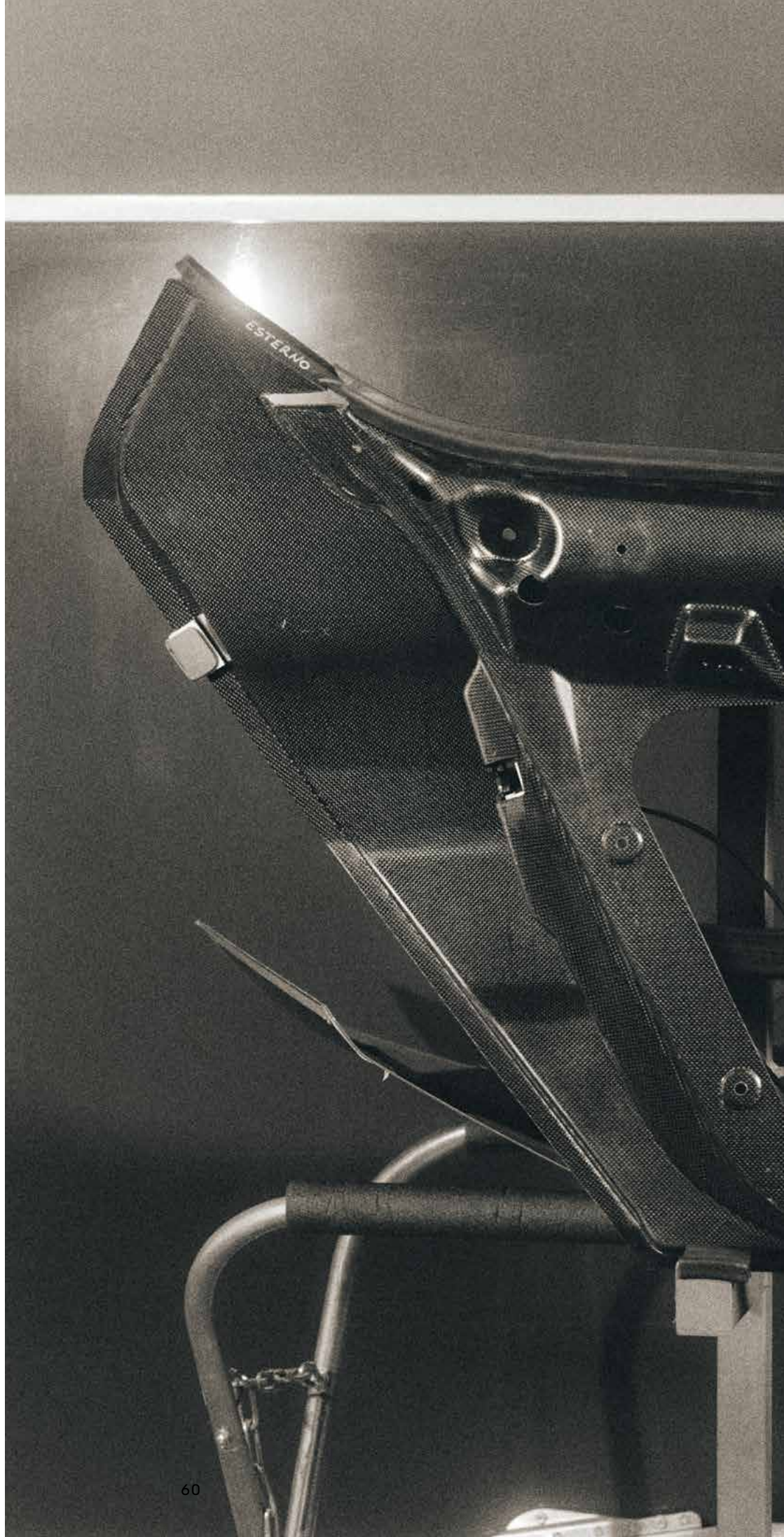
AG: Yes, I do, and above all with regard to quality – there are already one or two models that would perfectly complement the collection. The way to achieve this requires both vision and strategy. If you brook no compromise when it comes to acquiring only the best, patience is essential. Yet, solid connections and relationships in the collectors’ scene help to make more rapid advances.

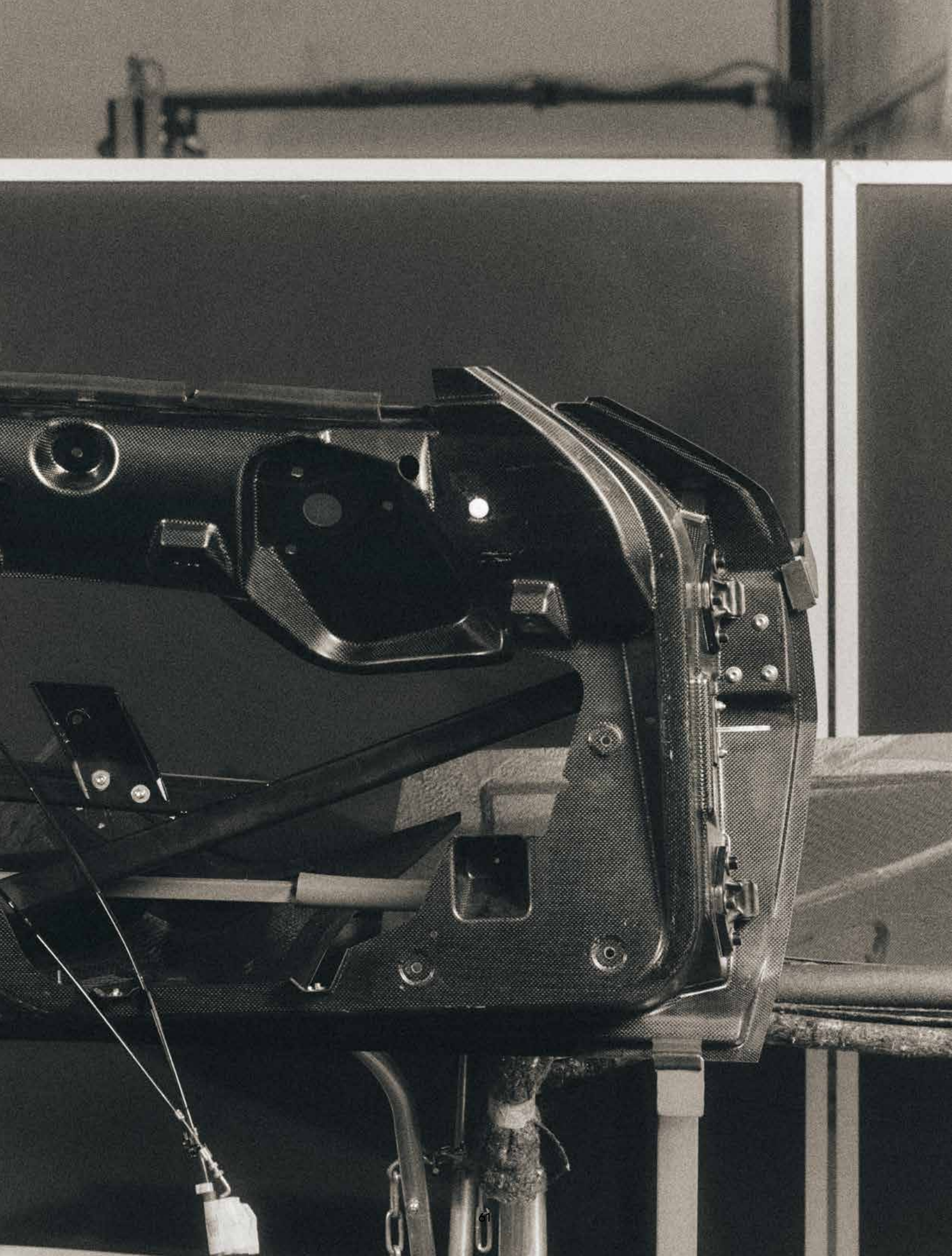
BIC: Which prognoses have you for the collector’s car market?

AG: The collectors’ market has developed in different ways. In North America, prices for first-class vehicles have again become exceptionally high this year, while in Europe the price trend is more selective. Here, high prices are fetched, above all, for highly sought-after vehicles from the 1990s and 2000s. But in Europe, too, vehicles in top condition invariably command attractive prices.

NAT

PHOTOGRAPHY: ALEXANDRE HÄFELI
STYLING: CHIARA TISO
HAIR & MAKE-UP: GIORGIA LECCE
MODEL: SELECT MODELS
ASSISTANCE & LIGHTING: DJANGO MANAGEMENT
PRODUCTION: MIREILLE FILIPPINI







TOP: VIVIENNE WESTWOOD







TOP: ISA BOULDER
PANTS: JW ANDERSON
SHOES: RACINE CARREE







PAGE FORWARD
TOP: ISA BOULDER
PANTS: HELMUT LANG



LEFT

TAPES: JOURED CARRO
SHORTS: ISABEL MARANT

BRA: ISA BOULDER
JACKET: PRADA
SHORTS: ISA BOULDER
STOCKINGS: WOLFORD
BOOTS: VIVETTA

BOOTS: MISSONI
DRESS: MARQUES' ALMEIDA





LEGE

PHOTOGRAPHER: STUDIO JOHANNES BAUER
POST PRODUCTION: RGBERLIN



ENDS



























LOUISA GAGLIARDI



Louisa Gagliardi's images, emerging from elementary sketches, digital remixes, Photoshop, and applied glosses, resound with a striking presentness. Through material exploration, she expresses a being-in-the-world that aligns with the present day integration of virtuality into physicality. This bizarre digital filtration system, where people become aggregates of technological interfaces, is the terrain in which Gagliardi composes her pictures. These works expertly encode the time and place of the artist's production.

Gagliardi's mode of rendering transmutes the immediacy of a brush on canvas to the inherent distance between user and networks beyond the screen. A mouse becomes the chief driver of forms – under her direction, old tech is substituted for a new one. She sandwiches digital procedures between traditional ones, initiating each image with a grouping of sketches, painting over her digitally rendered “meat” with gels, acrylics, and nail polish. Her finishing techniques produce luster that reverberates back toward the viewer. This glossy sheen also enforces the idea of “moving through” a painting, as the gel surfaces only catch light from specific angles. This procedure also bolsters a materiality that further reinforces these objects as artworks. Gagliardi contends with inherited textural indexes, her lacquers replacing traditional oils and tempera.

