

THE AUTOMOTIVE
Alchemist



ANDY SAUNDERS

SAMPLE PAGES

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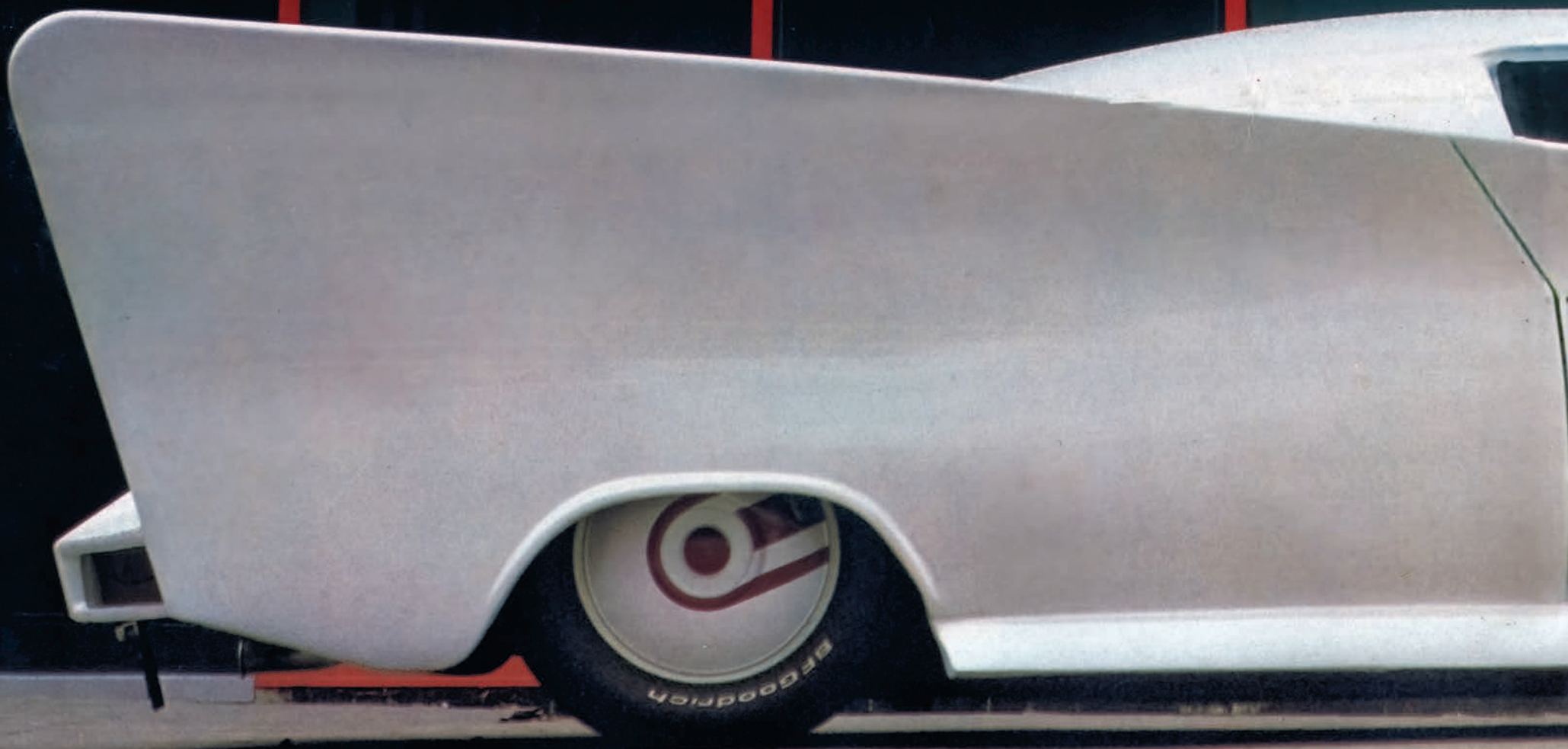
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INDECISION

1976 CITROËN CX 2000 PALLAS





Indecision!



In Vienna with TNT.

The other truck-based event she enjoyed was the 1985 British Truck Grand Prix at Brands Hatch. Claustrophobia was given the prestigious honour of being a celebrity pace car.

To get good photos for the programme, I was asked to attend the Press Day a couple of months before. All manner of photographs were taken, but when this was finished they held a short but authentic race to give the press the opportunity for action pictures. One of the drivers asked me if I'd like to ride as passenger. One hundredth of a second later I was in his truck donning

helmet and harness and it was an experience I will remember forever. The feeling of entering the downhill ninety-degree left-hand corner, called Graham Hill Bend, at about seventy-five miles per hour, in a truck some eleven feet tall, and looking out of the door window only to see the huge tyre wall virtually facing me as the tyre seemed to struggle to keep itself on the wheel rim was something I probably won't ever forget.

On race day my job was to lead the trucks around the warm-up lap of the track, before their rolling start, as a pace car would do, and it was brilliant. A car less than

three feet high being followed by two lines of towering race trucks. One of my highlights of race day was to see Barry Lee, as he completed his lap of honour, do something I have never before seen. He entered the straight in front of the grandstand and then, with the elegance of a ballerina his truck pirouetted as he executed the most beautiful handbrake turn in his race truck – incredible and what a showman! I have since read a bit about Barry Lee and in his career of different classes of motor racing he has won fourteen hundred races, something that is unlikely to be beaten.



At the British Truck Grand Prix. PHOTO BY ROGER HAYTER

In 1987 'Street Machine' magazine hosted the most outrageous and costly display stand ever commissioned by a magazine at the London Motor Show. They came up with the idea of showing six cars featuring the most extreme styles; the longest, the tallest, the fastest and, the other three categories which were taken by me, the shortest – Mini Ha Ha, the weirdest – Indecision and the lowest – Claustrophobia. It was certainly one of the most impressive stands ever built on Earls Court, Level 1. They even made a display podium for Mini Ha Ha that stood the car above Claustrophobia

whilst the heavy pearl of Indecision glowed against the red background wall on the other side of the stand. It was quite breathtaking.

On Saturday, the build-up day, all six cars had been requested to appear on BBC1's 'Saturday Superstore' for some pre-show publicity where all the owners were interviewed by Keith Chegwin. At that time I was a singer with a very odd, early 1980's new romantic band. I was also doing catwalk modelling and I figured

RIGHT: Passes for the British Truck Grand Prix.



wasn't in the running, whilst Ed's sofa was too unstable to go above 30mph, so after the initial start line take-off for the cameras the race was between me and the skip. Not that there ever really was a race in the first place, but it is amazing how competitive you become when you're out there on the track.

My little boat had the standard 750cc Reliant engine, derived from the pre-war Austin 7, but with the aerodynamics of a stealth fighter plane, whilst

the skip had a 2000cc Austin Montego turbo diesel but also the disadvantage of being brick shaped and weighing about three tons. I pushed my boat to the edge of mechanical destruction, nudging the skip all the way but having no acceleration to pass him. My speed reached numbers no Reliant could have ever dreamt of as, for the first time in its life, the strained speedometer needle pointed towards the lower right-hand side of the dashboard. The speedo actually

touched the dizzying speed of 92 miles per hour as per the dial face, but I could not accelerate. What I needed was a lucky break, which very shortly came into view. In the distance, just before the last corner, there was a chicane. I figured, if I was going to pass him, this was my only remaining opportunity as the following corner directed you back onto the home straight and finishing line.



Run-A-Ground outside its new owner's garage after delivery.



You can clearly see my Thruxton Circuit racing glasses atop the 750cc powerhouse.

*There was one factor
I hadn't considered:
Yes, my old friend
'the law of physics'.*

BELOW: My cousin Justin water-skiing on the tarmac. Seconds after this photo, a dog ran out, I braked hard and Justin ended up between the seats! PHOTO BY ANDY WILLSHEER

BOTTOM: Whacky Races. PHOTO COURTESY OF BIZARRE MAGAZINE

TOP RIGHT: Aneka and Justin sailing with me. PHOTO BY ANDY WILLSHEER

MIDDLE RIGHT: I like the irony of Run-A-Ground by the sea that it cannot float on. PHOTO COURTESY OF PRACTICAL CLASSIC MAGAZINE

BOTTOM RIGHT: Mr Clarkson driving Run-A-Ground.

"He looks like
he's taking the
sea-nic route."





PHOTO BY MIKE KEY



"Hey man, do you wanna go cruising?" PHOTO BY MIKE KEY

At one indoor show the fictitious personage of Larry Lozenge, a very funny janitor brought to life by none other than Victory Wheelers' natural comedian Mickey Kimber, was sweeping around the front of Incantation and, as he did, I made the car leap into the air using the hydraulic remote-control button in my pocket. Larry understood immediately and over the next five minutes I would lift, drop and dance the car to his command as he swept the floor and polished the headlights, and as I dropped the car for the last time he took a bow and walked off. Within seconds of him doing so dozens of children, and adults alike, were polishing and sweeping the front of the car to see if they too could make her dance but, unsurprisingly, she wouldn't move for anyone other than Larry!

