

Issue 06



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ADRIAN FLUX

# influx

The  
shape  
of  
things  
to come



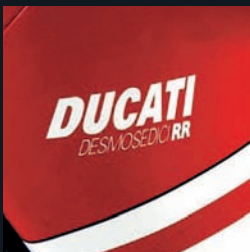
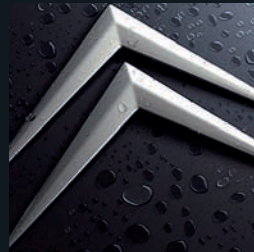
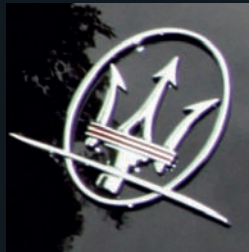
Imagining the future with the  
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# ADRIAN FLUX

modern approach, traditional values



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# Welcome...



MORE THAN EVER, CARS ARE A MAIN bugbear for the politically correct and environmentally aware. But although the world may mistrust the future of internal combustion, the romance of graceful vehicular movement will never die.

This issue focuses on several aspects of car culture that look back to its glorious past, and also takes a gander at the potentially spectacular future of vehicle design, technology and consumption.

We hope you'll continue to enjoy the ride.

Michael

Michael Fordham

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If you must take your home with you, make sure it looks cool





MOTORING HACKS HAVE CREATED A WHOLE genre out of stretching imagery to breaking point. The sonic characteristics and power of an engine, and the curvature of a piece of coachwork has been ripe for endless, shameless, pseudism. The dashboard, though, has been almost ignored.

Strange, really, because the dash has evolved, via the development of its dials, buttons, warnings and gadgets, from being a glorified mudguard to a conduit for the driving experience itself. In a modern executive car you silently slump, whisked along a highway where each of your hard-won capitalist freedoms is accosted by a nexus of street furniture, traffic management and surveillance technologies. Each piece of street furniture contrived to make your driving more controlled, less spontaneous and less fun.

The dashboard, meanwhile, is the communicator-in-chief of the car's every mood, whether that's the flush of rising temperatures and the strain of increased revolutions or flatline tedium of airbag status, atmospheric conditions and the state of the Dow Jones.

Meanwhile, outside is the world – a phenomenon through which you and the vehicle hum, clinging to the illusion of freedom while,

# Fascia-ist propaganda

right under your nose, the true beauty of driving – namely the harmony of man and machine – is neatly, endlessly quantified and digitized.

Notice that the more traffic is managed, the more complex dashboard interactions become. Witness, for example, the information overload of a high-end Merc, an office designed for negotiating trans-European speed cameras, traffic lights and industrial estates, versus the stripped down sparseness (designed to satisfy the pleasure principle) of an F430 Scuderia's dash. If your aim is to drive untrammelled by box-ticking regulation – to *drive* – all you really need is a rev counter and a couple of gauges to help avoid explosions.

Motoring by business class, on the other hand, denies that beautiful harmony and turns driving into the equivalent (as you wearily monitor a mass of readouts in fear of infraction) of constructing a really immaculate Excel spreadsheet.

I know which experience I choose. ✱

## TheInterior

Dashboards have evolved into information superhighways as our roads have developed from avenues of adventure to corridors of power

Words By Flavio Badoglio





**Metal guru**  
Could the progressive  
interior of the Spyker  
C8 be the perfect  
balance of function  
and pleasure?





# FULLY SUSSED

## The Technology

It's the appliance of science that keeps Audi's supercar on the straight and level

Words By Steve Jarratt

WITH POWERFUL, LOW-SLUNG SPORTS cars there's always a compromise between driving at pace and driving in comfort. Audi's mid-engined R8 is ably equipped to do the former; achieving the latter is accomplished by a little bit of engineering magic (see right).

The Lamborghini Gallardo-derived R8 first appeared in showrooms in 2007, immediately gaining plaudits from press and punters alike, who hailed it for its sublime handling and contemporary looks. It's clearly an evolution of the current Audi lineage, but the sleek, aggressive stance and Porsche 911-beating performance mean it's a legitimate member of the supercar club.

As if the standard V8 model wasn't potent enough, Audi recently unveiled this V12 TDI Le Mans concept, boasting a mighty 6-litre diesel engine. With an output of 500hp, the Le Mans joins a select group of production cars including the Dodge Viper, Aston Martin V12 Vanquish and Porsche Cayenne Turbo – not to mention a host of big-engined Mercedes.

This particular R8 is capable of breaking motorway regulations in a shade over four seconds and propelling its occupants to 186mph. And if those stats aren't enough to make your right foot twitch in excitement, its German developers had the audacity to make it pass Euro emissions standards *and* average 23 miles per gallon too. Vorsprung durch Technik, indeed. \*

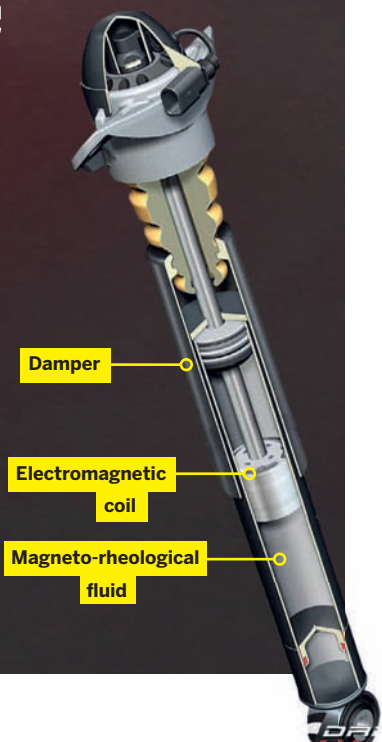




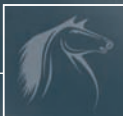


## IT'S A KIND OF MAG(NET)IC

The same firm ride that keeps car and road in happy concert at velocity can also cause sore backs on unkempt city streets. To solve this, the R8 incorporates MagneRide Semi-Active Suspension with magneto-rheological fluid-filled dampers. In human-speak, this is a liquid that becomes more resistant to being squashed when magnetised. So when the car detects that you're turning a corner at speed, it zaps the electromagnetic coils in the damping system, causing the fluid's particles to align – a little like iron filings – into a fibrous structure. This makes the fluid more viscous, producing a firmer ride. And because all four corners operate independently, it keeps the car level and tyres flat to the road for ultimate grip.







**influx06**

IGNITION *Flip Paint*



# Carma chameleon

Photography by Neil Godwin

**The Exterior** Two-tone paint jobs can make the curved lines of a coupé sing

"You wouldn't be penalised for the way you decorate your house, so you shouldn't suffer for making your car unique."

**See page 60 for Adrian Flux's modified car policies**

A SLICK PAINT JOB IS ONE OF THE SIMPLEST WAYS to put clear water between the you and the masses living in monochromatic anonymity. And there are few paint jobs that turn your car into a rolling work of art quicker than a classic 'flip' job. Flip paint is the sort that changes colour according to which way you look at it; common examples are green from one angle, purple from another, orange head-on. The actual *details* of attaining the perfect finish lie among the most jealously guarded secrets in the business – but, broadly, it's all about the angle at which light refracts through the different layers of paint. It's pretty easy to keep the facts obscure, in truth, as flipping involves the arcane science of liquid crystals. It's not the sort of look that's easy to achieve in a Saturday morning session with spray cans and a dog-eared roll of masking tape.

One of the most common techniques involves applying layers of paint with a lacquer inlaid with liquid crystal polymers. These polymers have a

polarising effect on light hitting the car. As in all polarising lenses – from the gold-rimmed sunglasses of the 1970s to the expensive filters that cut out glare on a photographer's lens – the polarising process involves restricting the frequency of light as it reflects off a surface. In an extended paint drying process, the crystals inlaid in the polymers re-orient themselves so that light refracts in the required manner. And hey presto! You have that fascinating multi-hued effect. OK, it may be a little more complex than that. You could bang on about angles of incidence, refractive indices or various other technical terms, but all you really need to know is this – when a top flip job is laid lovingly over the hard-edged curves of a tweaked Japanese GT, it looks good enough to lick. They're not for everyone, but give thanks to the brave souls who are creative enough to brighten up our streets with something as bold as a flip. ✱

[www.speedculture.co.uk](http://www.speedculture.co.uk)





IN THE EARLY PART OF THE 20TH CENTURY, modernity was a tangible thing. It was a state we strove to get to, a thing to reach out toward and to celebrate. The modern meant things that were fast, industrial and that were harbingers of progress; things that designers, artists and politicians were obsessed by. But despite the admonitions of the pre-millennial pundits who tried to tell us that we were at the end of history, the modern is still with us – it's just that these days it takes on unexpected forms.

It's tempting to see this new modernism in the trend toward the small, the sustainable, the fuel-efficient and the affordable. Or it could be one where advances tend toward the intangible, the microbiological, the nanotechnological and the subatomic. But surely the saviour of the modern doesn't lie solely in the microscopic tinkering of men in white coats. Surely there are still some grand designs to cherish...