This “terminally online” culture and its ever-expanding set of conditions offers a basis for Gagliardi to respond to. As a result, her visual world is inextricably linked to digital technologies. Insofar as she pursues contemporary touchstones, her impressive body of work invokes a range of historical precedents, borrowing elements from Italian futurism and maintaining a surrealist appetite for the dreamworld. Threads of Ivo Pannaggi's industrial language are woven between Kay Sage's barren frontiers and Remedios Varo's opaque narratives. Gagliardi encapsulates the present age of surveillance and spectacle while nodding to the conceits of Renaissance idealism. She refers to the impossible postures and proportions of Sandro Botticelli's subjects; her more populated, “readable” scenes recall those of Giotto.

A host of sculptural objects have also emerged from Gagliardi's mindscape. Her proclivity for illusion manifests itself in strange objects, the artist impressing her signature forms onto the surfaces of polyester daybeds and crafted aluminum. In *Permission* (2021) the viewer encounters a Flat Stanley-like figure sat beyond a wall-bound dog. Chains and candles decorate the scene to nebulous effect. These objects strain for autonomy, just the same as her painted figures do. The situation at hand thus becomes one in which the fracture between dimensions unlocks a fundamental question of presence.

In her monumental presentation for the 2022 edition of Art Basel Unlimited, Gagliardi stages a scene that is relatively depopulated. There are two fully clarified figures while the rest appear in suggestion, composed of

silver chroma or materialized as fragments in scattered glassware. Throughout the artist's practice, exorbitant impulses manifest in the shapes of lavish dinner spreads and heeled footwear. However, this is the deflation after the party. Salt has been spilled and cherries are strewn about. *Tête-à-tête* inherently sports the cold aestheticism of digital rendering, but ultimately bolsters Gagliardi's penchant for theatrics. Her narratives are cultivated from floating signifiers cast into the terrain of perception. Isabelle Graw proffers this sentiment, writing that “painting's signs can be read as traces of the producing person,” and are submitted to the viewer's appraisal.

Under the Breath (2021) is energetically similar to *Tête-à-tête*, though it is mired in an unsettling green palette. Here, a hazy roundtable of green figures is cloaked in an ominous mist, its seated occupants apparently drowning in the milky haze. Pigeons decorate the scene, bearing witness to whatever strange communion takes place around the central table. A portentous exchange of hands stands out here, with cuticles and knuckles standing out in particular. Gagliardi regularly meddles in the act of gesticulation, her interest trained on the semiotics of hands. The sheen and particularity of *Palm Reader's* (2019) nail beds and *Blood moon's* (2020) defined palm creases represent Gagliardi's fascination with the expressibility of the subject.

It should be understood that these characters rarely correspond to recognizable individuals, operating instead as avatars ripe for the viewer's mediation. Pierre Klossowski dutifully traces this situation, writing that “the obsessions of the artist never coincide with the joy or anguish of the spectator.” They are sites for projection, where slippages between real encounters and imagined ones induce perceptual chaos. In *Refill* (2020), a shadowy protagonist's eyes release lambent tears into twin martini glasses. *Aphrodisiac* (2020), too, sees a forlorn woman illuminated by an artificial glow akin to the one transmitted by computer screen. Her tearless visage is eclipsed by stemware containing translucent liquid and a sunken cherry. Similarly alienated figures recur throughout her image-worlds, as she concerns herself with the contours of melancholy. Head in hands, the figure in *Reflecting* (2021) toils in this somber dimension, her inscrutable expression cast into a table-pond composite.

She has come to regard her bodies as landscapes in more recent years, zooming out from her formerly cropped subjects. Her subjects are increasingly entangled with anomalous surroundings, their subjectivities dwindling in the process. Upon first glance, *Luncheon on the Grass* (2022) is a warped vision of cows out to pasture. The animals are surrounded by a swirling lawn similar to Alex Katz's recent landscapes. The suggestion of texture in the original print is met with Gagliardi's application of gel medium, producing a remarkable sense of depth and underscoring the dynamism of her subjects. With a discerning gaze, it becomes clear that human shapes define the cow spots. *Daily Jam* (2019) alternatively proposes a scenario in which a glob of jelly

with legs, arms, and a rudimentary face rests against a perfect slice of white bread.

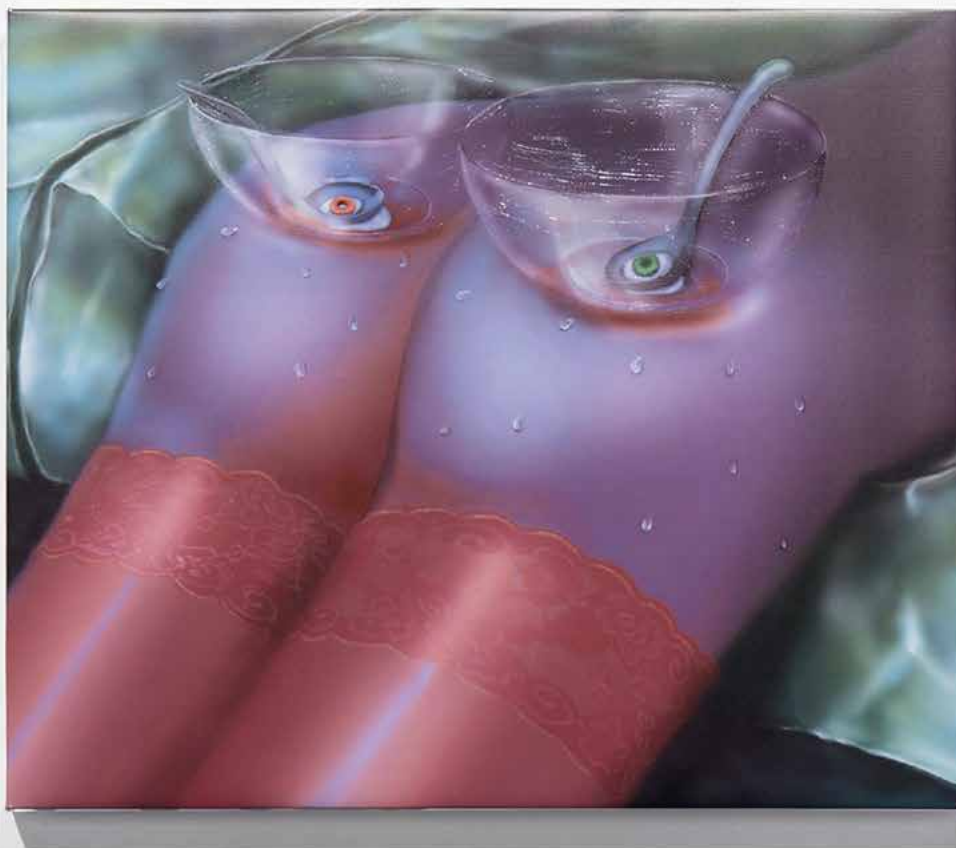
According to Gagliardi, these scenes can be understood as “midpoints,” or junctures lodged between climaxes. Whether moments of transition or repose, the artist’s interludes activate their own provocations. Negotiating with ambivalence sidesteps the trappings of melodrama and produces a sense of ongoingness. Meanwhile, the interplay of light and dark in these images draw from Baroque formalism, generating chiaroscuro undulations through her interface. This is precisely what drives the artist’s oeuvre. Gagliardi pushes the viewer to the brink of perturbation, while offering snippets of erotics and glamour. She expertly cultivates a tension between repulsion and desire. The dynamism of this effect alongside specific formal modalities compel the audience to actually spend time with the work, to pursue its schematics and embrace surreality. Even the perky bum in *Breakfast in Bed* (2019) projects strangeness, its pale skin tone verging on lavender. Sat atop each cheek is a bowl and spoon, punctuated by one eye – orange to the left, green on the right. The language here falls in line with Dalí’s anatomical deviations, the body estranged from realism.

In the essay “The Knowledge of Painting: Notes on Thinking and Subject Like Pictures,” Graw dutifully breaks down the problematics of painting’s myriad definitions throughout time. At one juncture she proposes that “painting has never been pure,” in fact, it should be understood as “something specific that has nonetheless undergone drastic despecification.” The latter sentiment is presented after Graw proposes that “we conceive painting not as a medium but rather as a type of sign production that’s experienced as highly personalized.” It is within this framework that one can begin to appreciate the material inquiries set forth in Gagliardi’s pluralized universe.

Gagliardi applies her skills in illustration and Photoshop to provoke the boundaries of her medium. Through the translation from digital to printed image, the object graduates into a state of “aliveness,” as its tactility induces tangible presence. PVC surfaces become receptacles for technological reorder, followed by the deployment of limited brushwork to the flat planes. She produces these disordered imaginal sites, broaching the tech-wise post-medium condition, while exploring a deeply human set of concerns. Reflexivity and fantasy seep into the artist’s synthetic universe. Working along the lines established by Graw, Gagliardi incorporates the notion that “painting is a form of production of signs that is experienced as a highly personalized semiotic activity.” Gagliardi’s self-awareness and understanding of her contribution within this framework facilitates a hybridized mode of production, one that connects dots from history with the conditions of today. While the future seems to be tripping over itself in an exponential race toward new horizons, Gagliardi sets out to concretize this particular moment.