In November Incantation had the honour of being invited to the Essen Motor Show. I had been chosen to exhibit at this show regularly over the years starting with Mini Ha Ha in 1983, but as the years went on the budget for this exhibition got bigger and bigger until it was nothing less than the most spectacular show on the automotive planet.

The Essen Motor Show was started in 1968 by Wolfgang Scholler and grew quickly. Wolfgang understood that the better the show the more people would flock to see it, and he was correct. As the show gained momentum, the public came from all corners of the world to see this extravaganza. The other halls were full of different genres of car, tuning, veteran,

classic, auction, etc., but it was the spectacular show hall that people wanted to see. Every year the vehicles were the best the world had to offer and the selection was so diverse that, as part of their prize, each category winner from Daytona Bike Week was shipped to Essen for that particular display, as indeed were the category winners of the prestigious Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance. There was always a theme running through the show hall, some years being much stronger than others, but nevertheless the theme usually gave rise to some spectacular displays.

Sadly this was to change on Wolfgang's death as the show became council run and those heady days of no limits show cars were to very quickly be no more.

The most impressive and expensive display I ever saw was at Essen. The theme was French Cars and I had been invited to display Asorta-Transporta. The whole of the main hall was French and there were hundreds of them of all different genres, but the jewel in the crown was a display never before seen...

Positioned in an X-shape configuration in the very centre of the main hall were four, twenty-five feet long, sealed glass display cabinets and inside each was an original Bugatti Royale.

Positioned in an X-shape configuration in the very centre of the main hall were four, twenty-five feet long, sealed glass display cabinets and inside each was an original Bugatti Royale. Bugatti made just six

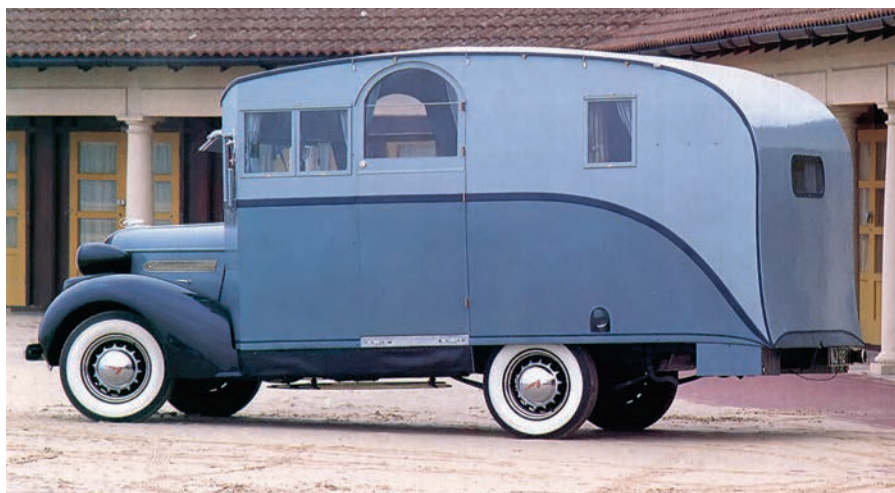
The exterior styling held the same level of contradiction as the interior in that the elegant, Detroit designed, waterfall grille sat just ahead of a very English designed caravan body, yet it worked, and it worked well as the contrasts in style somehow complimented each other.

When finished, her first trip was an invitation to the Bexhill Pageant of Motoring, and our host was Russell's of Bexhill. By now Russell's had become a Renault franchise, but as a family business that had been trading for 150 years they were well respected by the local community, and their stand here was a celebration of this. At the centre of their stand was a space reserved for one very special old lady.

On arrival we were introduced to the current Mr Russell who welcomed us and told us how as a child he remembered the Pontiac being in their workshop. He had, for our benefit, even gone to the effort of finding the original order books for 1936 where he proudly showed us the entry which clearly explained that they were working on 'Captain Dunn's Pontiac Motorhome'.

That afternoon Mr Russell introduced us to an old man by the name of Stan.

Stan must have been well into his eighties and was rather frail, but that certainly didn't stop his excitement, and on first seeing the Pontiac his eyes lit up. He started to tell us that his first job as an apprentice at Russell's was to help the coachbuilder with the task of building her. He complimented us on our choice of colours and confirmed we had got them absolutely spot on, something we had been unsure of as she had been 'wash painted' Khaki in case she was called upon by the Home Guard during the war.



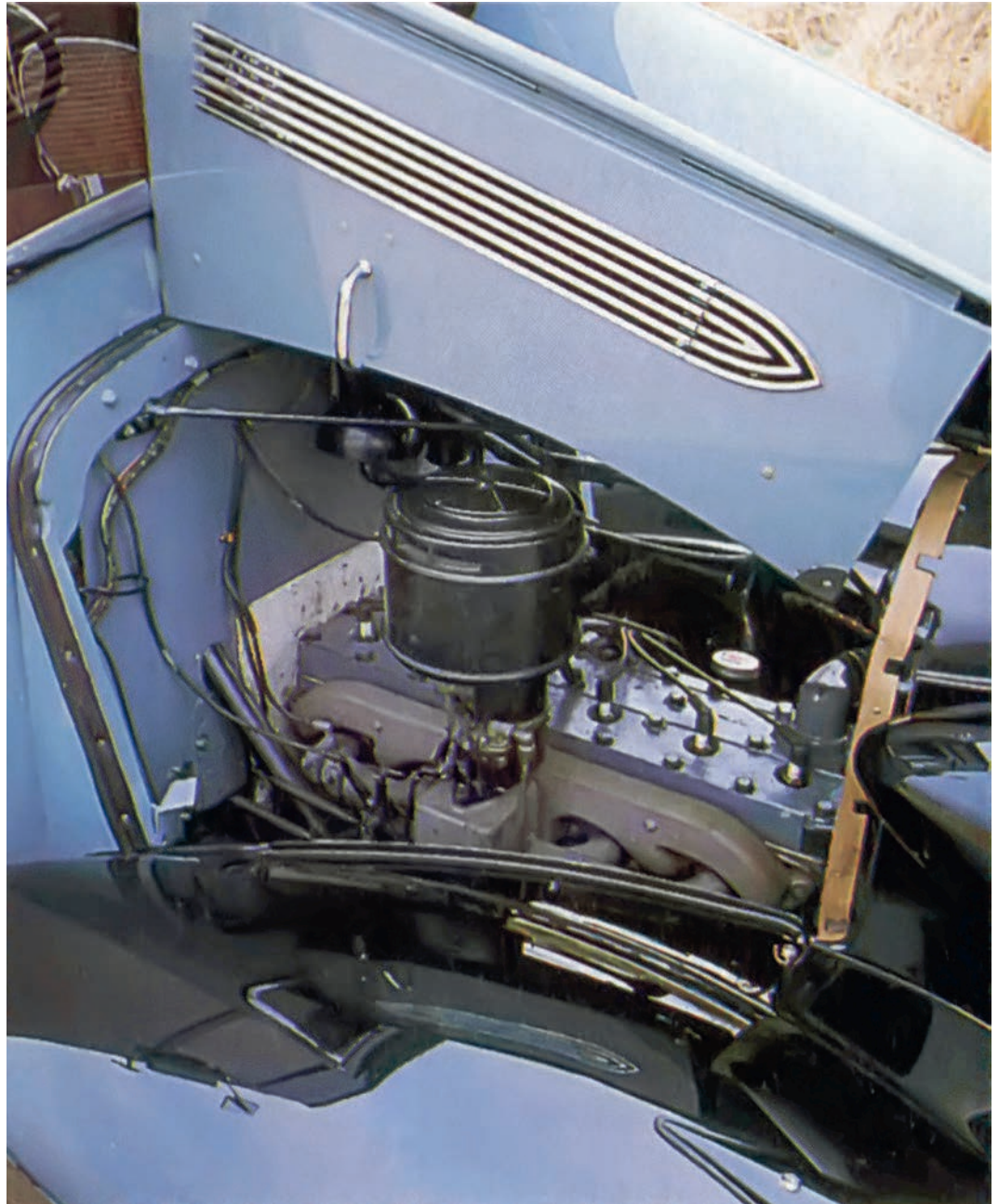
COURTESY OF AMERICAN CAR WORLD



COURTESY OF AMERICAN CAR WORLD



Art Deco styling in everything right down to the Indian head Pontiac mascot.
COURTESY OF AMERICAN CAR WORLD



COURTESY OF AMERICAN CAR WORLD

1936 CORD

1936 CORD 810 SPORTSMAN



My Dad read about this barn find Cord in one of the classic car magazines he used to buy and the romance of such a beautiful thing got him to enquire further. The car had been found in New York State and was up for auction, and as the auction was in the States and as my Dad had never set foot on an aeroplane, a phone bid was organised.