Take the Bugatti Veyron, for example. It makes no economic sense; even at a retail

price of over a million euros per unit, the 250mph hypercar project is doomed to make a spectacular loss for the VW Audi group who own Bugatti. According to various sources the actual cost to the manufacturer of making the car is anything up to five million euros. The car and the technology that made it possible is astoundingly cutting edge and spectacularly unattainable, at least to the common man. But VW decided to build the car anyway. The reason? It is the quintessence of the Modern. The Veyron project

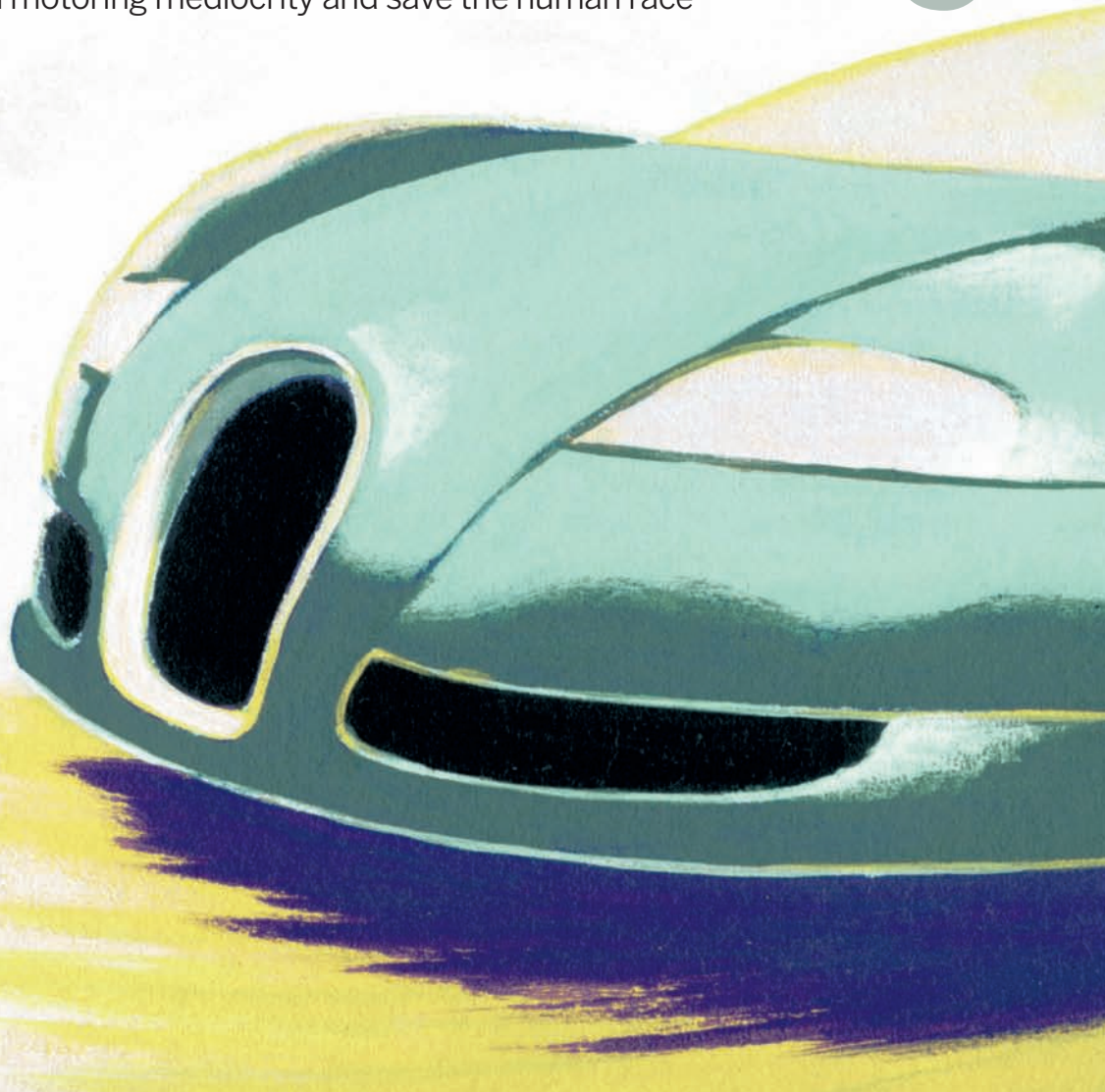
# A new modernity

Words Jens Sohl Illustration Pieter Van Eenoge

**TheFuture** Make war on motoring mediocrity and save the human race

## Shape of things

The art deco Veyron is at once both a 1920s throwback and a curvilinear expression of the immediate future





has harnessed the skills of some of the world's most forward-thinking engineers, mechanics, and marketers. It may not make money in itself, but its very existence is a triumph that anyone and everyone involved in will carry proudly to their grave. The return of this sort of restlessly striving type of modern thinking could not only one day help us to discover a way to produce powerful, beautiful cars that don't cost the Earth – but it could also save us from an even more pernicious enemy: mediocrity itself. ✱







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Supercars

# REQUIEM FOR THE SUPERCAR

DO SPIRALLING FUEL COSTS TWINNED  
WITH STRICTER EMISSION LAWS SIGNAL  
THE END OF THE ROAD FOR AUTOEXOTICA?

Photography Peter Guenzel

**A**PPLYING A HYPERBOLIC prefix these days to something as ubiquitous and as controversial as the motor car is bound to beg a question. Is there a future for the supercar?

Perhaps in this age of diminishing resources these embodiments of automotive passion are destined to becoming sacred icons. Perhaps we shouldn't even think about driving them any more, and accept that their fate is to become museum pieces, works of automotive art to be assessed but rarely experienced. Does this mean that for mere mortals, our roads will be forever emptied of the grace these cars are heir to? Whatever the answer to these questions, we gathered some of our favourite creations of the last four decades. We touched, we felt, we smelled and even drove some of them. We were determined that they would become part of our experience. Before it is finally too late. \*

## Jaguar XJ220



**ENGINE:** V6 TURBO 3.5 TURBO 540BHP

**PERFORMANCE:** 0-60 3.7 SEC, 0-100 7.8 SEC, 217MPH

**SNAG:** THE WHEEL DESIGN PREVENTED EFFICIENT HEAT TRANSFER FROM THE BRAKES

Starting life as a Jag insider's dream project, the XJ220 entered production at Jaguar Sports' Bloxham plant in 1991. Perhaps the only true English-made supercar, its engine was produced by Tom Walkinshaw Racing and it was one of the first production cars to feature a Venturi-based rear diffuser to create downforce. These cars were exorbitant anomalies of which only 289 were produced.



# 26

## Ford GT40



**ENGINE:** (ORIGINAL) V8 4.2  
LITRE APPROX 350BHP

**PERFORMANCE:** 0-60 4  
SEC, 0-100 8 SEC, 240MPH  
(ESTIMATED)

**NICKNAME:** FERRARI SLAYER

According to legend, Henry Ford jr. commissioned his company's Le Mans dominating GT whilst enraged at Enzo Ferrari for pulling out of a deal that would have sold the Italian company to the American giant. This car is one of the greatest recreations of the ultimate supercar of the 1960s by Franco Sbarro, who was part of Ford's Advanced Vehicle Team, which conceived, developed and produced the originals.







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Supercars



## Porsche 911/993 Turbo Coupé



**ENGINE:** FLAT 6 3.6 LITRE  
TURBO 408BHP

**PERFORMANCE:** 0-60 4.5 SEC,  
180MPH

**SPIRITUAL HOME:** THE  
NÜRBURGRING

The 993 was the very last of the classic air-cooled 911 Turbos, and delivered supremely manageable but exhilarating performance. The handling retained its characteristic back-happiness and that certain scary something that was refined to extinction in subsequent Turbo models. This was the perfect everyday supercar for the transcontinental traveler of the early nineties.





## Ferrari F40



**ENGINE:** V8 TWIN TURBO 2.9  
LITRE 478BHP

**PERFORMANCE:** 0-60 3.8 SEC,  
0-100 7.6 SEC, 199MPH

**PRICE TAG:** £299,000 (ONLY  
AVAILABLE IN RED)

The F40, introduced in 1987 to celebrate four decades of the company's existence encapsulates the Maranello creed and was the last car commissioned by Enzo Ferrari himself. Its low-slung body is made from carbon fibre, kevlar and aluminium and features 14 air intakes. It was built specifically to be the fastest production car in the world. Race-bred. Street legal. Intensely passionate.





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Supercars

## Ferrari 599 GTB Fiorano



**ENGINE:** V12 5.9 LITRE 612BHP

**PERFORMANCE:** 0-60 3.7 SEC,  
0-100 7.4 SEC, 205MPH

**ALSO KNOWN AS:** THE SUPER  
FERRARI FOR GROWN-UPS

The 599 is the exquisite summation of Ferrari's GT experience, and is the apogee of contemporary technology, performance and refinement. Though it has been criticised by some for channeling true supercar performance into a supremely refined driving package, the power, glory and sophistication of the 599's presence eclipses any argument. If supercars have a viable, usable future, then the 599 is it.





## Maserati Ghibli SS



**ENGINE:** V8 4.9 LITRE 355BHP

**PERFORMANCE:** 0-60 7 SEC,  
TOP SPEED 160MPH

**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT:**  
THE TWISTY ROADS OF  
THE ITALIAN ALPS

The heartbreakingly beautiful lines of the Ghibli were penned in 1965 by the hand of Giorgetto Giugiaro whilst working for Turin-based *carrozzeria* Ghia. It was immensely popular with the Italian public and easily outsold its contemporary competitors the Ferrari Daytona and the Lamborghini Miura. The SS version was introduced in 1970 and became the leading 'Super GT' of the era.



"Owning a supercar isn't like owning a runabout that just happens to go fast." **Adrian Flux** understands that **prestige car insurance** isn't 'one size fits all' – see page 59



■ FOR MORE: [www.influx.co.uk](http://www.influx.co.uk)

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Sarah Bennett-Baggs

# The Power of Pink

Adrian Flux-sponsored racer Sarah Bennett-Baggs thumbs a nose at the presumptions of Porsche-owning Alpha Males

Words Mike Fordham Photography Claire-Jessica Weait

IMAGINE THE SCENE. YOU'VE been nurturing your reserves of testosterone for the last few weeks, preparing your precious Porsche racer for its first runout at Brands Hatch. The car's Germanic brawn is emblematic, in your deep consciousness, of your own brand of power and sophistication. As you come out of Copse on the final lap, you're visualising dreams of podium glory. Then, all of a sudden, a shocking





■ FOR MORE: [www.influx.co.uk](http://www.influx.co.uk)

pink apparition bursts into your rear-view mirror. Slingshotting out of the tow, a blond in the Barbie-hued 911 blows your doors off. Your dreams are shattered. Your manhood pales.