Page 87

Aphrodisiac, 2020
Gel medium, ink on PVC
160 x 115 cm
Courtesy of the artist and
Dawid Radziszewski



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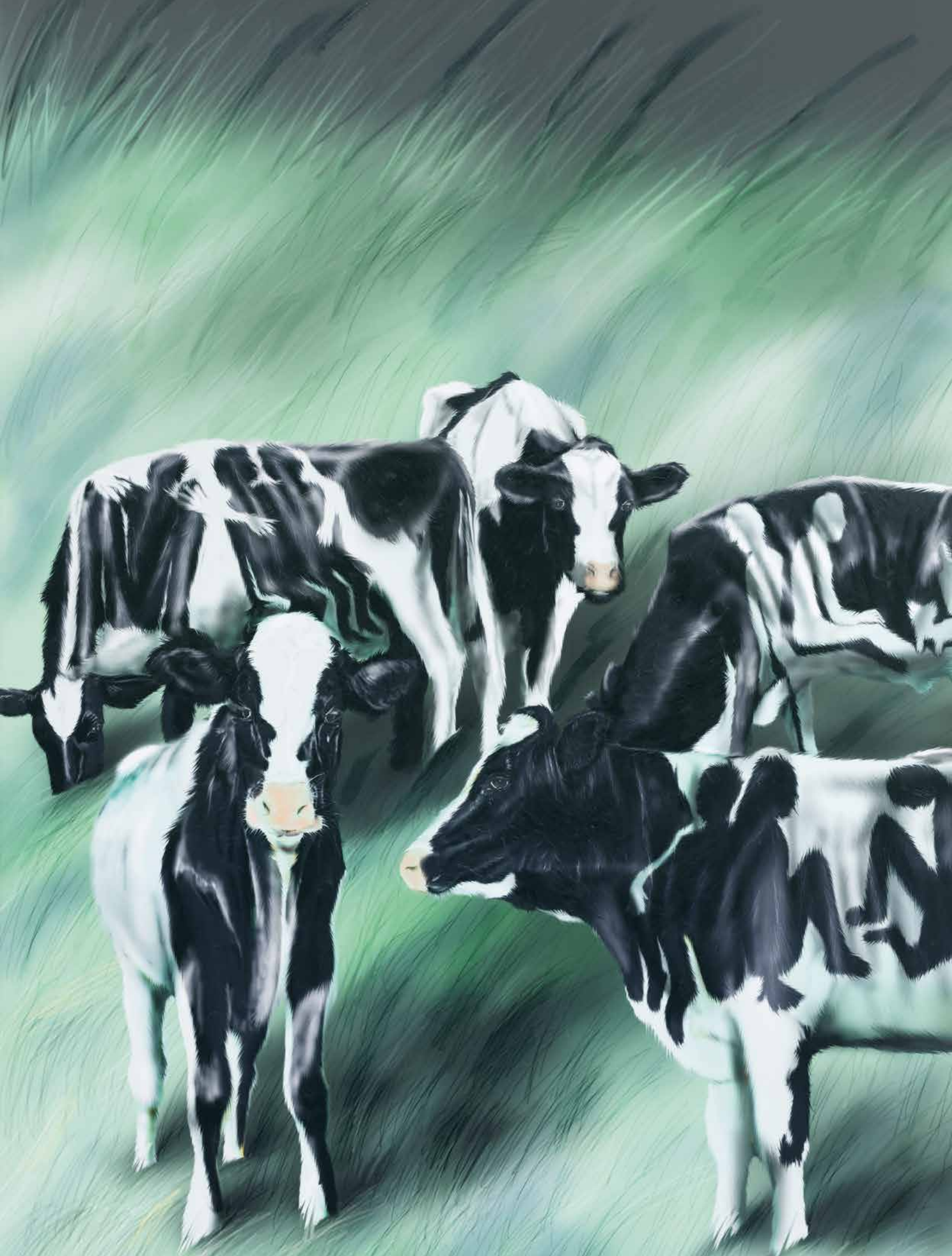
Breakfast in Bed, 2019
Gel medium, ink on PVC
50 x 60 cm
Courtesy of the artist and
Rodolphe Janssen

Right page

Luncheon on the Grass, 2022
Gel medium, ink on PVC
180 x 130 cm
Courtesy of the artist and
Dawid Radziszewski

Next double page

Palm Reader, 2019
Gel medium, ink on PVC
140 x 215 cm
Courtesy of the artist and
Rodolphe Janssen









Left page

Reflecting, 2021
Gel medium, ink on PVC
180 x 115 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Eva
Presenhuber

Right page

Bedtime Daybed, 2023
Ink on Polyester
10 x 200 x 90 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Eva
Presenhuber





This double page

Tête-à-Tête, 2022
Nail polish, gel medium on PVC
370 x 1100 cm
Courtesy of the artist, Rodolphe
Janssen, Galerie Eva Presenhuber,
Dawid Radziszewski



The Collective

Exhibitions *Agenda 2023*

Alice Channer: Heavy Metals / Silk Cut

2 July – 8 October 2023, Appenzell

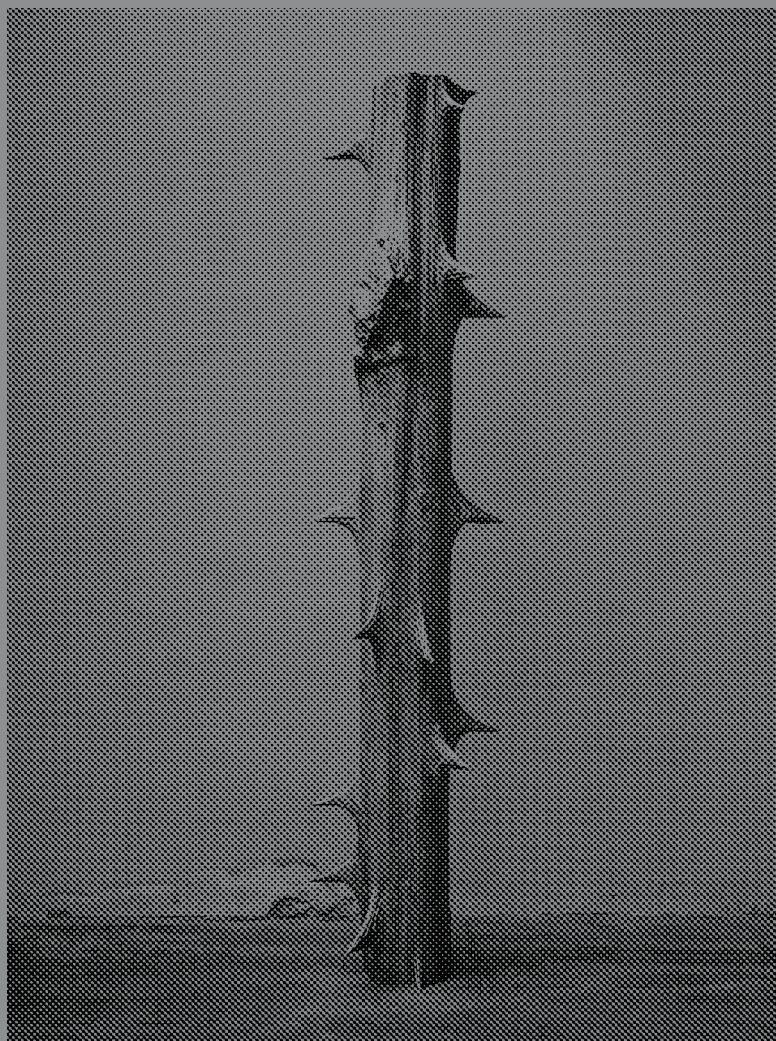


Illustration Caption: Alice Channer, *Megaflora*, 2021
Sand-cast aluminium, 330 × 72 × 47 cm, courtesy the artist, and Large Glass;
photograph: Kunstgiesserei St. Gallen

The exhibition *Heavy Metals/Silk Cut* extends across the two premises of the Kunstmuseum and the Kunsthalle Appenzell. On display are several new works, among them an architectural intervention, complemented by a survey of sculptures, drawings and installations produced over the previous ten years.

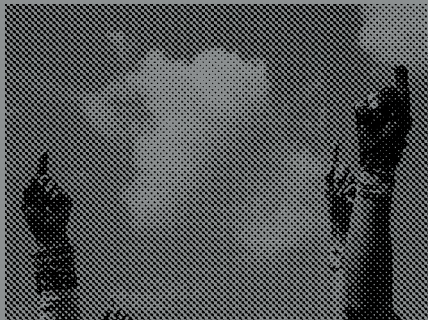
Alice Channer casts, plies or folds fabrics, produces sketches with cigarette ash and, in her exploration of materials and processes, reveals the veiled dimensions of the material world. She provides insights into that which lies beyond the categories and underlying assumptions informing both our perceptions of objects and our relationship to them. Channer's works are composed of geological and natural materials or representations of natural elements, such as shells, fingers or stones. The artist transfigures these by means of profound synthetic processes, very often in professional manufacturing facilities, such as paint coat-

ing plants or the chemical industry, which are a far cry, indeed, from the creation of art. She commissioned, for example, the vacuum metallisation of the shells of spinous spider-crab and edible crab, thus allowing for the authentic physicality of these objects to clash with the resulting identical, rhythmic and mechanical processes.

Industrial production methods, such as the use of precision CNC milling techniques for the transformation of aluminium into the desired shape, or couture techniques for folding images of geological layers in heavy crêpe de chine, are form-giving. Channer unsparingly juxtaposes the organic and the artificial, the biological and the industrial, and incorporates the traces of production processes into her language of sculpture. Not only does she juxtapose her artistic signature to the stark aesthetics of mechanical shaping, but it is through these brittle exoskeletons she indicates the fragility of ecology.

Debi Cornwall: Model Citizens

30 June – 1 October 2023, Lausanne



Debi Cornwall, "Number One. 'Save America' Rally." Youngstown, Ohio, 2022, from the series "Model Citizens" © Debi Cornwall / Prix Elysée

Debi Cornwall (born 1973 in the USA) is winner of the Prix Elysée 2023. The international jury selected her project Model Citizens at the Photo Elysée in March 2023:

"The artwork addresses recent events and thus, in the light of the impact of fake news on our society, makes a significant and timely contribution. The artist seeks to capture the blurred boundary between fact and fiction. The project, both a political and intellectual undertaking, underlines the urgent necessity to question photography as a means

of providing evidence. The impact of fake news is not confined to the US – the artist merely recounts a local story of worldwide ramifications. We are emphatically convinced that with the Prix Elysée, Debi Cornwall will gain new, broader recognition and greater visibility throughout Europe."

To be completed over the course of the coming year, the latest exhibition offers a first glimpse into this ongoing project.