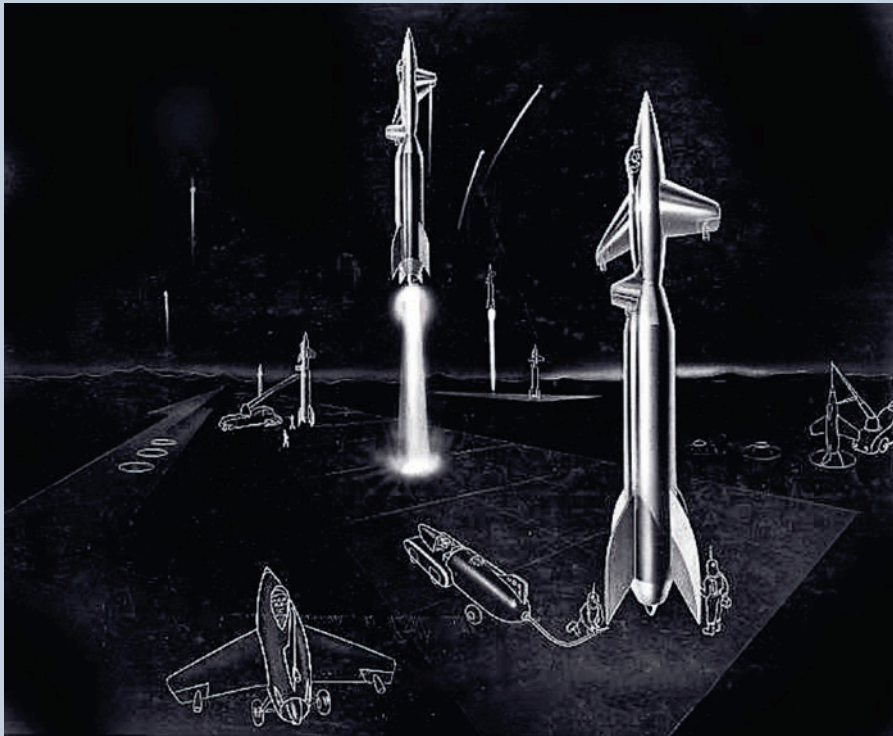
ABOVE: Romance in the ash tray? When we stripped her down, in the ash tray there were several cigarette ends covered in Bright Red '50s lipstick, and they set my imagination on fire. Who was she? How did she look? Where did she come from? Fascinating questions with a link to the past.

TOP RIGHT: As she arrived with us after many years in storage. Complete with extra vents drilled in the front and sides of the bonnet, she must have had an overheating problem.

RIGHT: Old laminated glass has a habit of delaminating when neglected and whenever I study such a piece it fascinates me.



Alex's ideas and knowledge of aerodynamics and drag coefficients, probably learned from his wartime years with the Air Corps and later at Boeing, is believed by many experts to have been decades ahead of the motor industry.

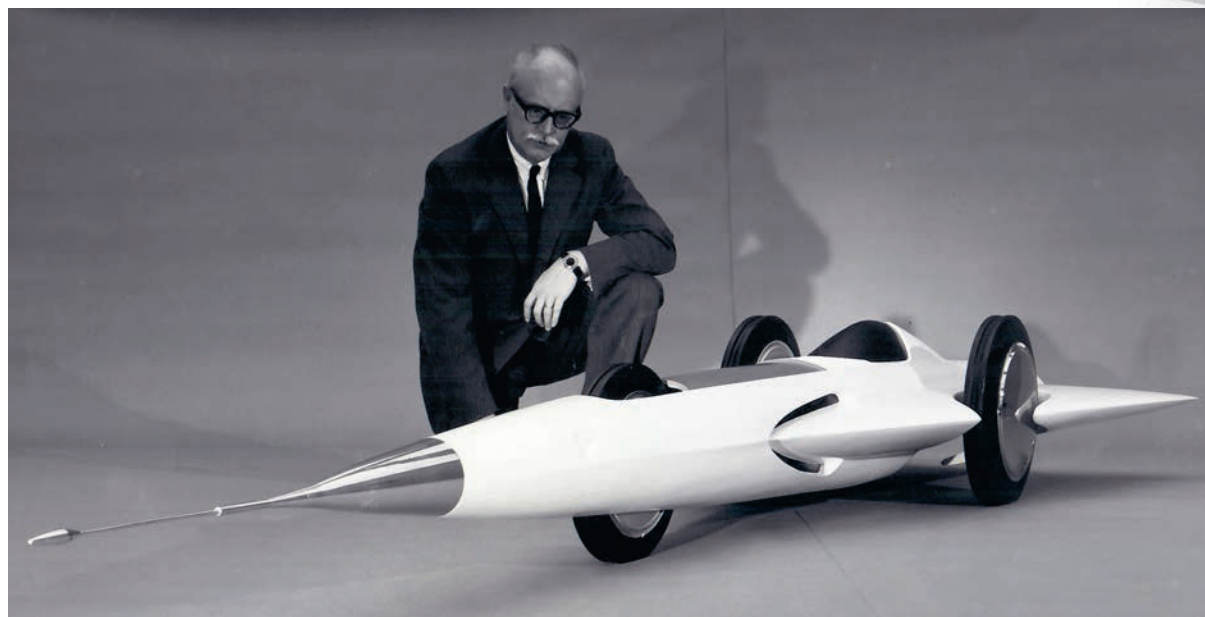


The 2-stage rocket concept designed by Alex Tremulis in July 1944 when stationed at the Aircraft Lab, Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio. The concept of two or more multiple stage rockets is still used today in space exploration.



Alex's flying saucer from 1950 that had a lot to do with the UFO craze of the 1950s and beyond.

BOTH IMAGES COURTESY OF THE ALEX TREMULIS FAMILY ARCHIVE



TOP LEFT: The Ford Gyron. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL MOTOR MUSEUM, BEAULIEU

TOP RIGHT: Alex Tremulis and Dom Orlando with the Seattle-Itc. The inscription reads, 'To the family with love and affection, Alex.' COURTESY OF THE ALEX TREMULIS FAMILY ARCHIVE

LEFT: Alex Tremulis with his 1960 Maxima, ultimate streamliner for Ford that inspired Craig Breedlove. COURTESY OF THE ALEX TREMULIS FAMILY ARCHIVE



A Space Age cruise along Sandbanks Promenade. PHOTO BY MIKE KEY

the Aurora and I have never been to a place like it. Back then a curator walked me to a long filing cabinet with the word Aurora neatly written above the pull handle. He pulled the drawer slowly open, and it didn't stop coming out. It was so long it could have doubled up as a sleeping pod in a Tokyo hotel. Inside was every piece of press and promotional literature ever printed on the Aurora! It was incredible. I figured if they had this much original information on such a small build as the Aurora then they would possibly have at least similar amounts on the X-2000. The reply to my letter explained that they only had one photograph of her and they enclosed a copy, but unfortunately this photo was the front 3/4 shot used in 'Dream Cars', although I did get it blown up to two foot square so it was easier to study details, but other than that, it didn't really help me.

I figured that perhaps the rear of the car never existed. This was quite possible as design models were usually moulded in clay, and if the designer wanted to emphasise one particular angle they would concentrate on that elevation only.

Basically, if I were to make the rear of this car as correct as possible without any knowledge of what it looked like I had to put my head into the position of Alex Tremulis some forty years earlier, and that excited me. I decided to use the '62 Mercury rear panel, trim, reverse lights and bumper as my thought was that if the X-2000 had been designed to gauge public reaction to its features, then some of these features may have found themselves in production during the following couple of years. Possibly not as long as four, but as my chosen base was '62, I allowed myself the luxury of these two years. So it is possible that the rear panel of the Mercury may well have stemmed from the X-2000. Who knows, it never existed! The rear pods were obviously to house taillights, and to find the correct lamp I studied all Ford light clusters from that period, choosing the '59 Galaxy units for their after burner trim. Again the theory was that concept ideas for '58 were likely to be in production ideas for '59.



TOP: When the X-2000 was first finished I used the chrome wire wheels from Rainbow Chaser, but later, on finishing The Empress and needing them for her I replaced them with original 1957 Ford wheel trims for the more 'factory' look.

ABOVE: I love this picture as it makes her look like the USS Enterprise.

MINI HA HA 2 & 3

1963 MINI



In 1983 when I first built Mini Ha Ha there were no thoughts of cars being this small. The Smart car wasn't even a concept and Mini Ha Ha was built just for fun.

Now seventeen years later with congestion and lack of parking being major factors everywhere, the need for small cars was increasingly more apparent. I had no thoughts of replicating Mini Ha Ha until one evening a friend of my Dad's offered me a particularly tidy Mini that needed front wings due to having run into the back of another car. As it was his fault he hadn't bothered going through insurance, instead he wanted someone to have it as a project, and this is why he mentioned it to me. I figured fixing the front was an easy repair but rather than do it to sell I would shorten it for use as my new daily car.

The influx of media attention virtually matched that of the original Mini Ha Ha as newspapers went wild for her, dubbing her England's answer to the Smart, although this was never my intention.

*The influx of media attention
virtually matched that of
the original Mini Ha Ha as
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dubbing her England's answer
to the Smart, although this
was never my intention.*

When I built the original car I was nineteen and although not as practised as I am now, I had started to find my feet. The original Mini Ha Ha had taken four months to build, this one took just six weeks including the paint.

Amazing how practise hones your skills isn't it?

This car is still very much alive and kicking and the lady who bought her from me still owns her and uses her regularly.