Quite a few male competitors in the Porsche Club Championships have experienced this scenario over the last couple of seasons. "Racing is a massive adrenalin rush," Sarah says, gazing down at her Adrian Flux sponsored 911. "The first corner is the

best. All hell breaks loose, your heart is going at 100mph. You're trying to find a gap, you're ploughing into the corner, people are coming past, spinning off..." Sarah's dayjob as manager of Rupert Lewin Racing has nurtured the calm, problem-solving attitude that helps keep her own racing line tidier than most. "All the guys in the paddock assume they're going to beat me, because I'm girl in a pink car. I'm lucky I'm able to keep calm and focused

and concentrate on progressive speed." Much to the chagrin of her competitors, Sarah came third in class in her first race, before taking the win in her second. And is the paint targeted to wind up the rest of the field? "Well, put it this way," she says, "I wouldn't have used the pink paint if I thought I'd be bumbling round at the back!" ✱

Follow Sarah's progress at [www.porscheclubmotorsport.co.uk](http://www.porscheclubmotorsport.co.uk)

**Pink champagne**  
To win second time out takes skill. What will the rest try now? Those presumably fireproof heels?





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LEGEND GIORGETTO GIUGIARO

“FUNCTIONALITY  
CAN TAKE A  
**A FORM  
OF  
BEAUTY...**  
MY ROLE IS TO ADD  
**A DISTINCTIVE TOUCH  
TO THAT BEAUTY”**

GIORGETTO GIUGIARO

Words Peta Van Artsdalen Illustration Flatliner V2

**T**HESE CANNOT POSSIBLY BE your designs!” Industry icon Nuccio Bertone fired the accusation across the room at a young Giorgetto Giugiaro. This was not quite the response the 21-year-old was expecting to his tentatively submitted sketches.

“If you don’t believe me, I’ll prove it!” replied the headstrong Giugiaro to the head of Turin’s premier coachbuilding house. In three years with Fiat, Giugiaro had yet to see one of his designs in production, and was frustrated. “Give me a project!”

Bertone thought for a moment.

“OK, I might have something...”

#### IN THE BEGINNING

Money may have been tight in the years following WW2 – too often the fiery Rosso Corsa favoured by Italian consumers bubbled into a flakey ochre, thanks to the cheap Russian steel underneath, and the way the country that brought us the Renaissance hadn’t, it seemed, mastered the art of rust-proofing. But there was no rationing of ideas and inspiration.









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LEGEND GIORGETTO GIUGIARO

“GONE WERE THE  
**SMOOTH  
CURVES**  
AND SOFT EDGES...  
THE IGUANA WAS A  
**SHARP-EDGED  
SUPERCAR**  
SNAPPED TIGHT TO  
**HARD-EDGED  
ANGLES”**



**Successful failure**

The aluminium body, the gullwing doors, John DeLorean's drug smuggling entrapment by the FBI, time travel... Giugiaro's DMC-12 has never lacked talking points



→ Manufacturers such as Alfa Romeo, Maserati, Lancia and Ferrari continued to employ design-focused *carrozzerias* (coachbuilders) to sculpt the lines of their cars, just as they had in the pre-war years. Working outside the constraints of corporate structures in an atmosphere dedicated purely to shape and form, these design houses created some of the most breathtaking cars ever. The famous Aston Martin DB4 GT was actually drawn by Zagato, for example, while Scaglietti penned Ferrari's 250 GTO (taking over from Giotto Bizzarrini, who left Ferrari to set up his own *carrozzeria*). Meanwhile, Bertone himself wowed the Italian public with the curvaceous Alfa Giulietta Sprint.

**LESS IS MORE**

Freed at Bertone from the restraints of Fiat, the young Piedmontese quickly began to show his brilliance. After proving himself with the Alfa Romeo 2000 Sprint prototype, he was given the job of dressing the marvellously eccentric Anglo-Italian-American hybrid that was the Gordon Keeble GT.

Whilst America's post war automotive boom was swathed in chrome-clad excess, Giugiaro was a pioneer of the subtly curved, beautifully proportioned look that came with an acreage of light-welcoming glass framed by the most delicate of pillars. "Italy was a poor country after WWII" says Giugiaro, "So Italian designers had to work with the few things we had at our disposal". A 'minimal' use of materials was key, as was the avoidance of superfluous repetition. "Ours were simple designs," he says, "born out of necessity."

Whilst still working in Bertone's studio, Giugiaro penned the BMW 3200 CS, which took the signatures of his master's Giulietta Sprint and married them to a solidly Germanic frame – and set the tone for BMW's future. But it was the Giulia GT itself, with its achingly pretty lines mated to a lithe chassis and Alfa's legendary twin-cam alloy engine, that influenced Italian coupes to come. It proved a hit in the showroom and, in its GTA form, dominant on the track.

By 1968, Giugiaro was sitting in his own office at Italdesign, his fledgling studio, sketching new lines for the mid-engined Alfa Romeo Iguana concept set for the 1969 Turin Car Show. And these really were new lines. Gone were the smooth curves and soft edges, lightly laid down in pencil. The Iguana was a sharp-edged supercar snapped tight to hard-edged angles

**GIORGETTO GIUGIARO** TIMELINE

**7th August 1938**

Born Giorgetto Giugiaro. His father was an artist, as was his father in turn.

**Sept 1952**

Studies art in Turin, plus technical drawing at night school.

**June 1955**

Car sketches spotted by Dante Giacosa, Fiat Technical Director, at school end-of-year show. Offers Giugiaro a job with their Special Vehicle Design Studio.

**Sept 1955**

Joins Fiat. Learns his craft but is frustrated within confines of a large corporation.

**Nov 1959**

Joins Bertone as a designer. Styles the new Alfa 2000/2600 Sprint.

**1960 - 1965**

Whilst at Bertone, designs Gordon Keeble GT, two Ferrari 250 GTs, the Iso Grifo, the BMW 3200 CS, Alfa Giulia GT, Fiat 850 spider, Mazda Luce and Fiat Dino.

**Nov 1965**

Leaves Bertone for Ghia as Director of Styling and Design.

**1965 - 1967**

At Ghia he designs the Isuzu 117, the Fiat 850 Vanessa, the Maserati Ghibli and the De Tomaso Mangusta.





and flat surfaces. This new design marked a paradigm shift, heralding a new style that would dominate for the next decade. The Iguana's genetic fingerprint can be seen in Giugiaro's most famous and influential offspring, from the Lotus Esprit to the BMW M1 to the DeLorean DMC12 – and even further to the sharply boxy, mass-market lines of VW's Golf and Fiat's Panda.

## FROM HERE TO ETERNITY

With a portfolio that embraced both 'design for design's sake' moments of sheer beauty *and* some of the most user-friendly and popular products in the history of automobiles, it's hardly surprising that manufacturers have been knocking on Giugiaro's door for five decades.

The dawn of the 21st century found the great man once again laying down new lines for a concept, this time for the Geneva Motor Show. Having penned his first production car over forty years previously, he has seen more than a hundred of his designs made real – and become an icon of Italian car design. As he started to rough out the shape for the Alfa Brera, he must have allowed himself a moment of reflection, knowing that soon yet another of his sports coupes would hit the streets in its lustrous coat of Rosso Corsa. And it's not just the discovery of decent rust-proofing that means that these cars will last; the classic lines which have flowed from Giugiaro's pen over the last half-century means his work will never be allowed to disappear completely. ✱

### Lines of the times

Clockwise from top right: The Lotus Esprit, BMW M1, Maserati Spyder, Ford Mustang and Giugiaro's own hydrogen-powered, two-seater VAD.HO concept – all flow from a legend

### Feb 1967

Leaves Ghia to form Italdesign. 1968's Bizzarini Manta concept, produced by Italdesign, becomes the prototype for the 'Folding Paper' ideal later formalised in his Iguana concept. Also pens the muscular Maserati Bora and

Merak, the Lotus Esprit and BMW M1. Other notable 1970s work includes VW's Golf, Scirocco and Passat, the Lancia Delta and Alfa Romeo's Alfa Sud and Alfetta GT/GTV.

### 1980s

Having ridden out the 1970s fuel crisis



by giving the world hot little hatches, Giugiaro hits the 1980s with the Fiat Panda. He also styles DeLorean's DMC-12, the Fiat Uno and Lancia's Thema.

### 1986

Giugiaro not only designs cars, but watches, trains, cameras and even kettles. His 1986 Seiko Speedmaster



'chronograph' was a classic – and worn by Ripley in horror blockbuster *Alien*!

### 1990 – to present

Continues to design for a multitude of clients, from Bugatti to VW. Voted 'Car Designer of the Century' in 1999, and inducted into Detroit's Automotive Hall of Fame in 2002.







**influx06**

sQuba

**Lotus E-spray**

There's nothing quite  
like a top-down drive  
through English  
summer lanes,  
though the SQuba  
comes very close



sQuba



# The drive aquatic

Inspired by an iconic spy film, the sQuba is the manifestation of an automotive dream that has persisted for three decades **Words** Mike Fordham



**F**rank M Rinderknecht is a beautiful freak. Like the rest of us, the chief executive of Swiss engineering firm Rinspeed marvelled at Roger Moore's underwater cruise in the 1977 schlockfest that was *The Spy Who Loved Me*. Unlike the rest of us, he was determined to create the first submersible car that could really pull off Moore's simulated stunt. Having

been unveiled at the 2008 Geneva show, the car might not be quite as cool as the pearly Lotus Esprit used in the film, but it looks pretty good all the same. And its success is not just about appearances, anyway. Steered by rotating jets made from stiff, corrosion resistant carbon fibre, it can achieve a stable and manoeuvrable 'flight' at depths of up to ten metres.