Sincerely, Walter Pfeiffer

8 July – 22 October 2023, Lucerne

Illustration Caption: Walter Pfeiffer, *Untitled*, 1978/2018, C Print, 40 × 60 cm, Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Gregor Staiger, © 2023, ProLitteris, Zurich

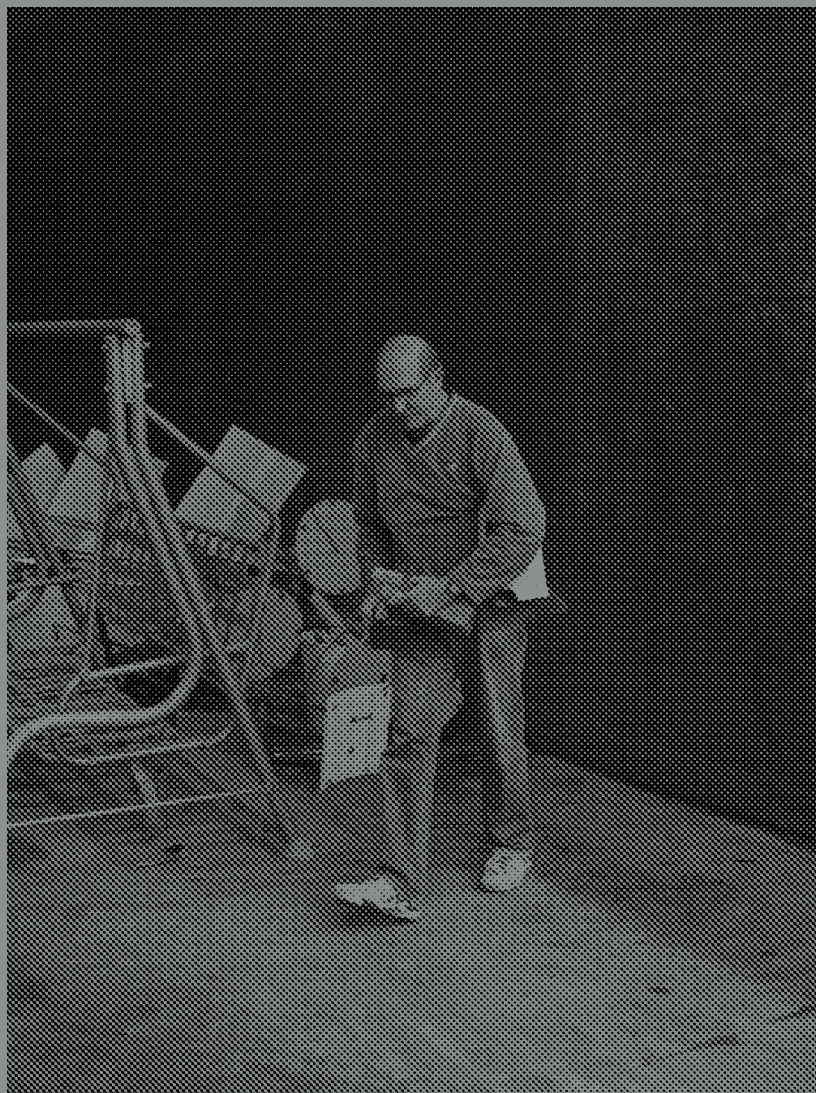


Through his photographic lens Walter Pfeiffer (*1946) seeks beauty – the portrayal of the male body far removed from clichéd ideals, from playful eroticism and lightness. The Swiss artist honed his keen eye for detail early on when working as a window dresser, and before going on to portray rebellious adolescents from Zurich's gay underground scene and supplying the hottest international fashion magazines with his photographic features. Pfeiffer's work seamlessly shifts between fashion photography and fine art. There is nothing remotely flat about

his landscapes, still-life works or portraits. Never depicting perfected beauty, they exude the revolutionary spirit of 1970s counterculture. Friends and lovers would drop in and out of his studio to be photographed. The predominantly male models resist classical masculine and feminine associations. Small blemishes, a dazzling glare, naked skin, and a bold use of colour, powerfully typify Pfeiffer's work. As if in some fever-induced reverie, his pictures evoke yearnings – more alluring than reality – desire, carefree joie de vivre, youthful love.

Gina Folly: Autofokus (Manor Kunstpreis 2023)

6 May – 1 October 2023, Basel



Gina Folly, *Quasitutto I (José disposing refuse from a garage)*, 2023
C Print, framed, 80 × 60 cm, © by the artist

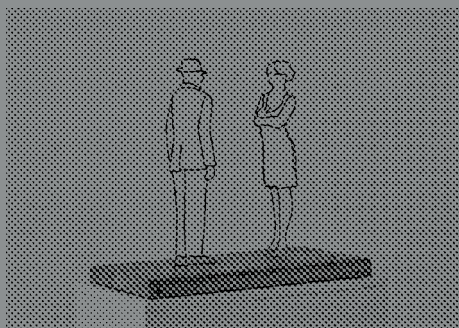
Folly's multifaceted paintings, sculptures and installations are about emotions and relationships in people's everyday lives. Her works revolve around situations, places and objects, on which the artist draws when questioning our everyday notions of fluidity and boundaries, naturalness and artificiality, or of private and public spheres. In most of these, it is the inconspicuous that forms the focus of attention. Her work is both sensitive and critical of the mechanisms of trivialisation and the marginalisation of values, codes, image systems and cultural-political structures that affect and govern our lives.

Gina Folly's current work on two new series of photographic artworks dealing with "being used" and "being in use" are for the exhibition "Autofokus", held at the Kunstmuseum Basel | Gegenwart. The works address social and economic systems of relationships as well as the potential for an inter-generational transfer of action and knowledge. The works explore the negotiation of conditions of human existence and the dissolution of entrenched hierarchies.

For "Autofokus", Folly cooperates with members of the association Quasi Tutto, a "small-scale service company the members of which are largely retired men and women", that provides all manner of services on their platform – from garden care, waste disposal, TV and internet installations to appliance repairs. For Folly, the association testifies to a ground-breaking example of how not to adhere to the tacit rules governing retirement – that allegedly inevitable economic and social dead-end – but to creating opportunities for the fulfilment of activities both on one's own initiative and as a collective. The artist accompanies members during this process and photographs them with an analogue medium-format camera. She thus provides a stage for an otherwise marginalised group within our social system and in doing so highlights the question of the relationship between individual benefits and societal efficiency.

Markus Raetz. oui non si no yes no

8 September 2023 – 25 February 2024, Bern



Markus Raetz, *Madame et Monsieur*, 2009,
steel wire, soldered, oak wood, waxed, in private ownership,
photograph: SIK ISEA, Zurich (Alexander Jaquemet),
© 2023, ProLitteris, Zurich

The Kunstmuseum Bern is devoting the first comprehensive posthumous retrospective to Swiss artist Markus Raetz, who died in 2020. Presented to a broad public for the first time, the exhibition centres on his three-dimensional works and mobiles.

The ongoing metamorphosis of motifs constituted the basis of his artistic work, which centres on visual perception. The exhibition facilitates unique insights into the artist's oeuvre. Organised into thematic groups, the exhibition also reveals the numerous cross-references that have marked the artist's multi-layered oeuvre since the 1960s.

Raetz began exhibiting regularly in major Swiss art venues and museums during the early 1970s. His participation in three editions of Documenta and his major solo exhibitions in leading European venues testify to a remarkable international career. Alongside these striking successes, it became evident very early on that Markus Raetz's art possesses distinctive qualities seldom found in contemporary art: Raetz's works succeed in captivating their viewers instantly, and not only among experts and art critics, but also among a broad public.

Villa Necchi Campiglio

Milan

The villa's entrance, featuring semi-circular steps and a canopy, opens onto the villa's capacious ground floor.



The Villa Necchi Campiglio, commissioned in the 1930s in Milan by the Necchi Campiglio family in the Milan Novecento style, is situated in a spacious garden.

The contractors, siblings Gigina, Nedda and Vittorio Necchiso together with Gigina's husband, Angelo Campiglio, were members of Lombardy's bourgeois industrialist class. The building, reflecting the client's lifestyle and who spared no costs, and which features outstanding furnishings, impeccable artistry and examples of contemporary-modern design, was erected between 1932 and 1935 by Milanese architect Piero Portaluppi (1888–1967). Aside from some aspects of

the interior, the villa has been perfectly preserved, both inside and out. Today, Villa Necchi Campiglio serves as a popular event location and – with advance booking – may be visited as a house museum. Besides its elaborate interior, it is home to Claudia Gian Ferrari's collection of early twentieth-century art alongside a collection of decorative art dating from the eighteenth century.

Yet this Milanese villa has nothing of the museum atmosphere about it; almost as if the presence of Nedda, Gigina and their guests can still be felt around this elegant, timelessly modern place.

Our Stories

*The Car in Cultural History –
Is a Renaissance on the Horizon?*

*Modern Luxury is Sustainable,
Enduring and Premium Priced*

*Collaborations –
People are Fond of Idols, though not
Necessarily those of their Parents*

*The Shrewd Solve Problems,
the Wise Avoid them...*

*Does Artificial Intelligence
Spell the End of Emotional Mobility?*

by Beat Imwinkelried

The Car in Cultural History – Is a Renaissance on the Horizon?

Ever since its invention by Carl Benz in 1886, the automobile has defined our lives like no other object. Hardly a day passes without us seeing or else using an automobile. For many, driving a car is associated with freedom – and acquiring a driving licence with the “coming of age.” But what impact does the automobile play on our culture?

Before we start, we should first take a closer look at the concept of culture, since it can encompass several aspects. The word “culture” in German and English derives from the Latin “cultura”, which means development, tilling or nurturing. Thus, the original meaning of term stemmed from agriculture. It is still used today, for instance, in reference to the cultivation of bacteria or cells. Casting further back in the history of language, we come across the Indo-Germanic root “kuel”, which presumably stems from the Latin “cultura” and means something like “rotation” or “wheel.”

Cicero, the Roman philosopher, finally introduced our contemporary meaning of the word “culture” by referring to philosophy as “cultura animi.” In this sense, he sought to convey that the mind – much like a field in agriculture – must be regularly cultivated, or it will else perish. Over the course of time, thinkers such as Johann Gottfried Herder or Alexander von Humboldt would further shift our understanding of the concept of culture away from its agricultural origins.

But how does this impact the present text? We may observe, in accordance to its Indo-European roots, that the phenomenon of culture is subject to constant flux. If, by contrast, we take into account the thought of Cicero and his followers, culture is simply the outcome of human values and the resulting actions.

Let’s now return to the automobile, which, as hinted at in the introduction, is one of the most highly influential inventions in human history. Initially, cars were tailored to individual tastes, were ornately designed and correspondingly expensive, and hence the preserve of the well-heeled. The engine and chassis were often ordered from a supplier such as Duesenberg in the USA or Rolls-Royce in Europe, whereas various other specialist firms were commissioned for the customised bodywork. We shall return to this concept in the high-end luxury segment featuring the One-Off vehicles, and thus come full circle. These

beautiful, dashing vehicles fit hand in glove with our image of 1920s culture. Consider F. Scott Fitzgerald’s “The Great Gatsby”, for example. In the book, Gatsby drives a Rolls-Royce Phantom I. And yet in the film, Gatsby, played by DiCaprio, is seen roaring through the streets of New York in a Duesenberg Model J.