In 2007, as my Dad's death loomed ever closer, I knew my responsibilities were soon going to double and I understood I was on the edge of huge life changes, yet I was surrounded by all the show cars I'd built so frantically over the past couple of years; none of which had dry storage, and all of which suffered a little water ingress from one chopped door shut or another. I already did not have enough time to look after them, and I knew my immediate future would afford me even less, and to leave them outside indefinitely would have been sacrilege, so I decided to place them in a specialist auction.

When the auctioneer visited, he saw pictures of



Parking spaces were always at a premium at Run to the Sun, Newquay.



PHOTO BY DRAKES PHOTOGRAPHY



stood I, and next to me, on the hard crisp salt was a salt lake race car whose body I had designed and built. Saline's body being completely unaltered from what I had built in just two short days in front of the cameras: The curved windscreen and long flowing moon roof to the pop-riveted nose extension and the twin roof dorsal fins. My streamliner stood awaiting her run on this hallowed ground, piloted by Gilles Pujol, a Frenchman who not only acknowledged his dreams but brought them to life as he wove them into the fabric of this car in his own personal attempt to make his mark on the history of the land speed records – to become the fastest Frenchman in the world.

Gilles and his team, 'Les Triplettes de Bonneville' attained a top speed of 145mph from Saline running in the 750cc class, unofficially beating the existing record by 11mph but as the engine detonated the car could not complete its second run thus was not recorded as official, but they all know it's now possible when they do get round to rebuilding her.

The trouble is that they have been bitten so badly by the bug of speed they have put the modest little Reliant to one side to chase further dreams in other classes. Since their debut at Bonneville in 2009 Gilles

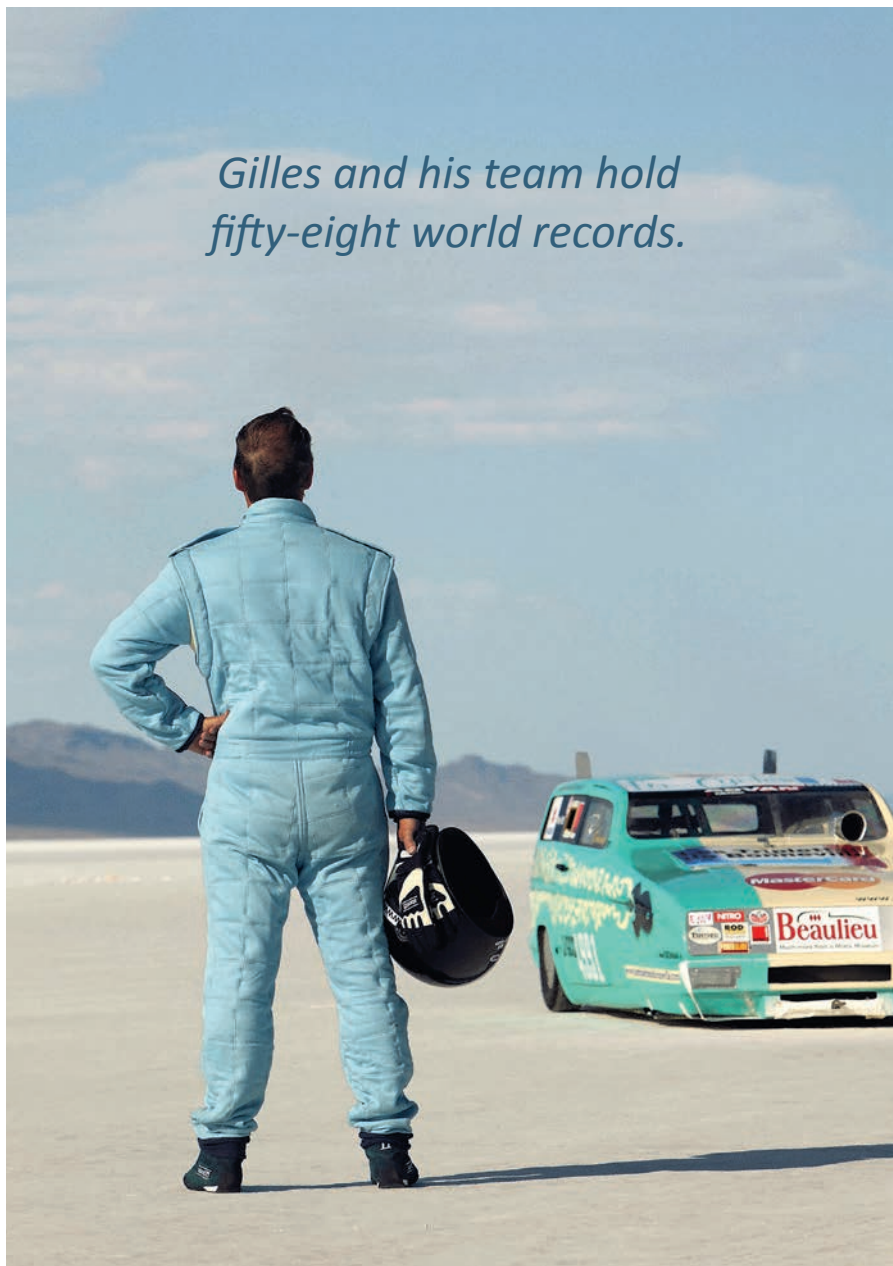


PHOTO BY ANDREW THOMPSON COURTESY OF STREET MACHINE

and his team, which incidentally has grown from three to literally dozens, have made the pilgrimage to Bonneville every year with a host of other vehicles they have designed and built themselves and, at the time of writing, Gilles and his team hold fifty-eight world records, each and every one inspired by my work on this very humble little Reliant Rialto and, as a nod of honour to her, the name of every race vehicle they have built begins with the word, 'Saline'.

THIS PAGE: So low. LEFT (BOTH): COURTESY OF LES TRIPLETES DE BONNEVILLE, RIGHT: PHOTO BY ANDREW THOMPSON COURTESY OF STREET MACHINE





Gilles and his team hold fifty-eight world records.

The reality of Gilles' dream. COURTESY OF LES TRIPLETTES DE BONNEVILLE

in a panic

...the driver's seat, parked in front of the...
...the driver's seat, parked in front of the...
...the driver's seat, parked in front of the...

On the question of performance, Gilles...
...the driver's seat, parked in front of the...
...the driver's seat, parked in front of the...

MAGAZINE COVERAGE

Street Machine UK

Veteran Slovakia

...the driver's seat, parked in front of the...
...the driver's seat, parked in front of the...
...the driver's seat, parked in front of the...

...the driver's seat, parked in front of the...
...the driver's seat, parked in front of the...
...the driver's seat, parked in front of the...

The profile of the old car was very dated and rather cumbersome and although I didn't know exactly where I was going, I knew by removing the roof skin it would afford me a clearer view. I chopped the pillars three inches bringing the height down nicely and then, by fluke, I found a glass roof panel and rear screen from a Mercedes Roadster hardtop in the 'Exchange & Mart'. I made a frame to fit the glass panels and tacked it into position using all manner of props and broom handles to balance it in the right place. This looked good but the main thing to come from this was that the new rear screen gave me a new side profile which in turn gave the car a beautiful new sleek C pillar. This shape made the car look incredible; low, sleek and very modern indeed.

The name Mentally Insanne actually came about through two friends.

One evening I was talking to Rod Cussons who asked how the Bentley Insanne was coming on and a couple of weeks later I was chatting to Lance McCormack of Romance of Rust when he asked for a progress report on the Mentally. I stood still, almost shocked, at the fabulous name I had just been given by chance. Mentally Insanne rather than Bentley Mulsanne – simply the best name in the world for her!

Within weeks of the car being finished I was contacted by the Rolls-Royce & Bentley Owners Club where it soon appeared in their newsletter, and from that article I received one rather powerful compliment:

'This is the most beautiful coachbuilt Bentley to have been built since WWII'.

So Mentally crossed boundaries and merged lines which is quite an honour, re-affirmed when Bob Gathercole invited me to the very prestigious European Concours d'Elegance held at Schloss Schwetzingen, Germany, under the classification of 'Modern Day Coachbuilt.'

Since my explosion into his office at Motor Show back in 1987, Bob Gathercole had become rather aware of my dress sense and when he invited me to this event he stressed that the Saturday evening's entertainment started with a classical music concert in the very theatre that Beethoven performed his first



Stately homes and Mentally Insanne go together.



concert. This was to be followed by dinner with a strict 'black tie' dress code. In anticipation of this event I had my dinner suit dry cleaned so I would look my best. I packed the car and set off on what was one of the longest journeys I have ever driven in Europe and certainly the longest distance I ever travelled by road to get to a show destination.

I drove all day and night stopping at a French motorway service car park in the early hours of the following morning to grab some sleep. I reclined the driver's seat and settled down. I slept heavily, stirring only when the sun's rays started to burn through the

I felt all the muscles of my face go taut as Bob Gathercole's words screamed inside my head...

windows. As my eyes fluttered open and I focused on the world outside I was baffled to see several male faces all pressed against the darkened side windows trying to see what, or even who, was inside this 'million-dollar prototype' parked haphazardly at a roadside pull in. I shook dreams from my head, opened the door and looking rather dishevelled made my way to the toilets, all to a round of applause from the gathered crowd.