And because it's electric and fed by three rechargeable lithium-ion batteries (like you find in your mobile, only

bigger), it gives off zero emissions. Furthermore, all lubricants used in its construction are biodegradable, so there are no harmful pollutants to leak out. Driver and passenger, meanwhile, get air conditioning in the shape of an integrated oxygen tank, brine-resistant mother of pearl trim and diamond-plated non-slip inlays. It's even got a watertight boot. Perfect for green, serene island hopping whilst keeping those Martinis shaken, maybe a bit watery, but never stirred. ✱





**One carefree owner**  
Fairing and seat unit gone – check. Hand-painted tank and exhaust – check. Crust of dirt and oil – check. Well, how else could you look rebellious on a Honda?





# Rodent Royalty

## THE RISE AND RISE OF THE RAT BIKE

Words by Scott Phelps Photography by Andrew Hetherington/Redux/eyevine

**W**ithin the gloriously diverse range of species that make up the motorcycling kingdom, the rat is an elusive, difficult-to-define sub-genus. Its shy, anti-establishment nature may be explained by a genealogy that can be traced to a single movie franchise from the late 1970s. If rebel bikers of the 1950s had Marlon Brando in *The Wild One* to aspire to, their later equivalents had the murderous biker nemeses of Max Rockatansky

— *Mad Max*, otherwise known as *The Road Warrior*. During the Thatcher-Reagan years the cities of Europe and America weren't as rough as the post apocalyptic Outback, but by the time of *Mad Max*'s 1979 debut, economies had shifted into reverse.

Russia was about to invade Afghanistan, nuclear war seemed just a siren's wail away and blue-collar folk were looking for ways to keep their bikes on the road — despite a chronic shortage of cash. The subcult of the rat bike was born. Rat bikers simply threw away anything broken that wasn't absolutely necessary, fixed half the rest →



# “IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE THE AESTHETIC (AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE REBELLIOUS LIFESTYLE IT IMPLIED) WAS CO-OPTED AS A MARKETING DEVICE ”

→ with gaffer tape, welded cracked steel frames in the shed and repainted the result with cheap, flat black primer. Extroverts would use grey primer. For a day to day, hard-riden tool it made perfect sense, especially as the swooping acres of aerodynamic Japanese plastic were as brittle as Ming vases if dropped – and almost as expensive to replace. Hence the rat bike look being popular with couriers. Yet so imposing was the resulting image that it spread to become a thing of itself.

London and Manchester were hubs on this side of the pond, whilst San Francisco and the Bay area played host to its own very distinct scene; one that gave birth to the East Bay Rats Motorcycle Club. The EBRMC now has thousands of members – who meet for burnouts, cruises and other less-than-wholesome gatherings – but has gained notoriety for its ‘fight nights’. These are (almost) ironic affairs involving serious, organised violence.

Biker guys and girls gather in order, waxing technical for a second, to kick each other cross-eyed. These events evolved from regular ‘riots’ in which rat-heads would burn so much rubber to such a cacophony of firecrackers that Oakland’s Fire Department was frequently called out by

concerned citizens. And if it wasn’t the firemen, it was the cops. According to the San Francisco Chronicle, the Five-O arrived at least once with weapons drawn to find good natured chaos and laughing rev-heads.

Eventually this evolved into nights where the Californian sun would set on a rat crew destroying a car as spectacularly as possible. Symbolic revenge.

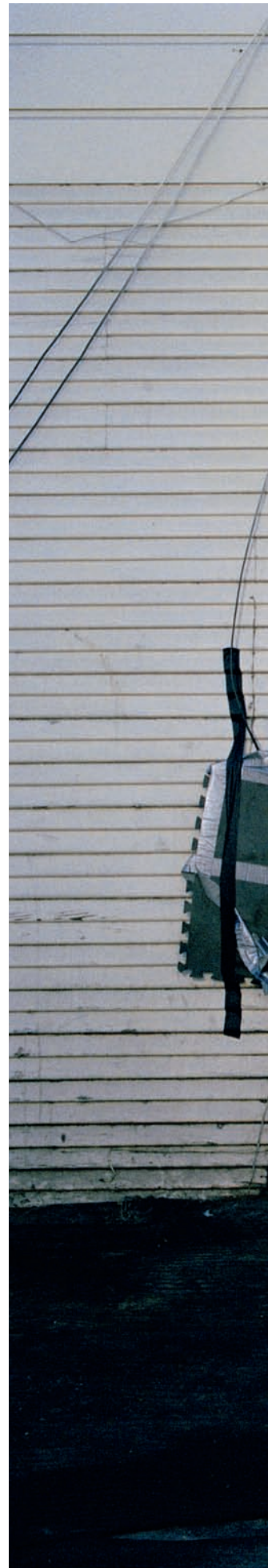
Inevitably, it wasn’t long before the aesthetic (and, more importantly, the rebellious lifestyle it implied) was co-opted as a marketing device. Early 1990s rat bikes had an almost fundamentalist dedication to utilitarian simplicity over flash and hi-tech: it was a rejection of fluorescent superbike fashions on the one hand and of the chromed rock face anachronisms of Harley Davidson on the other. Ironically, this just made them easier to rip off. The only oddity was that it took Ducati over a decade to fully exploit it with its Monster – available matt black and almost plastic-free as standard – and reap the rewards of the late 1990s credit boom.

By 2000, showrooms were filling with in-your-face naked bikes and no-frills supermotos. The rat derivative had secured its place in the motorcycling pantheon. ✱



**Left** The apocalyptic Mad Max influences are clear. Black Sabbath played concerts in less smoke than that

**Above** Rat bikes have become more a way of life than simply a cheap mode of transport





"Bikesure can arrange a policy to suit any bike, whether it's a modified chopper, a thumping British classic, a nitrous oxide-injected Hayabusa or a booming Italian twin." **See page 61**

**influx06**

**East Bay Rats**



**It takes tattoo**

Ironically, while the EBRMC ride Japanese motorcycles and ceremonially destroy cars, Hell's Angels – also from the Oakland area – ride American bikes and ceremonially destroy Japanese bikes...





**influx06**

Paul Ricard Test track



Between 1971 and 1990 **Paul Ricard Circuit** hosted 14 French Grands Prix and the iconic Bol d'or endurance bike race. At the turn of the century the circuit was reborn as the most sophisticated automotive test facility on Earth

Words Nathan Lee

# SPEED, NURTURED

## Red stripe

A system of colour-coded abrasive stripes means that cars leaving the track at high speed can usually re-join the race rather than languish in gravel

**O**n the motorsport-obsessed French Riviera, speed is fetishised and fast cars are almost ubiquitous. So what better place to create an arena designed to nurture ultimate automotive velocity? From the air Paul Ricard High Tech Test Track, situated on a plateau northeast of Marseille, looks like a piece of abstract art. The distinctive striped design, called the blue-line concept, was developed by Philippe Gurdjian – mastermind of the new facility and business partner of Bernie Ecclestone, who acquired the site in 1999 after the death of drinks magnate Ricard. The design has become the most visible part of a multi-million Euro development that not only aimed at improving racing drivers' apprehension of the circuit, but introduced graded areas of increased traction around the track, dispensing with the need for race-ending gravel traps and armco. The traditional flag-based system of marshalling is replaced by a system of four-colour

lights placed at key areas around the track. The lights are controlled from the space-age Track Control Room based on information received from a system of 38 strategically located cameras. These can be manipulated by the track manager so that the smallest anomaly detected on the track can be acted upon as quickly as possible. In addition to maintaining visual contact with each of the vehicles on the circuit, the control room stays in constant electronic touch with each car via a transponder, enabling real-time surveillance of its precise location thanks to a 50km network of fibre optic cabling integrated into the track itself. And if a Motorsport team should want to simulate less-than-ideal racing conditions, a sophisticated system of sprinklers can create wet conditions on 76 of the 180 track configurations. With fully networked pit areas equipped with cutting-edge telemetry as well as the slickest hospitality suites of any circuit in Europe, it's little wonder that the emerging nations of motorsport in the Middle and Far East have sought to replicate the innovations introduced here at the heart of the old world of European Motorsport. \*

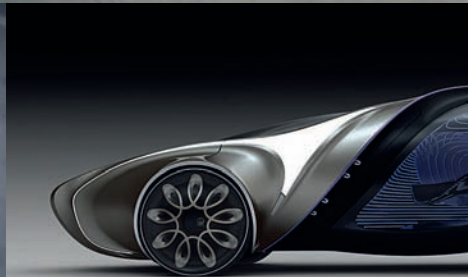


“A SOPHISTICATED SYSTEM OF SPRINKLERS  
CAN CREATE WET CONDITIONS ON 76 OF  
THE 180 TRACK CONFIGURATIONS”





"FOR ME, VEHICLES ARE EMOTIONAL  
MOTION ARCHITECTURE AND  
FUNDAMENTALLY ABOUT SUBTLENESS,  
BALANCE AND IMPRESSION"







# The Dreams of Children

Three student car designers dreaming with their eyes wide open

**W**e wager it to be a universal truism that every car designer in the world started out like the rest of us, drawing fantasy cars whilst keeping quiet for mum and dad. To youngsters, cars have always represented freedom, passion, the experience of the adult world. The next generation of car designers – three of which we've hand-picked from the Royal

College of Art in London's elite Automotive Design course, and who also began their automotive dreams as children – have at the forefront of their brief not only the need to preserve resources and produce sustainable motoring, but also to maintain that passion and sense of adventure that cars have always represented to kids. If the automotive industry gives these guys their head, then the future of motoring is truly exciting.