It was the Model T, unveiled by Ford at the beginning of the twentieth century, that was to first breach the social correlation between wealth and automobile. With the advent of serial production, automobiles became more affordable and thus available to a broader public. In this way, a new correlation emerged in the course of the twentieth century: Increasingly, the car would be perceived as a symbol of freedom and individualism. People were no longer constrained by public transport timetables, but could simply hop behind the wheel and head off to wherever they pleased.

This dimension to the automobile would also be adopted more and more by the art and entertainment industries. Consider, for example, James Bond and his iconic “Bond Cars” such as the DB5, which conveyed him to some of the world’s most far-flung locations. Or think of the science-fiction comedy “Back to the Future” released in 1985 and featuring the DeLorean DMC-12, a time-travelling car that to this day remains a household name in popular culture.

And the same holds for music, the automobile has over and over again provided material for lyrics. Take the song “Drive My Car”, a classic in music history released by the Beatles in 1965. The humorous title recounts the story of a young woman who requests that the singer drive her around in his car. Five years later, Janis Joplin premiered “Mercedes Benz”, a satirical acappella number in which she ironically appeals to the Lord to give her a luxury car, thus critiquing consumer society. Lastly, “Chasing Cars” by the Northern Irish rock band Snow Patrol that was to become a smash hit, notably in the USA after appearing in the series “Grey’s Anatomy.”

The art world has also frequently featured the automobile, especially 1950s and 1960s Pop Art, a time when automobiles were perceived as being synonymous with prosperity and progress: In the painting “Automobile and Landscape” by British artist David Hockney (1982),

The Car in Cultural History – Is a Renaissance on the Horizon?

for example, which depicts an idyllic landscape traversed by a colourful convoy of cars. The artwork exemplifies the blending of the automobile with nature and symbolises its high-profile presence in our living environment. In 1995, moreover, David Hockney designed BMW's 14th Art Car, a BMW 850 CSi.

One further example would be Andy Warhol's 1963 silkscreen "Green Car Crash" depicting an accident involving a green car. The work may be viewed as a commentary on society's fascination by way of media depictions of violence and tragedy, and their relation to the automobile. "Green Car Crash", incidentally, fetched almost \$72 million at an auction held in 2007. And, finally, I should mention British artist Rachel Whiteread, who was born in 1963. Her installation "Falling Autumn" exhibits an upside-down automobile cast in concrete, which may be interpreted as representing the transience and finitude of human achievement.

So what might we hope for in the future? The question is a tricky one insofar as, in the past, the car invariably symbolised technological progress and the promise of the future. In recent years, however, a certain disillusionment seems to have set in, whereby man and automobile have apparently drifted apart. The reasons for this are several, in my view. First of all, designers' individual styles have been forfeited in industrial wind tunnels. Today's electric cars, above all, look remarkably alike, lacking individual profile and character. Secondly, particularly in cities and urban agglomerations, several political decisions such as the expansion of public transport, have resulted in the car losing its allure among young adults: Not infrequently, it is even perceived as something parochial. Furthermore, we see heightened awareness of the global implications of the automobile industry's consumption of resources and the concomitant importance of oil as a raw material, as reflected in the changing status of individual countries. Thirdly, the automotive industry cannot be absolved of all blame in that it has failed, above all in recent years, to convey the joy of the automobile. As I see it, the focus is all too much on numbers and not enough on emotions; the industry lacks a visionary spirit. Even the electric car, which seems to be faltering the longer it drags on, is no new invention: The first electric tricycle was introduced at the end of the nineteenth century.

It comes as no surprise – at least as far as I am concerned – that the influence of the automobile on culture is on the wane. It seems as though the automobile no longer evokes the same intense feelings it once did in the early days of its history. In contrast to 50 years ago, today the car is hardly the object of dreams and visions; the automobile has simply become another mod con, much like the refrigerator or notebook.

Whether the automotive industry will manage to change this again is anyone's guess. I personally hope so, but I believe that the dichotomy between emotional and rational mobility will intensify. We periodically outline our stance on this issue through the B.I. Collection publication.

Modern Luxury is Sustainable, Enduring and Premium Priced

Sustainability and responsible consumption are two of the fastest growing macro-trends of the past decade. As a society, we have become increasingly aware of the negative impacts of our consumption and are striving to adapt accordingly. This trend permeates all aspects of life. Consider, for example, the issue of food and the growing awareness of food waste or vegetarian and vegan diets. But are luxury and sustainability a contradiction? And how does sustainability impact the luxury car industry?

One might assume, at first glance, that sustainability and luxury are incompatible. The Latin word “luxury” after all means “waste”. Indeed, the initial association with luxury often conjures up such terms as excess, opulence or irrational consumption habits. How else should one account for such items as handbags, dresses and watches worth tens of thousands of Swiss francs?

And yet it is apparently precisely in the world of high fashion that the issue of sustainability has long-since caught on; more subtle methods such as “stealth wealth” are currently the order of the day. The reign of “logomania” days have long-since gone: Bags and jumpers bearing Gucci, Dior and Co monograms have lost their status in fashion heaven. And the same goes for genuine furs, which, for ethical considerations, are no longer carried by many fashion houses. Other brands are replacing them. Loro Piana, for instance, puts other aspects in the foreground of its marketing campaign and, in so doing, generates record sales for the luxury goods group LVMH. Rather than logos, ostentation and flashiness at any price, the focus is now on vertical integration, supply chains, quality of fabrics (notably, the world-famous Loro Piana cashmere) and a certain resistance to trends.

One further example from the world of fashion can be seen in work of Italian fashion designer Brunello Cucinelli. Referring to himself as “humanitarian capitalist”, he and his company frequently make philanthropic appearances in his native region of Solomeo. As much as 20 per cent of the profits of this PLC are donated to a charitable foundation. Cucinelli’s designs are timeless, and thus one searches in vain for fancy cuts and patterns. For the well-heeled, the designs are intended to be worn for as long as possible and to create a feeling of sustainable consumption. In reality, however, particularly in the high-end segment, the contents of the wardrobe are frequently replenished.

Similarly, other luxury goods markets seek to establish themselves on a sustainable footing. In the watch industry, for instance, Vacheron Constantin endeavours to present its role in the diamond and precious-metal supply chains in the most transparent way possible by way of various certifications. Other attempts, such as a huge solar panel on the roof of the head office building, are also emphasised. In future, all Swiss manufactories of this watchmaker, established in 1755, are to be powered by renewable electricity.

Turning to the luxury car industry. At first sight, with its focus on decarbonisation and electrification of mobility, the shift here appears evident. A brief glance at the mushrooming diversity, together with electric hypercars such as the Rimac C_Two, the Lotus Evija or the Aspark Owl, would appear to bear this out. This approach does not go far enough, in my opinion, since the lithium batteries found in today’s electric cars are far from clean and green with regard to production and disposal. While electric mobility undoubtedly forms part of the solution, and despite extensive research and development in batteries, the automotive industry should do more to bring its commitment to sustainability to the attention of its clientele.

In a valuable study published in 2020, the authors Wellbrock, Ludin, Röhrle and Gerstlberger shift attention away from the engine bay and into the vehicle’s interior. Drivers and passengers do, after all, interact with the interior far more intensively and frequently. The authors recommend an increased use of natural materials in the interiors in lieu of leather or plastic. Among other things, this would enable cars to become lighter again and reduce energy consumption, regardless of the drive. According to Swiss company BComp, the use of natural fibres such as hemp, kenaf or flax allows up to a 50 per cent weight reduction in certain components. And – owing to the less intensive use of materials – this is possible while simultaneously reducing production costs.

In this regard, the all-electric luxury vehicles currently entering the market raise questions. As one such representative example, let’s consider Rolls-Royce’s Spectre. Spectre, or ghost, fits the bill for this extremely low-noise luxury liner. With its temple-like radiator grille, the limousine is mounted on 23-inch wheels, measures 5.45 metres in length and

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weighs 2.975 tonnes, whereby the battery alone is said to weigh some 700 kilograms. One might well speak of opulence.

One example of how things could be handled differently is “Vision 357”, Porsche’s future study. Among other things, this draws on hybrid materials such as plastics reinforced with natural fibres. With its “Mission R” study, Porsche is adopting a somewhat different approach, propergating tyres made of renewable raw materials developed in co-operation with Michelin.

Similar developments also seem to be gaining ground in the volume market. The new Volvo EX90, for example, is equipped with seats comprising a mixture of recycled PET bottles, wine corks and other biological materials. Thanks to this approach, the CO₂ footprint is reduced by up to 70 percent compared to conventional leather seats. These are all arguments that may well become significant in the future.

As I see it, if the automotive industry wishes to better market its sustainability performance and attract customers, then such changes should take place primarily in the interior. Increased use of natural fibres is easy to communicate and readily visible and tangible in the showroom. With systems for the recovery of kinetic energy (KERS) and electric power units with thousands of horsepower, one appeals primarily – if at all – to dyed in the wool enthusiasts and fans of technology. However, assuming the luxury car industry wants to be perceived by a younger and greener generation, then it will need to diversify its marketing strategy in the sustainability sector. This is not to suggest that car companies should neglect other aspects of sustainability, such as more efficient supply chains or climate-neutral manufacturing, and meet the sometimes ambitious targets set by policy-makers, especially the EU. In that these aspects are very difficult to grasp, they are simply not that well suited for convincing the clientele interested in sustainability.

Ultimately, the marketing strategists at luxury car manufacturers urgently need to again find a way to make mobile luxury more tangible and more emotionally charged. The most important aspects are high credibility and transparency. According to consultants Bain &

Company, 89 percent of consumers in the luxury segment expect that brands publicly declare and demonstrate their sustainable actions.

This also carries risks, for once credibility is tarnished the house of cards erected by specialists of marketing and communication rapidly collapses. Here, too, the luxury car industry should take a leaf out of the book of the fast-moving fashion world, and indeed learn from it. Thus, this summer it was revealed that a project in Zimbabwe initiated by South Pole, the Zurich-based world-market leader for CO₂ compensation, failed by a long shot to compensate for the promised tonnes of CO₂. Gucci immediately terminated the cooperation and deleted the promise of being “climate neutral” from its website. Other companies, among them Nespresso, have similarly dropped from their websites references to South Pole. Integrity means doing the right thing, regardless of the fact that no one notices it. It is above all the automotive industry that ought to be aware of this, at the very latest since the diesel scandal.