On arrival at the event, I got chatting to a blonde on the registration desk. We got on well and by the time I had finished checking in, I had a date for the Saturday evening. Late Saturday afternoon arrived and I went to my room, showered and styled my hair and then without a care in the world I unzipped the long black suit bag that contained my freshly cleaned 'black tie' dinner suit. I put my hand inside the pouting zip and pulled out my dinner jacket, and as I did, I literally froze. I felt all the muscles of my face go taut as Bob Gathercole's words screamed inside my head... the suit I held in my hand was not my dinner suit but my prized long black Zoot suit complete with Chicano chains.

How the hell had I picked the wrong bag?

My mistake left me with just two options: Number one was not to go to the ball, let the dream blonde on the registration desk down, and sit alone in my room all evening watching German TV. Number two was obvious and number one wasn't in the running so with a long deep breath I donned the Zoot suit.

Looking more like David Bowie than Dean Martin, I arrived at the luxurious marbled reception area which

was adorned with exquisite cut glass chandeliers. My date for the evening turned and looked at me in disbelief. Before she could attempt to stutter 'It's Black Tie', I had grabbed her by the hand and confidently swept into the main hall where a thousand men dressed as penguins turned and gasped!

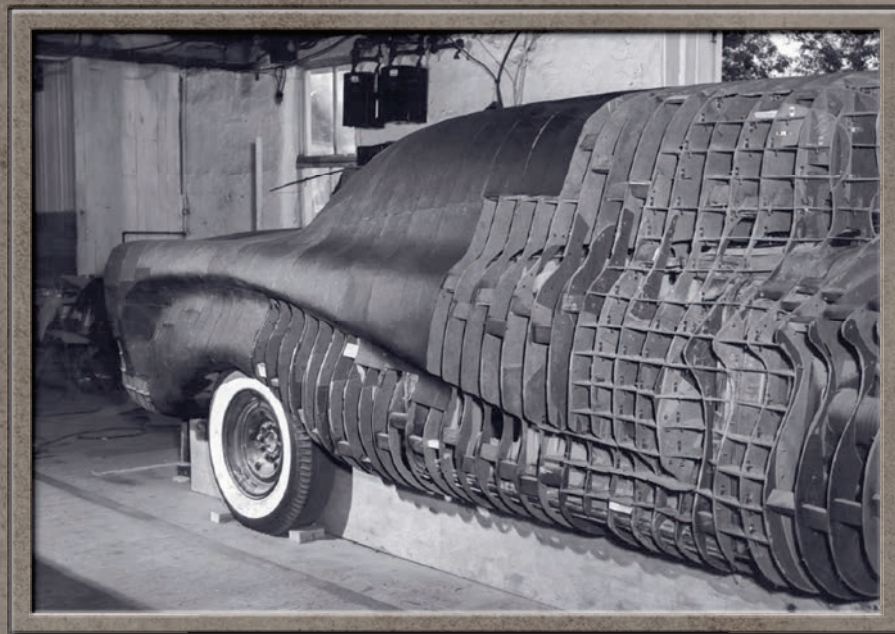
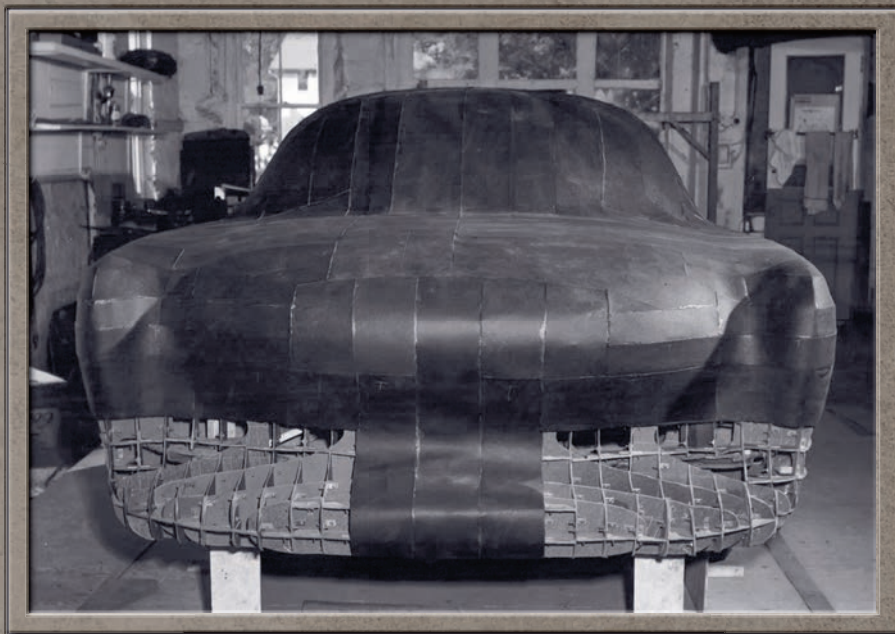
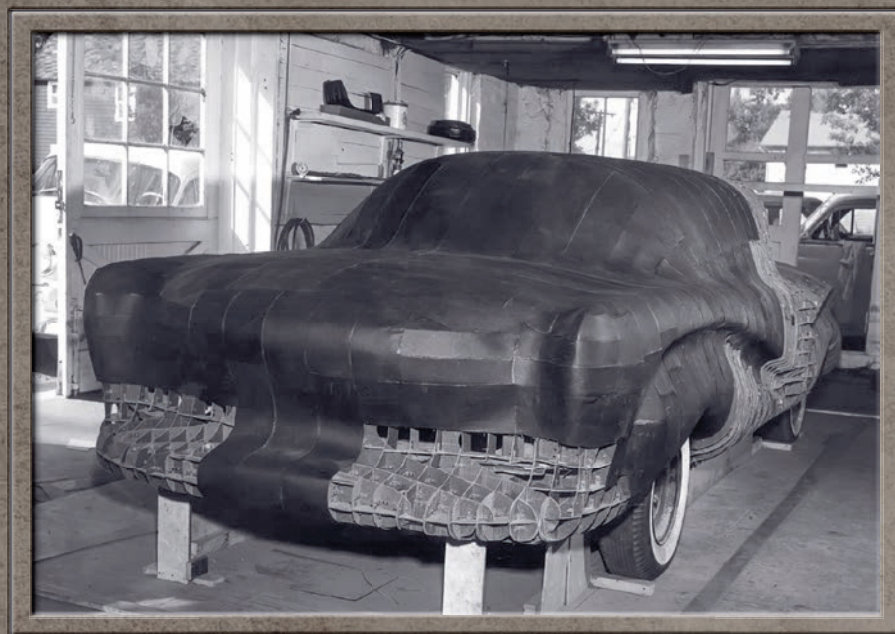
My long flowing jacket danced gracefully just below the knee as we walked confidently to our seats. My high-waisted trousers rubbed at my rib cage, just inches below my nipples, suspended by braces that framed an original 1940's vintage American silk tie with a naked pin-up girl hand-painted on it. Twin gold chains, hung menacingly from the lip of my pockets down to my shoes before swooping back up to the waistband, clinked as I walked.

I was of more interest to the other exhibitors than the concert itself. Bob Gathercole was speechless, this fashion overload far outshining his first encounter with my eclectic wardrobe!

That framed an original 1940's Gordy American silk tie with a naked pin-up girl hand-painted on it...

The following day, Sunday, was the main day and there were million-dollar cars dotted everywhere around the beautiful grounds. Along the side of the manicured lawns and neatly trimmed hedges was a large art gallery marquee housing all styles of automotive art carried out by an array of different artists. One artist was a rather trendy older chap, bespectacled with shoulder length wavy grey hair. I stopped to look at his work and started a conversation with him during which he said,

"When you drove in here on Thursday afternoon





GOODWOOD FESTIVAL 2004



At the end of 2003 I had a phone call from Julius Thurgood of Top Hat Racing and the Goodwood Festival of Speed. He said there was something he needed to talk to me about and asked if we could have a meeting.

At this meeting, standing next to a large pile of fibreglass panels that could one day, fingers crossed, turn back into the Aurora, Julius explained that the theme at the *Cartier Style et Luxe Concours* at Goodwood Festival of Speed the following year was going to be 'Cars of the Future'. I already knew what he was going to ask, and I already knew my answer. He looked at the Aurora, which consisted of the front half of the bodyshell, sat on top of the back half of the bodyshell with the bonnet and boot lid stacked on top of that again and four empty door skins leaning against it.

Julius inhaled as he continued,

"We would like that there."

He knew what he was asking was impossible with the time available, and my look confirmed his thoughts,

"No Julius, I would love it too but there isn't enough time."

His next line stopped me dead:

"That is such a shame Andy, as we also wanted to invite the X-2000, plus your earlier creation, Indecision. If all three of these were to attend, you would break records, as you would be the only person in the history of *concours* to exhibit three cars in a single event that embrace three different disciplines: Restoration, Replication and Custom."