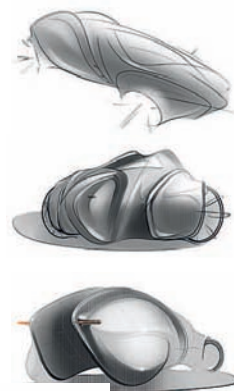


JOONAS  
VARTOLA  
**lomega**

VEHICLE DESIGN IS TAKING ME CLOSER TO SCULPTURE AND architecture. For me, vehicles are emotional motion architecture and fundamentally about subtleness, balance and impression. My project's core lies in private spaces fostering wellbeing because modern cities, with their constant sensory overload, cause both mental and physical stress. Time and privacy are now the greatest luxuries. The lomega project explores the possibilities of a driver-operated vehicle with a private capsule for passengers. It is about the luxury of being driven in seclusion, and allowing passengers to gain the greatest benefit from a journey.

**Dream Car:** Lamborghini Countach

**Current transportation:** Cannondale mountain bike



## Personal space

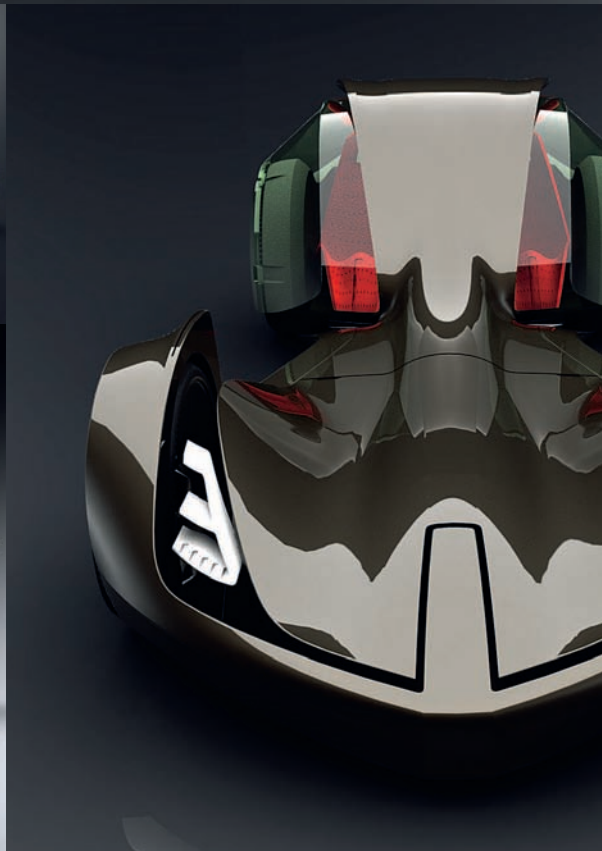
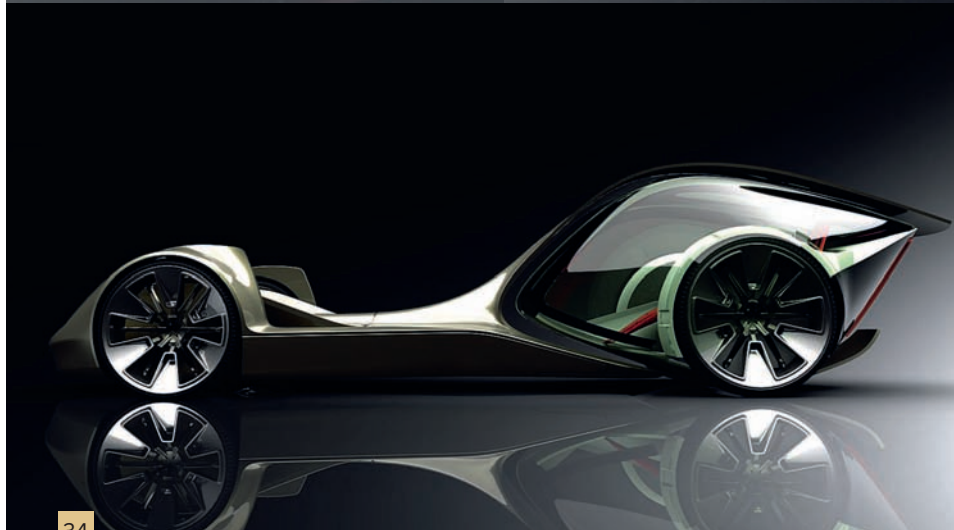
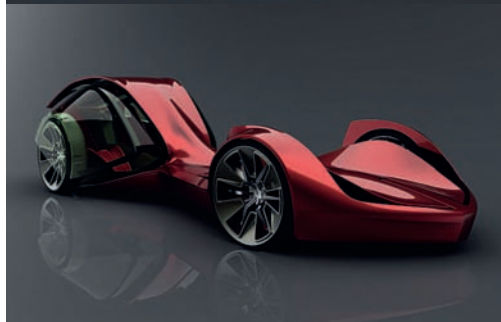
Driven by a desire for seclusion and privacy, the lomega features separate spaces for driver and passengers, providing much-needed shelter from today's hectic lifestyles







"THE PERCEIVED  
VALUE OF LUXURY  
INCREASES WITH  
TIME AND EXPERIENCE"







PAUL  
HOWSE  
**Enigma**

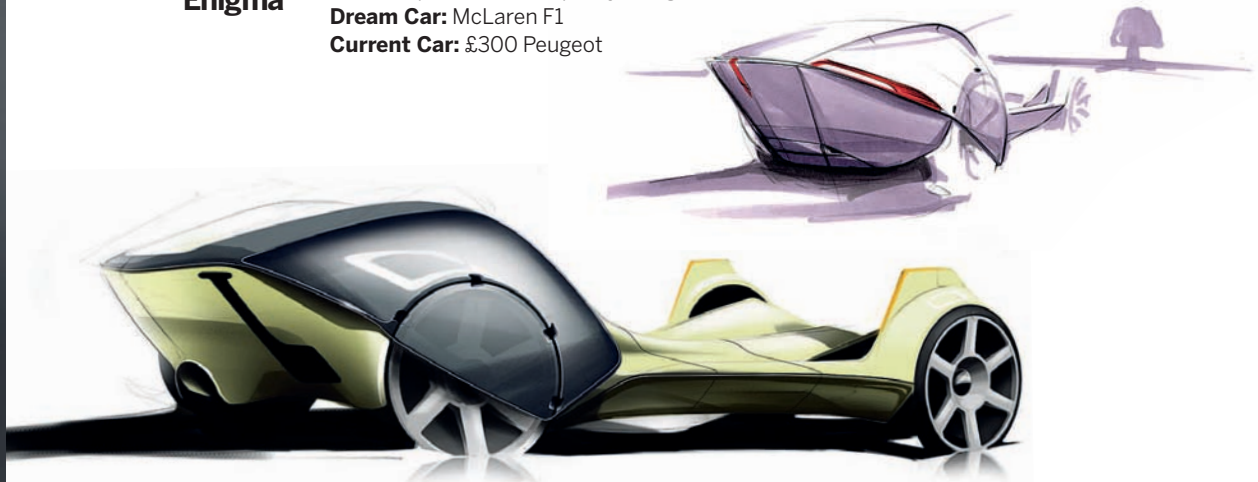
I WORKED IN A CLASSIC CAR DEALERSHIP WHILE STUDYING, so I was able to feel and drive some truly historic cars. This was a real inspiration. I saw luxury doesn't have to mean extravagance – perceived value increases with time and experience. So part of this car is bronze, whose patina develops over time. I also wanted to emphasise the interior as precious, Fabergé egg-like. Thus it's suspended magnetically, separate from the technical elements of the car to provide a truly serene ride. Intended purely for special occasions, the Enigma lives in a specifically designed building with an accurately controlled atmosphere. This enables owners to control the patination, in much the same way a humidor preserves the quality of cigars it contains.

**Dream Car:** McLaren F1

**Current Car:** £300 Peugeot

#### Spotless in sunshine

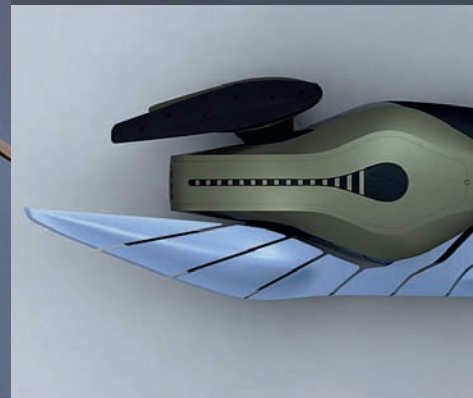
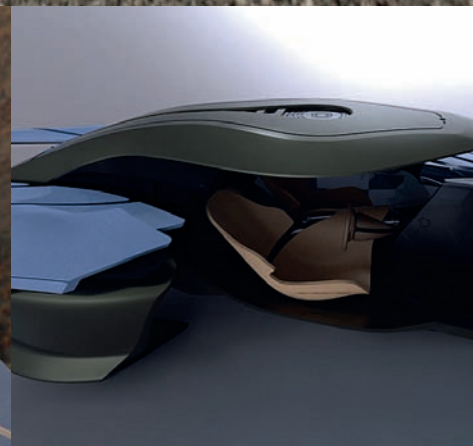
The Enigma's garage is a vital part of its design: an array of photovoltaic solar panels store the Sun's energy for transfer to the car, making it essentially self-sufficient