Modern luxury is sustainable, long-lasting and highly priced – much like the Ferrari Dino I so much cherish. Weighing a mere 1,200 kilograms, it was rolled out in Florence in 1971, and has thus been in service for 52 years, being driven out only at weekends on special occasions. The Ferrari Dino is expensive, though it retains its value. True luxury, indeed!

Collaborations – *People are Fond of Idols, though not Necessarily those of their Parents*

Collaboration is the new buzzword. In the fashion world, consider the collaboration between otherwise very different partners, such as the US skateboard label Supreme, which designed a fashion collection, and Louis Vuitton; or the sneakers Jordan released with Dior, and which today sell for several times their retail price.

And the same holds true for music, where there are examples of growing interest in collaboration. The French concert pianist Sofiane Pamart, winner of a gold medal from the Lille Conservatory, for example, is widely regarded as the most popular collaborator in French hip hop and rap circles. Similarly, world-renowned DJ David Guetta regularly performs duets with such pop giants as Dua Lipa and Bebe Rexha.

The collaborative fusion of diverse genres and art forms has been a macro-trend of the foregoing fifteen years, a tendency which is apparently set to continue. Alongside the artistic appeal in exploring other forms of creativity, commercial considerations lie at the heart of this phenomenon. Collaboration with a well-known artist, regardless of sector, brings added visibility, a broader market and enhanced credibility. And yet at the same time, many brands sense the pressure of competition and seek to offer not merely a product, but an entire lifestyle. Here, too, collaborations are excellent. At first glance, one might think that collaboration between artists and the automotive industry is a relatively novel phenomenon. Indeed, one witnesses these projects with increasing regularity on various social media platforms, whereas in the past things were rather subdued on this front. This is, however, mistaken. BMW first launched the so-called Art Cars as early as the 1970s. These were vehicles painted by well-known artists. To date, 20 such Art Cars have been unveiled – the illustrious group of collaborators includes Roy Liechtenstein, Jenny Holzer and Jeff Koons. Yet the most influential and best-known Art Car of the series was created by BMW in collaboration with the legend Andy Warhol. The BMW M1, painted in Technicolor style, not only looks spectacular: it was also fast, coming second in its class at the 1979 24-hour race at Le Mans.

This foray back into history reveals that collaboration forged between the automotive industry and the art world is by no means new. The Mercedes Group is arguably the most active in this field today. The Smart ForJeremy, a joint project with designer Jeremy Scott in 2013,

marked the first of these collaborations. This somewhat unique Smart also features many of the characteristics of Jeremy Scott's somewhat flamboyant fashions.

The most well-known of these is the so-called PROJECT MAYBACH, developed in collaboration with fashion designer and DJ Virgil Abloh, who sadly passed away prematurely, and which followed the earlier "Project Geländewagen" (Off-Road Project). This collaboration led to the birth of a concept car, a special, limited edition of the Maybach S-Class and a so-called Capsule Collection, which includes clothing and accessories. For the industrious Abloh, known as the king of collaborations, and who, among others, worked with Nike, Mercedes-Benz, the NBA, Takahashi Murakami and Evian, PROJECT MAYBACH proved to be one of his last projects prior to succumbing to cancer at the age of 41, in 2021.

The most recent example of this series is Maybach's "Haute Voiture" special edition, available to customers since the beginning of this year. This fusion of haute couture fashion and automotive engineering features Maybach's signature use of special materials, with which you may already be familiar from the world of fashion. For instance, the interior is clad in bouclé fabric, the same material used for premium-quality jerseys. Belinda Günther is leading this haute voiture project. A graduate in fashion design, Günther has been head of colour & trim at Mercedes since 2019. Analogous to PROJECT MAYBACH, here we not only have a vehicle to marvel at, but also matching bags and garments. As one of a handful of Swiss dealers, it is an enormous privilege and a source of great pleasure that BI COLLECTION has already been able to gain practical experience with this haute voiture project.

And to conclude, the most important question is what the future holds for this "collaboration culture?" I see no reason why this wave should not continue. Collaboration is an essential tool when it comes to reaching out and establishing connections to the next generation. This represents a special challenge because the younger generation, impacted by social media, feels better connected to people than it does to institutions. The younger generation felt connected to Virgil Abloh. Other insightful analogies may be found in sports. Today, many youngsters no longer support a club (their hometown club, for example), but are the

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fans of individual players, of Messi, Mbappé or of Cristiano and so on. Whether the player is signed up with Real Madrid, Manchester United, Juventus Turin or Al-Nassr is of secondary importance so long as “CR7” is displayed on the back of his shirt. If brands wish to reach this generation, the most effective way of doing so is through its idols (and not those of their parents), which is why I believe that the collaboration with Virgil Abloh was a stroke of genius. Abloh was definitely formative for today’s youth. He influenced their style of dress, their taste in music and what sneakers were in fashion at the time. Why shouldn’t someone like him influence the cars of tomorrow’s adults? One positive side benefit is magazine and portal coverage from other sectors, such as GQ or Highsnobiety, which are most likely read and consulted more widely by the young target group than are automotive publications.

I’m eager to see which superstar will replace Abloh. With rapper Will.i.am – well-known as member of the Black Eyed Peas – Mercedes has taken a first shot at filling the colossal void left by Abloh. One does not have to be a prophet to say, “There’ll be more attempts to come.”

The Shrewd Solve Problems, the Wise Avoid them ...

Among the most famous artists there are those who, through their works, live on after their deaths. But whether artist or collector, the failure to make future arrangements for your artwork following your death may make it more difficult to preserve your legacy: It may also result in lengthy and onerous legal complications for your heirs.

The example of Pablo Picasso, who died without a will in 1973, is a prime example this. He predeceased seven potential heirs – four offspring, a widow and two mistresses – who were to decide the fate of some 45,000 works of art, two castles, three additional residences and some \$6 million in cash, gold and securities. Settling the artist's estate took about six years, 60 meetings and \$30 million in lawyers', appraisers', cataloguers' and government officials' fees from several countries, and, finally, the intervention of French president.

Farewells are often hard. This is true especially when it comes to objects charged with great sentimental value. In our industry, we see time and again how difficult it is for people to part with their car collection. At some point, however, there comes a time when you have to deal with the fate of your collection after your own lifetime. This is no easy matter. If only because it means coming to terms with your own mortality. Still, it is a very crucial issue, which, in our experience, is all too seldom actively addressed; one is then faced with a very challenging task when it comes to dissolving large collections in one stroke. Legacy planning is charged with a great deal of emotion. You buy a car simply because you love it, because you find it appealing, and which then becomes a part of your identity. Often you search in vain for years until you find the object you desire. You then need more time to persuade the owner to sell it.

By contrast, there is then the rational dimension. One of our clients recently said "My property in the Zurich Oberland is losing value by the day, but I can sell my car collection in any currency in any country in the world." To accomplish this, one must not only make financial plans, but also consider the preservation and history of the cars that comprise the collection.

The devil is in the detail. Here, let's do a thought experiment (something I was actually confronted with almost two years ago). A young collector wishes to diversify and enter the market. He is also a young

father of two young children, and so his questions revolve around sibling rivalry. His plan is to give both children a Classic car on their 25th birthdays. Currently, there are two important pieces in his collection, which he had, in turn, inherited from his father. To protect their identity, let's just say one is a very special Mercedes Benz SL300 Roadster, while the other is a Ferrari 250 GT Boano. Now, if he gives or leaves one to his little girl and the other to his little boy, then the question is how he is to ensure that in 20 years the one is not worth four times as much as the other? In such cases, it may be wise to transfer the collection to a company or foundation to which both beneficiaries can belong and which will allow them to benefit from the collection. This, then, establishes a genuinely fair ownership structure. So, while the SL300 Roadster is in one party's garage and the Ferrari 250 is at the other's house, the property belongs to both of them jointly. Regarding structures, there are various options to which you can, over time, assign shares to the children; but it all has to be examined from a fiscal point of view as well. Something which takes time to prepare.

Tastes evolve. Let's suppose, as one further example, that your collecting passion consists of very early Bugattis and that you are the happy owner of a Type 35B, a Type 35A, a 37A in mint condition, and a Type 49 that was driven by Jean Bugatti. And your children? Your son has been based in London for several years and works as a banker. He collects art and owns a Mini, while your daughter breeds horses in Ireland and owns expensive towing vehicles for the animals. Passion for the Bugattis? No such thing. Often tastes change, or else the next generation chooses a different hobby to that of their parents. So, what do you do with such an exceptional collection? Sell it? Auction it off? Donate it to a museum?

This now brings us to the big picture. At B.I. Collection we feel that it is really important for a family to understand the background story behind their car collection. Our recommendation is that families develop a master plan and have family meetings at which family history is also discussed. In the case of families where the car collection is a substantial asset, such discussions should also cover the history behind different purchases so that future generations are able to better understand the reason for the collection's existence.

The Shrewd Solve Problems, the Wise Avoid them ...

A family car collection may also act as a catalyst for keeping multi-generational families together. In many cases, a family's wealth may have been established through a family business, and after the sale of the business, many families find that relatives go in different directions, no longer maintaining the close relationships they once had when they frequently exchanged information about business operations. Having a collection in the family can unite the various members by way of a common interest and thus help keep them together.

What does the ideal scenario look like? You would like to pass on your collection to the next generation and thus ensure its continued existence. This is not, however, always as easy as it may seem. Broadly speaking, the automobile has been somewhat deprived of its importance as a status symbol. So, what is to be done? Straightforward, cross-generational dialogue is the key. One should aim to convey the importance and passion for the collection clearly and determine early on whether the continuation of the collection is even an option for the next generation. If the answer is yes, terrific. If the answer should be no, then alternatives must be explored in good time.

There are such alternatives. These range from gradual reduction, the refinement of a collection, through to a complete by an auction house. Thus, at Bonhams and RM Sotheby's, entire auctions come under the hammer time and again. This, however, is not without risk. I will not elaborate on this alternative here, but whatever the case may be, individual solutions are invariably called for. As mentioned above with regard to the Bugattis, one further possibility is to transfer the vehicles to a museum as part of a foundation. This is often not so simple, however, and involves a great deal of time and effort. The foundation and museum both require staff. It needs suitable premises for a car collection. And there is another aspect, not always so easy to convey: one's own collection has to be really special and of a high standard so that people come to view it, and for which they are willing to pay an entrance fee.