So, the first thing I had to do was to speak with the current owner of Indecision. I had sold Indecision at the 1987 London Motor Show and two months later it reappeared for sale for three times what I sold it for.

Sometime later I received a phone call from the then new owner. He had a collection of a hundred and

PHOTO BY ANDY SMERDON, COURTESY OF GOODWOOD.COM

“If all three of these were to attend, you would break records, as you would be the only person in the history of concours to exhibit three cars in a single event that embrace three different disciplines: Restoration, Replication and Custom.”

seventy cars near Brooklands. Over the years we had spoken occasionally but we never became friends. I now needed to speak to him urgently, so I found his number and made the call.

I asked if I could borrow Indecision for this exhibition to which he immediately replied,

“No. I am sorry but a few years ago the river running behind the barn broke its banks and every single car was flooded by two feet of river water. None of the cars have moved since. I am not interested in moving forty or so seized cars for you to borrow a flooded car. If you want to buy it then come and take a look.”

Suddenly I found myself in a conundrum. I didn’t want to own her again but an invitation to exhibit a car I designed and built at the tender age of twenty-two, at the best *concours* in Europe, was too good to miss. I went to meet him and as he opened the door of his huge industrial unit, a tide line of filthy river water was visible two feet high around every car. Indecision was one of the worst flooded as she had been parked with the suspension down. The water had actually lapped at her door windows. As I peered through the murky glass my heart sank. The interior had been softly covered with two inches of thick grey sediment; everything from the double bed to the heater vents was impregnated with filth.

So, Indecision arrived at my garage. Mechanically everything was still full of river water; the intake manifold, the cylinders, the gearbox and the heater ducts, all full. Every cable was seized, it was ridiculous. As if I hadn’t taken on too much by promising the Aurora would be there, I now had this to contend with. I found another Citroën CX and swapped every mechanical item. Also the body had become tatty around the lower edge. Time did not allow for the luxury of trying to patch up twenty-year-old pearl paint. Colin Ware was helping me and together we decided to change the colour to an unlacquered matt silver base coat, wiped over with a Scotchbrite to give the effect of brushed aluminium with the top being silver flake.

With Indecision now painted, Bob and I set about the task of finishing the Aurora and at this point Colin Ware became my saviour. He had been unhappy with his employment for some time but hadn’t decided on a way forward, but this particular Monday, six weeks before Goodwood, Colin walked into my yard and announced,

“I’ve handed my notice in and I’m not looking for another job until the Aurora is finished, now what do you want me to do?”



MIDDLE AND ABOVE PHOTOS COURTESY OF STREET MACHINE



When 'Intersection' asked me to take part in this design exhibition, they had no idea that I could not use CAD, nor did I have the time or the interest in computers to learn. As my idea took shape, they got Ashley Cichocki to bring my design to life using CAD. I sketched my ideas and sent them to Ash. From them, he created the CAD images and emailed them to me. I would then print, alter and return it. This process happened numerous times, but eventually his CAD was what was in my head. CAD and me? I could have probably built the car faster than creating the CAD. REPRODUCED COURTESY OF ASHLEY CICHOCKI

alongside the designs by the legendary Syd Mead. The exhibition was taking place at an art gallery in Brick Lane in London and as the Zero was so near to completion, 'Intersection' asked if I would debut it there, which I did.

Luigi Colani was to be the guest of honour on the opening day. Now, I have seen a lot of his stuff and he really is 'far-out', sometimes in a good way and sometimes not so good, but, whatever you think of his work, he pulled some pretty amazing things out of the bag during his lifetime. Prior to his appearance I was talking to a writer from the magazine who told me Colani was then eighty years old, so I wasn't expecting too much from the opening ceremony until this booming voice announced,

"Colani's the name."

Everyone turned to look and the sight was unreal. Instead of the image of a little eighty-year-old man we had all been guilty of conjuring up, there in the centre of the gallery stood a tall, strong man, wearing a full-length fur coat that bobbed against the floor as he walked. His hair was longer than shoulder length and was two colours: Pure white from the scalp to half-length and jet black from there to the ends. This guy had presence.

After he opened the exhibition, I spoke with him for some time and he was fascinating, and the most interesting thing he told me was how and why he had become Luigi Colani: He was originally German and had been born Lutz Colani in 1928. Growing up in Germany during that time he, along with all the other children of this generation, were all but forced to enrol in the Hitler Youth. What he witnessed disturbed him

so much that he changed his name to Luigi so he could feign being Italian...

After her launch at the Brick Lane Art Gallery, she, along with Mentally, the Aurora, the X-2000 and the freshly repainted Indecision was asked to take part in a rock opera. Held in conjunction with the London Excel Motor Show, 'Dock Rock' was a half-hour rendition of 'Romeo and Juliet' performed in an open-air arena overlooking the London Docklands and was a cross breed of rock opera and stunt show.

Terry Grant and another stunt driver bellowed white tyre smoke from two seething Holden Monaros in a gracefully dangerous bull fight, dancing and drifting two cars ever closer to a cape waving matador. Opera singers stood on top of twenty-foot-high platforms, tailored to be part of their long flowing dresses, and manoeuvred their large motorised trestles between

dance troupes and acrobats as they sang their way around the area. As this particular act came to an elegant, yet smoke-filled close, bikers started to leap skyward as they back flipped their bikes high above the wires where other acrobats now spun and twisted, and all whilst my cars cruised the arena delivering dancing girls to their next line-up and rock bands, such as the legendary hot rod artist and musician 'Vince Ray & the Razorbacks', to their designated stages.



The printed designs of the Bentley shown behind the Zero on display at the Brick Lane Gallery.



The '50s American concept styling was wild, but when the Italians joined in at the end of the '60s, concept vehicles were taken to another level.

sad they hadn't known of her existence earlier as they would have booked her as the press car for 2007, but it was now too late to get her there before the show opened. Ten days later he phoned again, this time with excitement in his voice, as he shouted down the phone,

"I've done it Andy, I've found a sponsor who is going to pay to fly Flat Out to Melbourne!"

The sponsor was an Australian Sat-Nav company, and they made the most of her presence. She sat diagonally across their stand in the very centre of this enormous hall and drew the people in their hordes. On Press Day she was surrounded by Australian celebrities and models. One model was a very petite Asian lady who draped herself across the car. The press asked her to sit inside the car, a task only possible by climbing through the sunroof. She got in and posed, sitting upright through the roof before reclining a little, then, without warning, she did something no one had managed before. She disappeared inside the car and, to my astonishment, closed the sunroof above her!

For all I know she could still be in there...

She got in and posed, sitting upright through the roof before reclining a little, then, without warning, she did something no one had managed before...



PHOTO BY BNPS.CO.UK





OPPOSITE TOP LEFT: Harley the bulldog, supporting us by wearing the team shirt during the intense 3-day build.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Autoglym's exhibition display.

ABOVE: Autoglym's calendar.

TOP RIGHT: The celebratory photo with the Autoglym team. PHOTO BY SARAH BRADLEY

RIGHT: This is without doubt my favourite shot of Flat Out. Taken in the car park of an Earls Court Hotel, after the MPH show, it simply shows how a Ford Fiesta towers above her...



when positioned against a standard car were about fifteen inches taller than stock.

I performed the same trick but instead of moving the pillars backwards I moved them forward and the effect was astounding.

The idea for the paint was to use primary colours. The Harlequin patterned strip was taken from one of Picasso's paintings whilst the splattered paint effect on the bumper came from another.

The name was a play on words, Citroën manufacture the Citroën Picasso so the opportunity to call it Picasso's Citroën could not be missed.

Picasso's Citroën was launched at the Goodwood

Festival of Speed in 2007. Chosen by a trade stand to pull the public in, it did its job well.

Paul of Pro-Motive was on hand and wrote a For Sale sign with the price being £995,000.

Everyone laughed but at lunchtime Saturday two very well-to-do women about sixty years of age came in and as their eyes fell on Picasso their faces lit up. Paul got talking to them and they expressed that they thought it to be 'an incredible work of art' and could he tell them more, so he introduced them to me. We spoke for some time and they listened intently to my every word. During the weekend they returned a couple of times and on their last visit disclosed that they had been interested in it for their own private art collection but, after measuring it, had come to the conclusion that it was too big to get into their small gallery and so, sadly, they could go no further.

Picasso's Citroën went on to have a 1/43rd scale model made that was given away free with a Citroën magazine in France and, after several more magazine features, she was chosen by 'Vanity Fair' (German edition) as one of the 'Must Haves' of that year.







The timing of this project couldn't have been better, as caring for my Mum whilst witnessing her daily decline pushed my stress levels to the max. I desperately needed respite and this came in the form of using my pent-up anxiety cutting the living daylight out of this little Fiat. Although the body work was finished before my Mum died, the Jolly did not go on the road until 2013.

I did use this little car a few times, and it was a lot of fun cruising round Poole Harbour peninsula pretending I had a Riva moored just offshore, but in all honesty, the real pleasure was the fact that I had put so much effort into attaining the correct level of detail, that she fooled everyone. Specialists, magazines and valuers all took her to be original and that's a compliment.