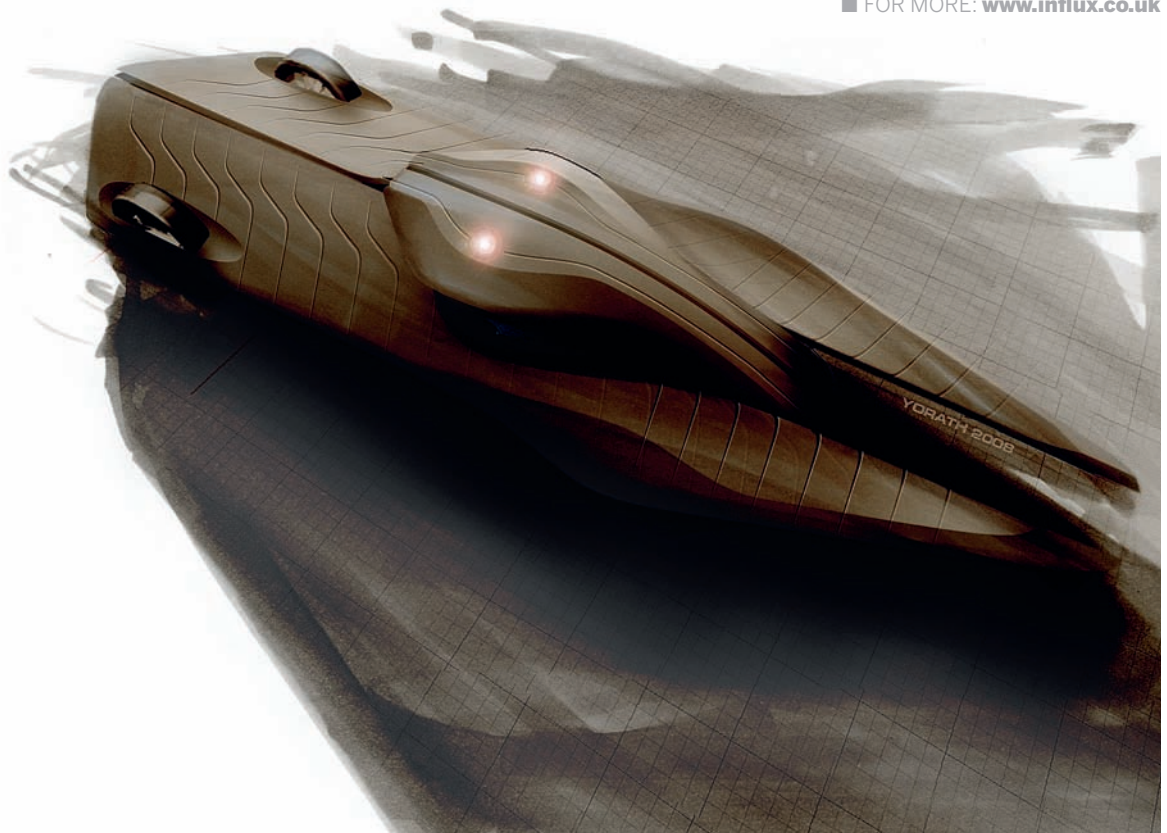
“THE NEREUS SEEKS TO EXPLOIT THE IRRATIONAL  
AND EMOTIONAL APPEAL OF SPEED AND MOVEMENT”







■ FOR MORE: [www.influx.co.uk](http://www.influx.co.uk)



CERI  
YORATH  
The Nereus

TODAY'S CARS ARE SO COMPETENT THEY INSULATE US FROM sensation. Yet speed is increasingly seen as negative and antisocial. The Nereus seeks to exploit the irrational and emotional appeal of speed and movement, and through visual and tactile sensations create new experiences. Using manta rays and stingrays as its primary design inspiration, this fuel cell powered three-seater's body panels move independently to form a flexible membrane that mimics the dynamics of your journey. When the car reaches its destination, a sculpture has been created: fast roads create long and streamlined shapes; twisty ones reveal something more sinuous.

**Dream Car:** Pininfarina 512 Speciale

**Current car:** Fiat Marea 'Weekend'

#### God-like driving

The Nereus, fittingly, is named after a shape-shifting Greek god. The marine inspiration behind the vehicle's membrane is also thematically key – Nereus is otherwise known as The Old Man of the Sea







**influx06**

Mini Marcos

# England's dreaming

The rise and fall of the Mini Marcos, England's most popular backyard motoring beauty

Photograph by Zoe Harrison

Words by James Drake



There's something that's just so early 1970s about the look and feel, the very *idea*, of a kit car. That tempestuous time of change certainly saw an explosion of strange, hybrid creations – usually based on the steel frames of Minis and Beetles – gracing British streets. For a start, there were hundreds of thousands of low quality, English-made cars rusting to death in the front yards of this great nation. And for another thing, from the late 1960s the motor industry was producing hundreds of thousands of highly skilled engineering apprentices, to whom the prospect of building a unique, road-going creation from a box of new parts was both entirely accessible and endlessly appealing.





"Though we have special schemes for Caterhams, Westfields and Cobra replicas, we don't just insure the well-known brands." **See page 60 for details on dedicated kit car insurance**

Enter the Mini Marcos, one of the most popular and enduring kit cars ever produced. "The thing was," says Chris Marsh, son of Marcos creator Jem Marsh, "There were so many Minis going rusty by the mid-to-late 1960s, making a kit that could transform these little rustbuckets proved to be a brilliant idea in terms of marketing." Chris is now the boss of Farbio Sports Cars, which he set up in 2004, so it obviously runs in the family. "And the Mini Marcos proved really quick once you tuned the things up properly..." The formula was simple. Remove the body panels from a standard Mini, bolt on the Marcos subframe and outer panels, then strip the interior, applying bucket seats and light plexiglass. Add a souped-up transverse engine of

anything up to 1400cc and there you had it – a light, streamlined pocket-rocket guaranteed to turn heads, blow minds and get you in trouble with the local constabulary. The Mini Marcos and its variants proved popular not only in Britain, but all over Europe. In fact, a French team entered a Marcos armed with a Mini Cooper S engine in the 1966 24 Heures Du Mans and, competing against grand old marques such as Ferrari and Porsche, finished in a highly respectable 15th place. The following year, Jem Marsh himself took a new version to Le Mans, pointed it down the Mulsanne Straight and clocked up an incredible 146mph. Yet the bubble was set to burst for kit cars. "What saw the more affordable kits fade away was regulation," continues

## NOW! ...THE G.T. MINI-MARCOS MONOCOQUE BODY/CHASSIS UNIT

Accepts standard Mini parts.  
Assembly time: 15-20 man-hours.  
Glassfibre moulded body/chassis unit  
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principle. Lower weight and  
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### Fun sized

A cheap way of  
reviving your  
rusty Mini, with a  
sporty new look  
and extra speed  
as standard. It just  
couldn't happen  
today

Chris. It became so difficult, with all sorts of health and safety, emissions and other laws. It became way too complex and expensive to build your own car." It may be the halcyon days of backyard rides are gone forever, but the huge popularity of this rakish, bug-eyed beauty – and its rust-defying fibreglass – means we can continue to enjoy one of the last manifestations of truly creative UK car culture. \*











Influx meets the truckers of Central Asia:  
road warriors on the frontline of a dangerous  
and rapidly-changing world economy

Photography Claude Barutel

# RISKY BUSINESS

## THE AFGHAN ROAD TO HELL?

FOLLOWING ITS LIBERATION FROM THE TALIBAN, Afghanistan is a nation in ruins that's crying out for reconstruction. Drug dealers have now replaced the Islamicists as the dominant force in the Afghan mountains and the law is still made with the use of Kalashnikovs.

Russian engineers began the epic task of building the strategically important road through the Hindu Kush, which connects Kabul with the southern states of the former Soviet Union, in 1956 and were faced with bridging 5000m passes and the construction of the highest tunnel in the world. Today, despite the unstable situation, Afghanistan's truckers must resume their work across the Hindu Kush.

"During the Soviet occupation, this was the most dangerous road in the country," says a trucker, Mahmoud.

A semblance of peace has now returned to the Hindu Kush, thanks to America's intervention. However, the area's climatic conditions are as terrible as ever, fully justifying the meaning of its name, 'the killer of the Indians', which refers to the thousands of Indian soldiers who were frozen to death there throughout Afghanistan's eventful history.

Mahmoud's truck, a tired Russian Kamaz with an added Mercedes symbol, doggedly climbs the road that's the main highway for opium-loads destined for Russia and other countries to the north. Since the overthrow of the Taliban, heroin production has risen dramatically and Afghanistan has become the world's largest supplier.

"From being part of an Islamic dictatorship," explains Mahmoud, "we have become part of the drug mafia." →







**influx06**

Trucking

## BOOMTIME IN AZERBAIJAN'S BADLANDS

NEWLY-DISCOVERED OILFIELDS NEAR BAKU could lift the former Soviet state of Azerbaijan out of poverty. However, the truck drivers of the Azerbaijani badlands are having to fight foreign competition for a share of the petrodollars, to feed the area's burgeoning economy.

Almost half of Azerbaijan is mountainous, boasting summits of over 4000m, precipitous Alpine landscapes and non-existent roads. Carrying supplies, animals and passengers to inaccessible villages is an essential part of every trucker's job. Working conditions are hard, but Safar, an Azeri owner-operator, is helped by the best friend a driver can hope for in this part of the world: a Soviet-made Ural six-wheeler. Safar proudly declares, "The Ural is to trucks what the Kalashnikov is to assault rifles."

Developed for the Soviet army during the cold war, Urals have been manufactured in exactly the same way for 40 years. An all-terrain 6x6 that sits high on its wheels and is powered by an eight-cylinder ZIL engine, the Ural's maximum road speed is around 75kph, but it can traverse rivers and snow-covered mountains like no other. Its manufacturers claim a maximum load of five tonnes, but drivers like Safar happily carry double this weight, on roads which would scare the living daylight out of competitors in the Paris-Dakar Rally.

It will take trucks akin to the Ural and drivers like Safar to make Azerbaijan truly prosper in the future. →



ALMOST HALF OF AZERBAIJAN IS MOUNTAINOUS, BOASTING SUMMITS OF OVER 4000M



**Six shooter**  
A Russian-built Ural truck is the weapon-of-choice for the Azerbaijani trucker





**Big Mack**  
The ubiquity of American trucks in Iran means that you're never far from a mechanic







## IRAN AT THE CROSSROADS

AT THE CRUX OF THE MIDDLE EAST, ASIA AND Europe, Iran is of prime strategic importance. It's also trucking country as, despite a network of almost 8000km of railways, trains only transport about 20 million tonnes of freight per year, with the lion's share of more than 200 million tonnes moving by road.