This is where art collectors may have it a little easier. Art usually occupies less space than a car. Furthermore, there are far more art museums than automobile museums, the reason why there is greater demand for the exhibition of art.

Every collection is unique. When talking with collectors, they explain why, for each of their cars, this or that vehicle should on no account be sold. This is where a neutral service provider is often helpful, since this person looks at things with a certain distance. Besides the emotional grounds for holding on to the car, there are always financial or pragmatic reasons for selling it.

As a family business owner and modest collector, I am well aware of the degree to which this topic calls for foresight and courage. For me, it started with "being structurally unwise." The question is how I might one day pass on my cars, watches and art to my four sons, in addition to my plan for entrepreneurial succession. To paraphrase Albert Einstein: "The Shrewd Solve Problems, the Wise Avoid them."

Does Artificial Intelligence Spell the End of Emotional Mobility?

Artificial intelligence (AI) is currently the talk of the town. You may have already gained some experience with so-called “large language models” such as OpenAI’s “ChatGPT” or Google’s “Bard”. Whereas chatbots are a relatively new phenomena, AI has been shaping our digital lives for far longer – it’s just that we’re not always aware of it. Whether the results of a Google search or the videos on platforms such as YouTube and Instagram, most of us interact with AI in some form or another on a daily basis: In this article, I’ll be taking a closer look at the history of AI, before going on to show the extent to which it could bring about favourable changes in the automotive industry.

In principle, we understand AI as non-biological intelligence – all the more remarkable then, that its origins are traceable to the myths and legends of Greek antiquity. The bronze giant Talos, for example, is said to have protected the island of Crete by automatically bombarding approaching ships with stones. In the nineteenth century, Mary Shelley wrote an influential work, “Frankenstein”. This story of man losing control over his creations continues to shape discussions on technological progress down to the present. The AI phenomenon has further intensified this discussion. Even Sam Altman, CEO of OpenAI, signed an open letter cautioning against the dangers of AI for humanity. This also reminded me of Kubrik’s “2001: A Space Odyssey”, in which the on-board computer HAL plays a similar role.

Throughout the twentieth century, the science of AI gradually began to be formalised, owing primarily to the advent of computers. British scientist Alan Turing developed the Turing Test in 1950, prompting renewed discussion on “thinking machines”, which continues to be very topical today.

As computer capabilities increased in subsequent decades, so also did AI become increasingly powerful. One such milestone came on 11 May 1997, when, for the first time, IBM’s chess computer Deep Blue defeated the then world champion Garri Kasparov. AI progressed rapidly in the following years as well, but failed to leave a sustained impression on public discourse. This began to change within the last ten to fifteen years. The reason does not solely have to do with the ongoing increase in computer processing capacity, but above all with easier access to the large data bases, which technical jargon calls “big data”. These data

are essential for language models to work, as Chat GPT impressively demonstrates. To train the algorithm, ChatGPT was fed 300 billion words by OpenAI, including all Wikipedia articles. The launch of the beta version of ChatGPT 3.5 on 30 November 2022 marked the dawn of artificial intelligence, comparable to Steve Jobs’ presentation of the first iPhone on 9 January 2007.

While such developments may be impressive, and programmes such as ChatGPT generate a mixed sense of trepidation and wonder, it is worth noting that these represent examples of what is known as “weak AI”. Weak AI means that programmes are devised to perform specifically predetermined tasks. Chess computers can play chess, whereas the task of chatbots such as ChatGPT is essentially to predict the next word with maximum probability. So-called “strong AI”, by contrast, is characterised by its capacity to imitate a limitless range of human action. This also includes aspects such as emotions, self-awareness and empathy, though this is still a long way off. More than a few researchers have doubts about ever reaching such an advanced stage.

But what ramifications does AI actually have for the automotive industry? There are several answers to this question. It should first be pointed out that AI is currently being applied intensively in particular to the production of cars. At the Toyota, Mercedes and other production plants, for example, automated robots occasionally assume responsibility for entire production processes. And the increased use of AI is at work in the field of safety than one might expect. Should your vehicle be equipped with a lane departure warning system or adaptive cruise control, then this is nothing other than AI. In insurance, too, various algorithms, and thus AI, are in operation to simplify the life of both insurer and insured. AI is even used in vehicle design. Thus, thousands of spoiler variants can be tested in a digital simulation, something which, in the real world, is either impossible or when it is, then at horrendous expense.

AI has also become indispensable in the homologation of automobiles. The multiple requirements and tests a vehicle must undergo can be streamlined through AI. And, thanks to AI-supported simulations, countless scenarios can be played out to test vehicle performance and safety under a range of conditions. Among other things, this eliminates the need for expensive crash tests and accelerates homologation, which

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not only significantly reduces costs. And, not least, the innovation process is enhanced, as vehicle developers enjoy more leeway for their creative ideas. Ultimately, this ought to promote the development and licensing of one-offs and micro-series production, which is in turn set to become a growing trend in the top luxury segment.

Hence, we see that AI could, indeed, be bound to play a role at each stage of the value chain. Hardly surprising then, that many analysts attribute major growth potential in and around AI, above all, in the automotive market.

I imagine that some readers are now wondering when the topic of self-driving cars will finally be raised. In a sense, the self-driving car is the antithesis of emotional mobility. I have deliberately reserved this for the end, as it is arguably the most controversial area of AI application in the automotive sector. First, it should be said that self-driving cars are already in use in the mining industry, for example, where self-driving trucks operate in mines around the clock, often for safety reasons. I'm highly sceptical about whether this will ever carry over to private road traffic.

In 2022, according to the Federal Statistical Office some 6.9 million vehicles were registered in Switzerland, while the global figure is 1.3 billion. To ensure that self-driving cars can function nationwide all these cars would have to be able to "talk" to each other. Only, the technical requirements, such as the speed of the internet connection, are so high that a self-driving car network would entail exorbitant expenses. And there are other problems in the sphere of insurance, as is also true, no doubt, with regard to the willingness to participate. These problems render the self-driving car as a vehicle used en masse a distant prospect.

So what does this imply for corporate executives? My emphatic recommendation to everyone, and above all to people of my age, is to read everything, check everything and test everything relating to artificial intelligence. The knowledge as of January 2023 has now, by the time of writing, already become obsolete; with the last update in March 2023, ChatGPT has learned yet another 125 languages. Thus, don't cling to your preferences and what you know, but try to anticipate where the journey might lead.

Should we be wary of artificial intelligence? Yes and no. No, since AI will never be able to replace the brain. As Wilhem von Humboldt observed more than two hundred years ago, the "mind", the human brain, is capable of infinite things with finite means. Today, we might add: The machine achieves finite things by infinite means, and thus will never reach the singularity that is the human brain. Qualitatively speaking, there is yet one further difference. The chatbot stores information without rhyme or reason, because it can do little else but string together and store linguistic units. The human mind, by contrast, processes linguistic stimuli, evaluates them and adopts them or, as the case may be, rejects them as its own. In short: it thinks.

However, according to Lutz Götze, Professor of German literature, there is one thing which ought to concern us. So far, with their smartphones, corporations have managed to make large swathes of humanity digitally dependent if not downright addicted. Such conditions are ideal for the enslavement of human beings by artificial intelligence. A grim outlook. We can only hope that thanks to its rationality and intellect, humanity will, in time, be capable of defending and reasserting itself.

Fifty years ago, the Lancia Stratos made the world of rallying faster, more furious, more fun. It hasn't recovered since.

Text: Herbert Völker
Photos: Amy Shore



One day, long after the end of the Stone Age, wedges were back in fashion. This time without a handle for the fist, but with scissor doors – if they absolutely had to have doors at all. The most radical studio for the wedge design was Bertone, Marcello Gandini its leading interpreter. For a good ten years, the Wedge Era turned the car world upside down, the beginning best defined as 1968 with the presentation of Bertone's Carabo show car. Fantastically unreal. And somehow so fantastically perfect that you could have just bottled the magic right then and there and basically called it a day. Instead, many more wonderful wedges arrived on the scene, and wealthy men made fools of themselves as they crawled like lizards into the smallest crevices in order to inhabit new niches that were the furthest thing yet from Gottlieb Daimler's idea of the automobile.

One of the original wedges, given the provisional name of Stratos, was presented as a concept car by Bertone at the 1970 Turin Motor Show. Visitors were perplexed, amused and gleefully excited. The wedge was 86 centimeters high at best, which makes the Carabo look like a bus by comparison. Theoretically, you could at least lie down in it, if the combined door, roof and windshield allowed it. Folding up the huge windscreen hatch revealed the cockpit. Any kind of dashboard would have been a hindrance. The few switches and levers were embedded in the part that elsewhere would be called the door sill, and in the pillar in front of it, still to the side, a flat instrument panel heralded a digital future that had not yet begun.

Bertone's concepts were never the automotive equivalent of a Potemkin village, each show car was fully developed into a moving, functioning vehicle. The inner workings of the Stratos concept were taken from the Lancia Fulvia, which meant that Lancia was quite literally on board. The compact little Fulvia engine was small enough to fit, though in a mid-engine layout. This gave the car a certain degree of respectability and transformed the pure beauty of the wedge into a functioning sports machine. In Bertone's various cutaway drawings, the driver seated at the wheel (actually, lying behind it) was always a professional wearing a helmet, never some casual civilian.

Lancia and Bertone got together in early 1971 to put a real human being behind the wheel, a person like Lancia's factory rally driver Sandro Munari. Munari and team manager Cesare Fiorio would go on to drive the Stratos to a series of manufacturers' titles.

We gladly confess our love for this era, from 1970 onwards, especially with regard to all things Italian and the fabulous design and craftsmanship to be found in the golden triangle between Turin, Milan and Bologna. Everything was possible and everyone was excited to see how these young blossoms would unfold. As far as Italy's dynastic Agnelli family was concerned, Fiat had swallowed Lancia in 1969, along with its spellbinding magic and astonishing debts, which were so high they could no longer be expressed in lire anyway. In that respect, they were actually not so worrying.

BERTONE AND THE WEDGE AND THE WHOLE STRATOS PHENOMENON



No one, absolutely no one, could imagine the indifference with which the corporate parent would one day starve the illustrious marque to death, until nothing was left of Lancia except a souvenir pin to be worn on the company's anniversary days.