The real pleasure was the fact that I had put so much effort into attaining the correct level of detail that she fooled everyone...



The early 'Nuevo' Jolly always had large, white wall crossplies with large aluminium hubcaps. The wicker seats were woven by an older man who was taught the art by the man who used to weave them at the Fiat factory. ALL PHOTOS ON THIS PAGE BY STEVE BARON



Three race drivers, but not their race car.



Tom Barnard at the wheel while Jim Chalmers adjusts his harness before a spin round town.



and dorsal fin, scratching his head at the number plate and the Saunders' signature. As they walked round the side of the car, they realised the car was actually not their race car and their astonishment turned to laughter as the paparazzi went wild.

If you are studying the picture of the real race car and thinking it differs considerably from my version, you are right, and there is a very good reason for that. When Tom sent me his original picture I copied it to the very best of my ability considering the time I had, and they were very similar. But when I saw the real car on the track I noticed how different it was to the picture I had been given and Tom replied,

"Yes, it has undergone considerable modification since that original shot was taken."

Gee thanks Tom...

During the build I had posted regular pictures on the internet. No sooner had I returned from France than I received an email from a guy requesting a meeting. On his arrival we sat down, he clicked open his briefcase and pulled out a document...

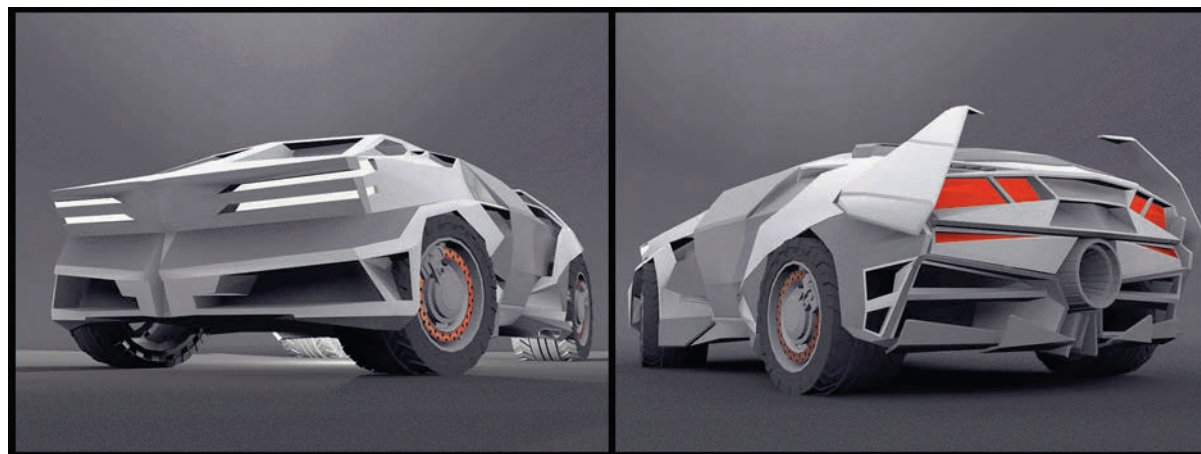
"Now, before I go into detail I need to explain to you the importance of this letter. It is a letter of confidentiality, which you must sign before I disclose why I'm here. The letter binds you to secrecy of all matters discussed today for a period of five years from today's date, and we will be making sure you comply."

Confused by such secrecy, I read it and signed it and as I did he pulled out a series of computer-generated photos,

"I am from Warner Brothers. Over the past few weeks, we have watched with interest as you built the DeltaWing copy, and I am here to discuss with you the possibility of you building the next 'Batmobile'."

My ears could not believe what he was telling me as I soaked up his every word.

"These pictures are just ideas at the moment, but if



The 'Batmobile' concept. COURTESY OF WARNER BROTHERS

"I am here to discuss with you the possibility of you building the next 'Batmobile'."

this was the new car could you build it?"

I studied the pictures and they certainly broke the mould of all previous 'Batmobiles' as it looked like a cross between a new Lexus people carrier and Captain Scarlet's car.

"Yes, I could build this," my breathing rising in intensity.

After he left I drew, designed, priced and dreamt, maybe the dreams of that little boy.

Over the following weeks, Warner Brothers changed their plans not only on the design but also how it was going to be built. Their corporate decision was that it would be the product of several companies and not an individual.

I have to say though, with my chaotic and deranged mind at that time, I know now that I would not have had the clarity or energy for such an immense task. Something of this nature would need the commitment of months of living and breathing it, and realising that my Mum's death wasn't too far away, plus the overriding pressures that would accompany that eventuality, I recognised that the place I needed to be to accomplish that task was not a place I was going to find.

Build it or not, the fact remains that I had been asked and that is compliment enough.

MAGAZINE COVERAGE

Top Gear magazine

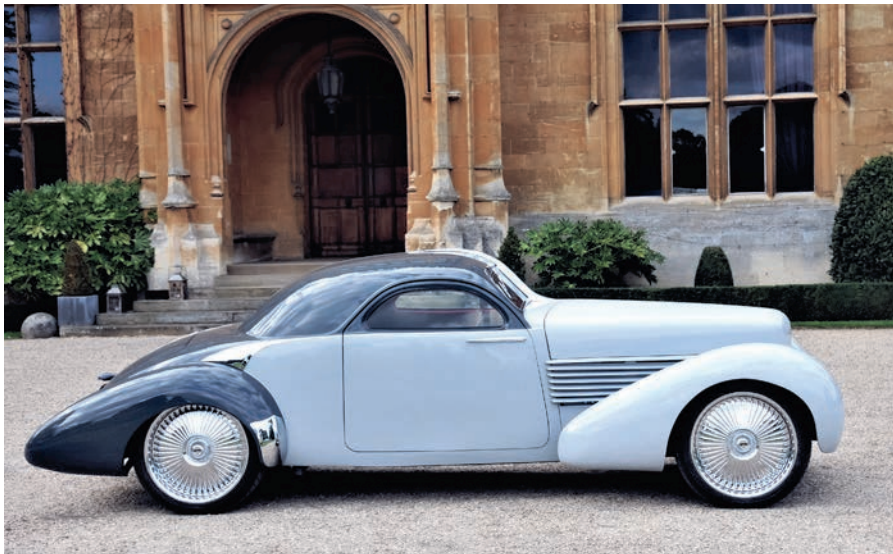
UK



Action shot at the London Classic Car Show in Syon Park. PHOTO BY STEPHEN HEWES



PHOTO BY MATT RICHARDSON



Isn't it a shame Cord never made a coupe? PHOTO BY ANDY WILLSHEER



PHOTO BY MATT WOODS



One of my favourite photos of all time. PHOTO BY MATT WOODS

METROPOLIS

Fine AirBrush Art. by Max Xavier - Tel 07907542319
maxxavier@live.com www.maximexavier.co.uk



The lion was ruled by the robot, represented by the chain tethering them together, but on closer inspection you will notice the chain has a broken link which signifies the end of the war and the end of German rule.

the style of the one used on Tetanus. His face lit up like a little boy at Christmas as he exclaimed,

“Do you know what one of those 1940’s toy space guns looks like?”

He had to say nothing more as I knew where he was coming from, and the answer was definitely yes.

Maxime Xavier is a professional artist whose work is recognised by The National Portrait Gallery. Her lifelong chosen medium being oil on canvas until we started hanging out and she bought herself an airbrush and, as she practised, I knew I had to have some of the magic of her artwork on this truck.

Given the Germanic history entwined within the fabric of the truck and the enhanced Deco styling cues, the mural had to incorporate both, and to help inspire us we watched Fritz Lang’s 1927 futuristic masterpiece ‘Metropolis’.

Two weeks later a full-size pencil on paper rendition of what was to be the final piece adorned her easel.

I delivered the heavy bed cover to her and strapped it to her large, heavyweight, Victorian, crank-handle easel and she started work, locking herself in her studio for two months without contact with the outside world, but the result was outstanding.

The female robot was sexed up using the facial features of none other than Marlene Dietrich. Every piece of the robot’s jewellery was adapted from the stunning trims Matt Edley had made: The spat trims became her earrings and headdress, the split screen trim being the back of her boots, while the profile of the grille and front wings were incorporated into the shape of the back of her belt. She is stood on a stylised wheel trim.

As with every painting Maxime does, she weaves a story through it and this was no different: The three-dimensional geometric lion represents Peugeot. The lion had itself become a steel robot, thus signifying Peugeot having become part of Hitler’s war machine. The lion was ruled by the robot, represented by the chain tethering them together, but on closer inspection you will notice the chain has a broken link which signifies the end of the war and the end of German rule.

With the chain now broken, the lion prepares for peace, and this is signified by the regrowth of fur on his nose, legs and paws. All of this superimposed over the backdrop of the ‘Metropolis’ film-poster.