The dominance of trucks is due to Iran's good-quality roads and the low cost of fuel, at around €0.06 per litre of diesel. International road transportation is taken care of by around 75 companies, of which 15 are state-owned.

Although Iran, as a country, is no great lover of America, it certainly adores its trucks, and Mack vehicles are ever-present.

"It's the best of trucks," gloats one owner, Rustam. "You can break down in the middle of the Baluchistan desert and you'll always find someone to repair it."

Indeed, when the Americans declared a trade embargo after Ayatollah Khomeini seized power, Iran got around it by buying truck parts from Canada.

Though they are of high quality, Iran's roads have a reputation for being some of the most dangerous in the world. More than 100,000 people have been killed on them over the last five years – that's three every hour. This carnage can be blamed partly on the age of the vehicles, as a third are over 20 years old. But above all, the almost suicidal carelessness of Iranian drivers is at the root of the problem. Usually a gentle, likeable people, Iranians seem to become psychopaths once they're behind the wheel. \*



THE DOMINANCE OF TRUCKS  
IS DUE TO THE LOW COST OF  
FUEL AT €0.06 PER LITRE





# IB

BACK IN 1973, A GROUP OF ANGRY freedom-loving riders took on a government that had trampled the easy-riding lifestyle underfoot by demanding that all riders wore

helmets. "We were never against the use of helmets but bitterly resented being criminalised for exercising choice about when we wore them," says Ian Mutch, founder member and current president of the Motorcycle Action Group.

The principle of choice underpins the ethos of MAG which has successfully fended off many knee-jerk proposals including a plan to fit leg protectors to all new production bikes, restrict power to 100bhp and impose inflexible controls on the right of owners to modify their machines.

MAG's motivating principle is to protect the fun and freedom of motorcycling from meddling busybodies who believe they know what's best for others. "It's freedom with responsibility," emphasises Mutch. "We're not anarchists."

Probably the most difficult fight on MAG's hands is the public's distorted, dated view of bikers. Despite this image problem, MAG is politically sophisticated and PR-savvy. It works with Whitehall on a daily basis, and its ranks were recently swelled to include former North Yorkshire Chief Superintendent, David Short.

"It's about separating the perceived logic from the real truth," says Mutch. "The 100bhp limit proposal was typical of the simplistic thinking we're up against. When someone noticed many bikers have accidents and that these machines are capable of high speeds, it seemed obvious the two were linked and that making bikes less powerful would stop people crashing."

This aberrant thinking resulted in the 'Speed Kills' policy, which focused on numerical speed to the detriment of personal responsibility and driving skills.

"When you look into the facts, how relevant is engine power to the problem?" Mutch asks. "Most single-vehicle accidents occur at low speeds and are caused by the rider's over-estimation of his abilities, other motorists' inattentiveness or simply poor skills."

"When it comes to road deaths, bikes are more conspicuous," he adds, admitting, "motorcycles are never going to be safer than cars. But we like riding them and choose to ride them. We pay our taxes to ride them. The persecution of bikers isn't fair, it's

disproportionate in terms of the problem."

The Royal Society for the Prevention Of Accidents (RoSPA) holds a Zero Tolerance policy regarding road safety and works towards nil road casualties or fatalities. True, if motorcycles were removed from our roads, a huge number of lives would be saved (599 in 2006), but why stop there? Why not remove cyclists or pedestrians? If you removed the stairs from every UK home, you'd stop 230,000 injuries and the deaths of nearly 500 people who fall down them each year...

Although MAG's current agenda may seem to deal with mundane, practical issues, such as ensuring that bikes can use bus lanes and remain exempt from congestion charges, many members of the government are still unhappy about these 'non-conformists' controlling their own destinies. For instance, the harebrained notion of fitting Automatic Speed Control devices on bikes to stop them exceeding posted limits, still hasn't gone away despite being as barny an idea as chocolate exhaust pipes.

MAG deals daily with the practicality of cultivating a society where motorcycling is relatively cheap, accessible and an integrated part of transport policy. Happily, Mutch believes there's a growing backlash against the nanny state, but worries that, "in light of the acceptance of the smoking ban, it's still possible to imagine biking coming under serious threat."

David Short's recent appointment to the MAG team has made this fight markedly easier. Like his colleagues and the organisation's 10,000 individual members, Short's far from being a half-crazed adrenalin junkie. In fact, Short started the BikeSafe scheme, which offers police rider training to all bikers at a pittance. The Motorcycle Industry Association's (MCIA) chief statistician, Nich Brown, has also joined MAG, to provide hard facts behind the rhetoric.

Nevertheless, MAG can only survive with the support of its members, of which they always need more. So, regardless of whether you ride a bike or not, if you've ever felt the wind on your chest and the strain in your neck; smelt a hot engine mixed with freshly-toiled fields; bristled with giddy excitement at the simple elation of leaning a bike into a corner, or nipped through traffic and thanked god you weren't in a stationary tin box – support MAG. \*

# Ride for your Life

Why the Motorcycle Action Group is more important to you than you think

Words Rich Beach

**MAG**  
mag-uk.org





*"The MAG exists to preserve and enliven a whole lifestyle."*  
Find out how membership can earn you preferential rates – page 58





influx06

Volvo



#### Ad nausea

Volvo's 1990s TV advert, of a man having a violent crash while remaining smugly relaxed, was maybe too effective. The company has struggled to reassert the idea of active design, rather than passive safety, ever since





# Joy Division

Volvo may be rooted in Nordic nonchalance, but there's passion encoded in its DNA **Words** Mike Fordham

**V**OLVO IS THE FIRST PERSON singular of the present tense – bear with us, this is true – from the infinitive of the Latin verb *volvere*, which can be translated as: 'to wind, turn, roll, twist round, to cause to roll by, or to turn over in the mind.' Funny that. The Volvo

marque has continually revolved in our minds these last 80 years. Everyone thinks they know what the brand is all about. But not everyone is right...

It's true that the Swedish company builds cars with The Right Stuff to protect the average man, his wife, kids and Labrador, but it would be a mistake to think that stolid estates are the furthest reach of the brand's identity. When Assar Gabrielsson and Gustaf Larsson founded the company in Gothenburg, way back in 1927, they made a conscious decision to associate their products with a sense of dynamic rotation. There was no image of frigid passivity in the business plan. To truly understand the beauty of Volvo, therefore, you need to go back. You need to look at the cars predating the 200-series that set the tone for massive sales in the last three decades of the millennium.

The rakish, long-nosed P1800 coupé for example (the coachwork for which was constructed in the Jensen factory in the English midlands) remains one of the prettiest and most accessible classics of the era. It even came in a superbly streamlined, two-door 'shooting brake' variant. This was, of course, the chosen transport of The Saint.

Now cast your mind back further, to the Bergmanesque 'Amazon' series of the 1950s and 1960s. The Amazon, with its pronounced shoulders and subtle suggestion of a tail-fin, inspired the V70 – and evoked a stylish sort of Euro-centred bohemianism that remains appealing to this day. The 480 of 1985, meanwhile, was an outlandish, US-targeted coupé and featured a flip-up rear window and pop-up headlights.

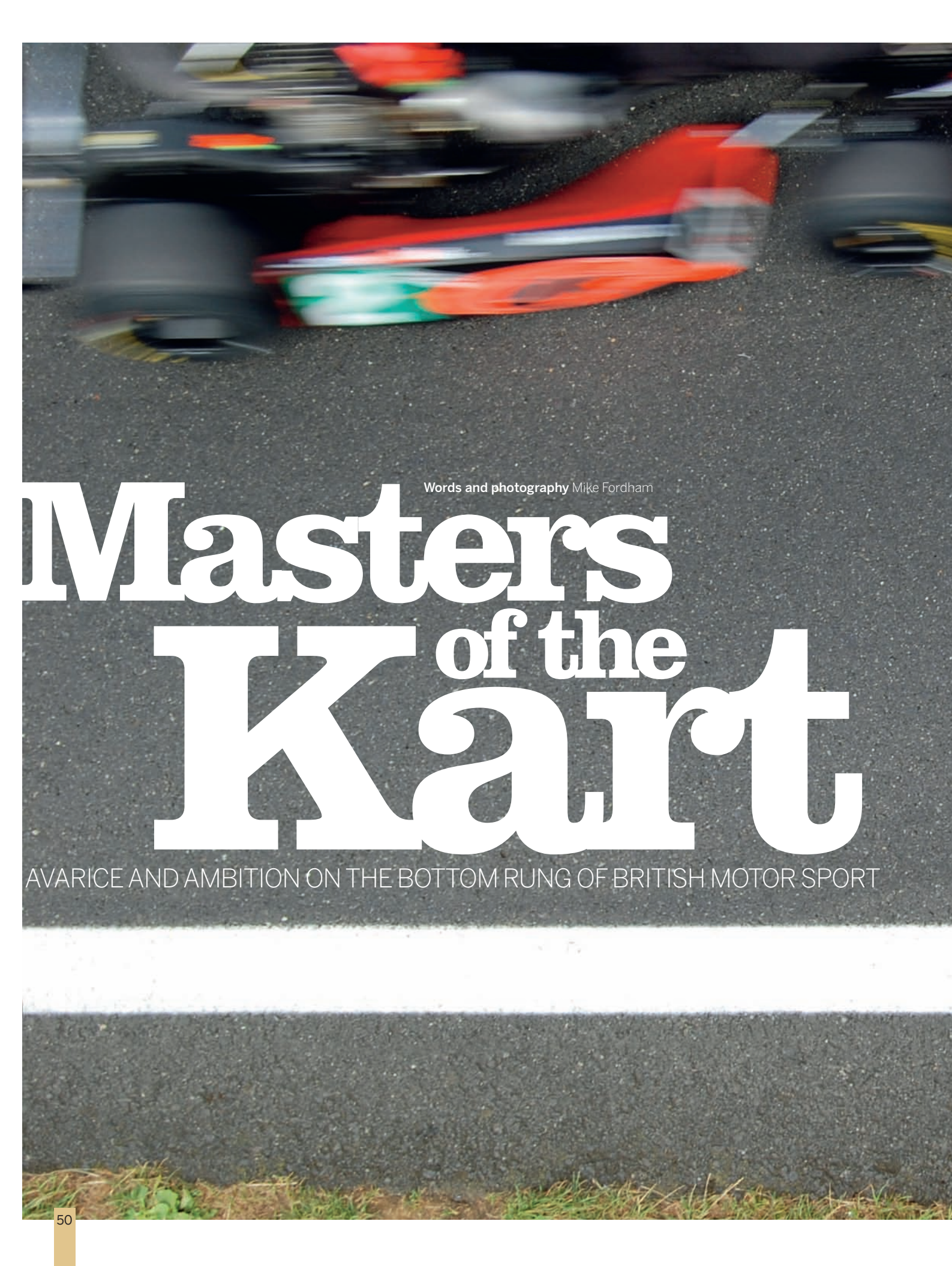
These and other, forward-thinking Volvo models should not be seen as oddities – they're actually closer kindred to the design-centred sensibilities of Scandinavia than the joy-killing, risk-averse boxiness that has since come – possibly indelibly – to define the brand. It's not the XC series, or the latest of the curiously outmoded V70s – bloated caricatures of Volvo's base values – that resonate with true aficionados. It's the C30, with its innovative flourishes and a sense of playfulness, which is destined to make Volvo cool again. It's certainly been a long time coming. ✱