For the time being, however, Fiat appeared determined to let Lancia not only exist, but also shine. Admittedly, from the day that Brigitte Bardot slipped out of an Aurelia B24, anything that came later on in the Lancia story seemed almost anti-climactic. So the decision was made to follow the Fulvia HF back into the motoring arena. This was where time and place came together, Bertone and the wedge and the whole Stratos phenomenon, all in the heyday of the Italian automobile as far as designers, engine builders and unfettered geniuses are concerned.

The Stratos was stripped of its motor show bling and reduced to something that even ordinary people could imagine driving, though always with a focus on rallying and racing. The car became more practical, and with it: higher, shorter, clunkier. The harmony of the primordial wedge was disturbed through the addition of grafted-on fenders.

The transformation from beauty to functionality resulted in a stocky, powerful, perhaps even wicked car, more bear-like than cat-like. Bears have a short wheelbase. And the decisive factor now was, of course, the 2.4-liter six-cylinder from Ferrari that the old man delivered in person. No small feat.

We also got our first true cult and movie star. Sandro Munari, who slipped into the Stratos like a glove, becoming one with the car, was just as good an actor as a driver. Everywhere he went, helpers, doctors, hand-holders and sandwich-bearers followed close by. Sandro presented himself as a sad hero, always a bit melancholy, whenever he wasn't busy acting as crazed as a spotted mare before the Prix d'Amérique. What he didn't like at all was when that Swedish rascal, teammate Björn Waldegård, disobeyed orders and overtook Munari himself. But Cesare Fiorio had been smart enough to know: You have to add a Finn or a Swede to your Italians to orient the compass – to keep it pointing north, so to speak. And an Englishman as principal development engineer wasn't a bad choice either. Mike Parkes was the name of this magnificent man.

Everything fell into place for Lancia in the autumn of 1974. The oil crisis was over, the stations were pumping fuel again and people were in high spirits, the homologations had been approved, the car was fully developed, and Sandro Munari was at the top of his game. He won in San Remo and the Canadian Rally. Not everyone will remember the details: Sandro had fallen ill from a spoonful of mayonnaise with cold chicken at the compulsory rest stop in Bancroft, north of Lake Ontario, and from then on he appeared at every checkpoint with an increasingly dull expression on his face, accentuated by a yellow skin

tone that was like the finishing touches to his already ascetic face. But not to worry: He won the rally.

The previous anecdote is the reason there now is a doctor present at rally events. Following the mayonnaise incident, Munari demanded the presence of a physician at every race, which gave us the unforgettable appearances of Dottore Bartoletti and his fur-coat-wearing wife, who kept us entertained all the way into the late eighties, becoming more and more memorable with the years. The whole thing was somewhat reminiscent of Italian opera, Donizetti's *Elixir of Love* comes to mind: the tangles of love, pain and medicine.

In any case, there hasn't been a rally since in which every respectable professional team didn't have a doctor with them, not to mention all the physiotherapists and mental trainers. Sandro Munari can take credit for starting all this, fifty years ago, and an entire industry thanks him for it.

That's the time span we need to look back at when talking about milestones in driver support. In the 1960s, Citroën team boss René Cotton introduced the mobile showers that now await drivers at the end of the difficult stages (which could add up to ten or twelve hours back then). What innovations! Front-wheel drive, ride height adjustment – and a cabin to shower in!

The Stratos – getting back on track now – was of course a fantastic rally animal, perfect for Corsican hairpins or the routes of the Tour de France. Cesare Fiorio was full of bravado and noble calling, which you either feel or you don't – and Cesare felt it early on. In short: Lancia wanted to win the 1975 Safari Rally with the Stratos, as a statement for posterity.

The suspension was raised, and Mike Parkes devised a kind of underbody armor that would survive all the gravel Africa had to offer. They can't even get that straight anymore these days. The rally covered 6,000 km, of which only the smallest part was asphalt; everything else was dirt, gravel, boulders and mud.

Lancia already had a network in Kenya from its Fulvia days, and in the Italian expat community living in exotic places, everyone is family. The team also did business with the Prestons, of established colonial heritage and with excellent connections. They helped with everything that was needed: from running reconnaissance to setting up the team base to providing helicopters to crewing hundreds – honestly: HUNDREDS – of mud cars, driven by private helpers standing by at the muddiest sections or at river crossings to help the proud Alitalia fleet in case of trouble. Alitalia was Lancia's new partner, and of all the historic liveries, it remains the most valuable. It looked good too, that has just got to be said, and when the whole Lancia entourage was hoisted into the belly of an Alitalia 747 at the airport in Rome, you can bet there were more than a few photographers there to capture the moment.

In short: Stratos and the 1975 Safari, that was no trifling matter.

The team drivers were Sandro Munari and Björn Waldegård, who cultivated an elegant dislike for each other, quite to the amusement of Cesare Fiorio, who had been cleverly working on the whole North–South tension for the past decade. A third Stratos was made available to Vic Preston Jr., part of the deal with the Preston clan – a smart thing to do. Preston was given the muletto, the reconnaissance car, which already had several thousand kilometers under its wheels from running the “recce”. Let’s all make a note of the chassis number: 1637.

Now you probably want to know if a Stratos won the 1975 Safari Rally, and if so, which one: the one with Munari or the one with Waldegård.

To make a long story short: Start in Nairobi: 5,929 km to go. Munari readies for the attack. His start number: 3. His goal: get to the front of the pack as quickly as possible so as not to choke or go blind in the plume of dust. Start number 2 was no problem, that was a friend from the community. So all he had to do was take start number 1 by surprise, which was just a Peugeot, though admittedly it was a 504 specially tuned for Africa rallying, with “Flying Finn” Timo Mäkinen at the wheel.

To prepare from this passing maneuver, the Stratos had to shed some weight. Munari opted to dispense with the second spare, which also did away with the tire carrier that would otherwise be mounted at the rear. That left him with only the one spare inside the front storage compartment. Mäkinen, the tall Finn, had a clear line of sight and sped across the red dust doing about 140 klicks. Munari, with zero visibility, went 160 and flew right off the track, where he got stuck in half-way soft terrain. The front end of the car was so banged up that he couldn’t get the hood open, leaving him with no way to get at his only spare. So Munari had to wait for Waldegård and ask him for one of his.

That was a brief history of the 1975 Safari Rally, though there were still 5,750 km to go.

Afterwards, the Lancia team found it a bit awkward to admit: Oops, a Peugeot won (driven by the fabulous Ove Andersson, by the way), but we came in second and third, which is great too. And then there was the muletto. Vic Preston Jr. came in eleventh, almost twelve hours behind the winning car.

Except for Porsche and Datsun, it had become common practice for the Safari teams to convince their companies back home that the return transport of the worn-out cars was not worth it. So the team managers were usually given leeway to sell locally to interested buyers (this was decades before controlling and compliance). Any remaining hardware also found its way from one crate to another, all of which kept the rally scene in East Africa going up into the 1990s. Or not: When ambition

and essential small parts dried up, a genuine Munari Stratos (clearly the original) was found on a farm along Thika Road, the front recess of the car making a worthy place for a faithful dog to rest its weary head.

Our muletto, start number 29 in the Safari, fared much better. It survived one more African rally season with driver Frank Tundo and was then tracked down by Graham Warner, the owner of the highly successful Chequered Flag team. After decades with British racers, Warner saw a Stratos as the definitive jewel for racing and rallying. Number 1637 proved to be in amazingly good shape, so the car quickly ended up at Chequered Flag in England, where it was given a tip-top makeover in the team’s typical black and white livery in time to compete in the 1976 season. Until the end of its active days in 1979, the Stratos was only driven by top international drivers, first and foremost by Irish star Billy Coleman. Per-Inge Walfridsson, Andy Dawson and (for a rally sprint) Patrick Depailler were also part of the line-up. The car’s greatest achievement was a win at the 1977 Donegal International Rally in Ireland with Billy Coleman at the wheel.

Number 1637 was eventually bought by a Japanese collector who had the heart to have the Stratos totally restored in 1991. The buyer enlisted the best in the classic Lancia business: Claudio Maglioli, the little brother of Umberto. Since then, the car has been a jewel of the classic rally scene, shining again in the Alitalia colors from the 1975 Safari Rally, powered by the 280 hp Dino Quattrovalvole capable of sending the Stratos shooting off like a bat out of hell.

The Lancia Stratos shown here with chassis number 829ARO*001637* is one of the twenty-five factory racing cars of the Lancia Squadra Corse. Initially used as an official reconnaissance car for the 1975 Safari Rally, the 1637 then spent a little under two years in Kenya in private ownership. From late 1976, the Stratos was used for local rallies in England, later being acquired by a Japanese collector who completely restored the car. In addition to the original Alitalia livery, the Stratos was also endowed with the final version of the Dino V6 engine with 320 hp and four valves per cylinder. The car has been back in Europe since 2017.

LANCIA STRATOS HF GR.4

Engine Ferrari Dino V6
Displacement 2,418 cc
Power 320 hp (235 kW) at 8,500 rpm
Top speed 185 km/h to 220 km/h
Year of manufacture 1974







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FERRARI F40

Text: Nina Trembl

For its 40th birthday, Ferrari presented itself with a gift. Born in 1987, the F40 was to defend the family honour as the world's most powerful and fastest road car...In clear competition with the Porsche 959, which appeared on the scene a year earlier.

The 2.9-litre V8, fitted with four overhead camshafts, 32 valves and dual turbochargers, delivered 478 hp ... at least. In that the Pininfarina-designed body was largely constructed of carbon, aluminium and Kevlar, and, originally, the side windows even consisted of lightweight Lexan, they weighed in at less than 1.3 tonnes. The result: 0 to 100 km/h in 4.1 seconds and a top speed of 324 km/h. Even though these values could never be replicated by trade magazines, the F40 was the trump card in the car quartet: At the time, the poster-favourite among the youth of the time.

Only a very privileged few were actually able to own one. Initially, it was VIPs of the likes of Formula 1 drivers Jacky Ickx and Nigel Mansell who were supplied with it. It is said, however, that many owners passed on their model within a short period of time. This was either because the two-seater was deemed difficult to handle and was completely lacking in comfort (no audio system, no door handles, no glove compartment, no leather), or because the car's resale value, even during production, increased dramatically. This, mark you, even after the originally envisaged production-run of 450 units had been extended to over 1,300 by the end of production in 1992.

The F40 is still one of the most sought-after of all Ferraris. Being the last to be built under the aegis of company founder Enzo, it is recognised by purists as the last "real" model.

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