OPPOSITE: Not only is Maxime’s artwork out of this world, but the story she writes to run through the theme of each piece is quite sublime. PHOTOS BY MATT RICHARDSON

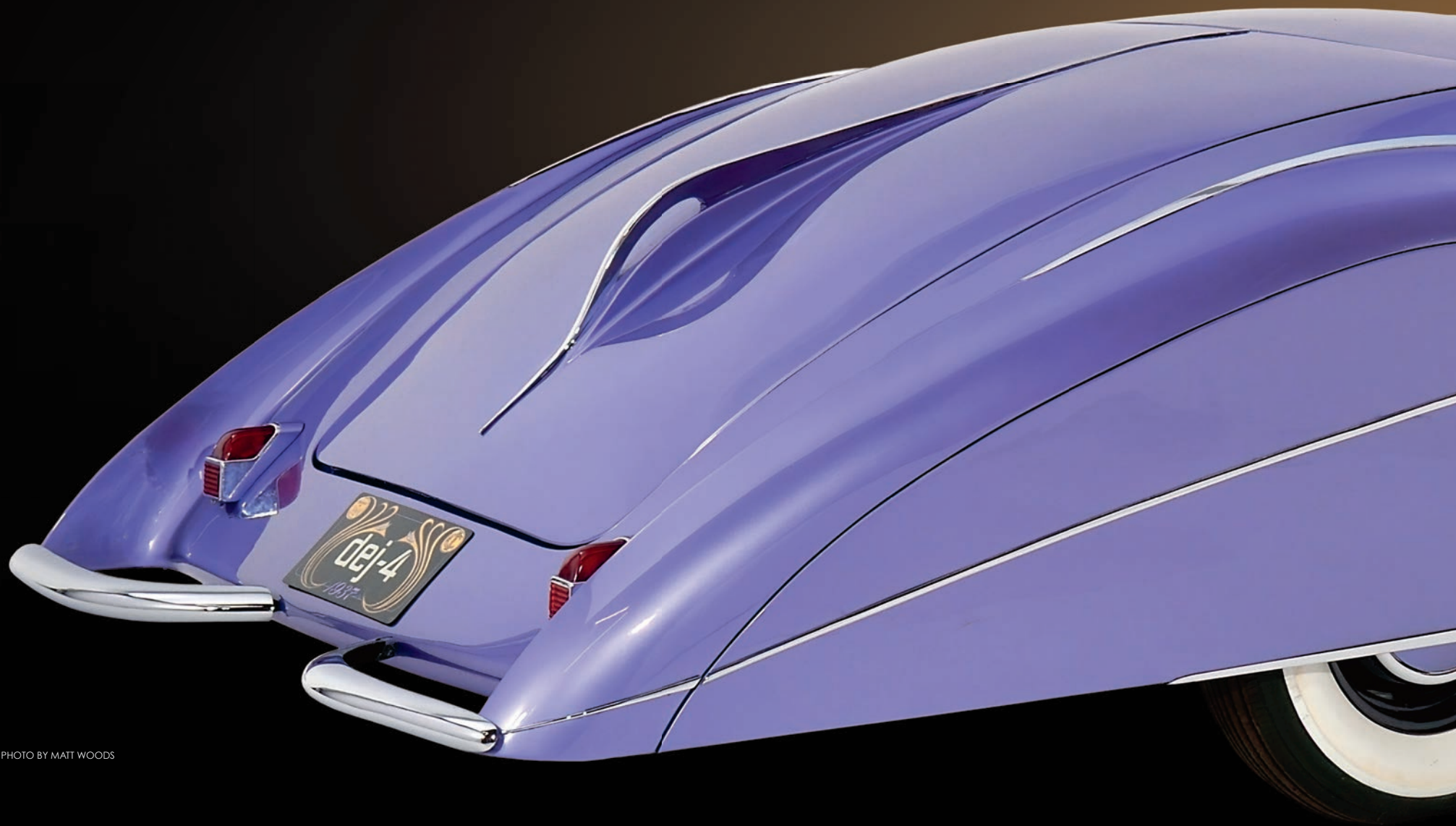
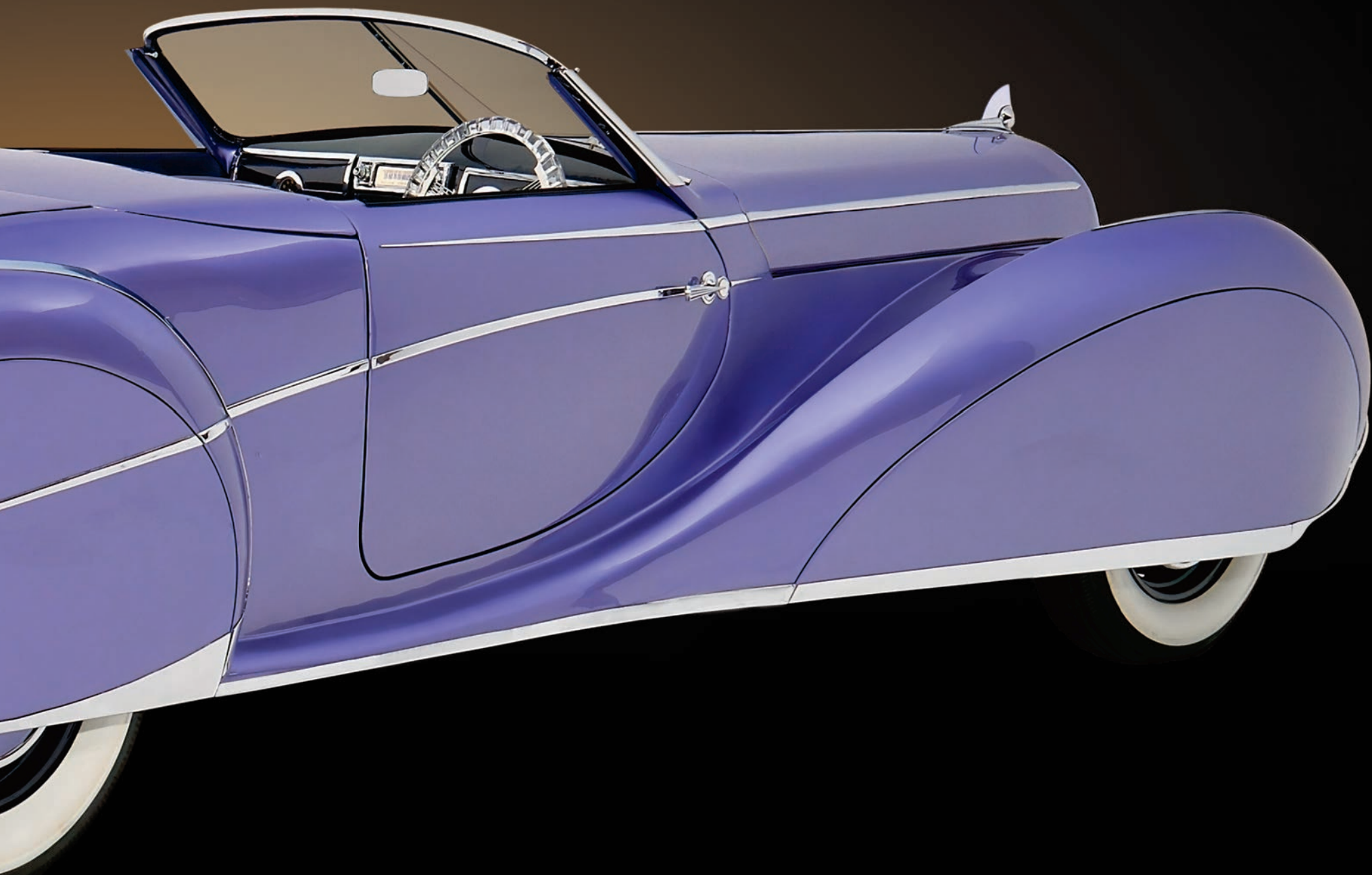


PHOTO BY MATT WOODS



THE AUTOMOTIVE

Alchemist

Andy Saunders' *The Automotive Alchemist* is a roller-coaster ride through the highs and lows of this charismatic man's life. From the early years of learning the skills of metal working, then painting and airbrushing, to his mature creations and restorations, the inherent genius of his designs show through. Andy welcomes us into his workshop and his head: not afraid to express his emotions, as he creates each of the sixty vehicles detailed within these pages. He lays bare his motivations, inspirations, influences and, occasionally, humorous anecdotes.

More than half of his creations now reside in museums and private collections across the globe, but the most unusual fate is that of Flat Out, the Guinness Book of Records-acclaimed 'Lowest Car in the World', which is now a coffee table in the foyer of a huge Californian corporation.

With his passionate interest in the history of automotive design, Andy built his interpretation of the Alex Tremulis-designed Ford X-2000, an important design concept vehicle that was previously never more than a thirty-inch-long model.

His most significant restoration was the 1957 Aurora Safety Sedan. For over sixty years, this amazingly advanced vehicle was much maligned in the world's press through an accident of fate. Andy has not only restored the Aurora, but also contacted several of the four men directly involved with the original build. Along with sixteen original photographs, their words tell the never-before-revealed truth about the Aurora. Of all the pre-computer-controlled electronic safety features incorporated in our cars today, the only one that wasn't designed into the Aurora was airbags.

Andy has, on many occasions, been referred to as the 'The British Barris'. George himself loved Andy's work and kept an eye on what Andy built.

**THE
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BARRIS**

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