## Beauty and...

...the Volvo 480 of 1985 (right). Seemingly a big departure, it was actually more in line with earlier Volvo values, as encapsulated in the sleek P1800 (left).







Words and photography Mike Fordham

# Masters of the Kart

AVARICE AND AMBITION ON THE BOTTOM RUNG OF BRITISH MOTOR SPORT





**P**AUL FLETCHER INTERNATIONAL karting circuit is a kaleidoscope of racing suits, branded hoardings and luxury motor homes. Families reeking of lucre huddle around prepubescent boys with victory in their eyes and the keys of AMGs in their back pockets.

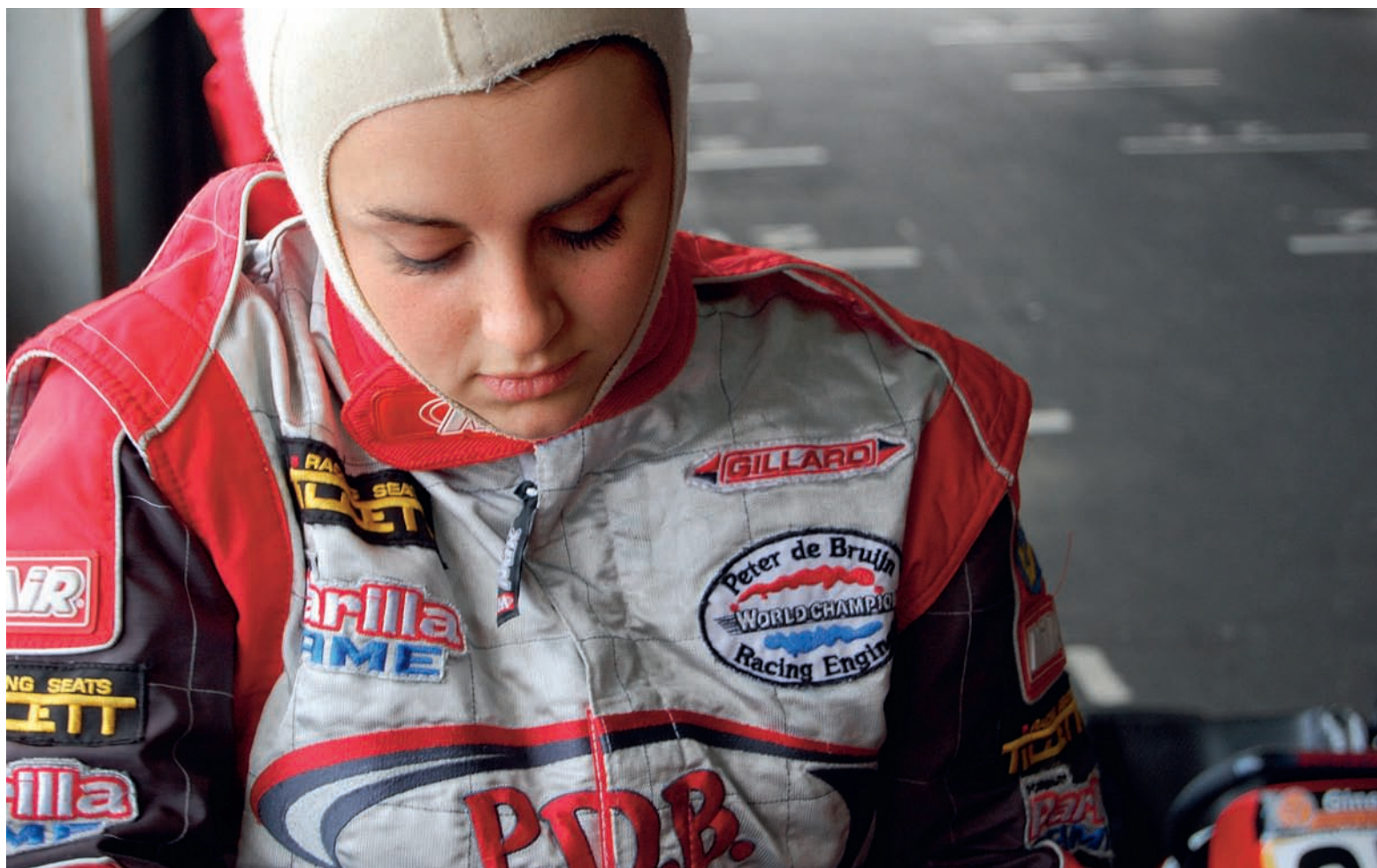
There is the need for speed and aspiration in the ether. At Kart Masters 2008, it's not all about taking part. These kids and their families are here to win.

Lewis Hamilton's image hangs over the proceedings like a spectre. At the exact moment that Lewis, who won the cadet division of the British Championships in 1996, is sitting on the grid on Pole Position at the Hungaroring, a cadre of 11-year-olds in the cadet division here at PFI are battling it out to take up Hamilton's star-spangled mantle.

"The kid in front of me just broke!", exclaims Influx-sponsored Jacques Morley, in his first full season. "No-one breaks there. I had nowhere to go!" His dad Peter had noticed in qualifying that the little fella was getting good speed on the straight, but was bogging coming out of corners, so he made a few adjustments to weight distribution and changed the axle set-up. Having started right at the back of the grid, his son was on a →

"TENSIONS DO GET HIGH. BUT IF YOU GET IT RIGHT THIS CAN LEAD STRAIGHT TO THE TOP..."





### Young guns

It may be the bottom rung of the motorsport ladder, but professionalism, glamour and money all still count

→ hard-charge and slicing through the mid-field when the kid in front anchored up. "The thing about this class of 60cc karts is that there's so little horsepower [about 6bhp]," explains Peter Morley. "It's all about subtle adjustments to the frame."

You can see how much the parents care about these kids' success. There's a look of truly focussed, passionate concern in their eyes whilst trophy wives and teenage sisters with too much flesh on show totter around lasciviously in stacked heels and hotpants. Smaller, family-run teams are devoted, ambitious crews despite the huge competition from the bigger teams. "We're up against it with all the money some teams and some families are able to spend," one dad, bug-eyed and sweating from the tension tells me in the pit-lane. "There are teams that are set up like Formula One crews," he continues, "with loads of mechanics and other resources." Meanwhile, a particularly scary Kart Mom of 13-year-old racing twins – with a teak-hued spray

tan and a frantic look in her eye – shuffles about nervously in her seat in the VIP box above the main stand. "It is nerve wracking seeing the boys hurtle down the straight at 60mph", she says, "but you have to encourage them. This sport is all about winning, and they're little nightmares if they don't have a good race weekend."

In the gladiatorial heat of battle tempers sometimes become frayed between team engineers, and between family members themselves. There's also complex politics and not a little resentment between the privateers and the more moneyed teams which can draw on seemingly limitless resources to put their kids in front. Waiting for the marshal to open the gates of the Parc Fermé, a huge, burly dad, bejewelled with a hefty rope chain and a fistful of sovereigns, gets agitated when a member of one of the big teams' pit crew, whose head is cloaked under a Byzantine helmet of hair gel, cuts the queue back into the scrutineering area. His boy has had a nightmare qualify





influx06

Karting



■ FOR MORE: [www.influx.co.uk](http://www.influx.co.uk)

## “THERE IS THE NEED FOR SPEED – AND NAKED ASPIRATION – IN THE ETHER. KARTING IS CLEARLY NOT ALL ABOUT TAKING PART”

session. “Listen mate, just ‘cos you work for a big team, don’t think you get priority here,” Chav Daddy tells Mr Gel. There’s a red-faced standoff, and the younger man puffs his chest out before letting the big fella through.

There’s clearly a lot riding on these kids. “Tensions do get high,” says the Sovereigned One, after giving his son an earful frothing with spittle. “When it comes down to it, this is only the bottom rung of motorsport, but if you get it right it can lead straight to the top. The big teams dominate the

podiums and even the kids think they’re Johnny big spuds.”

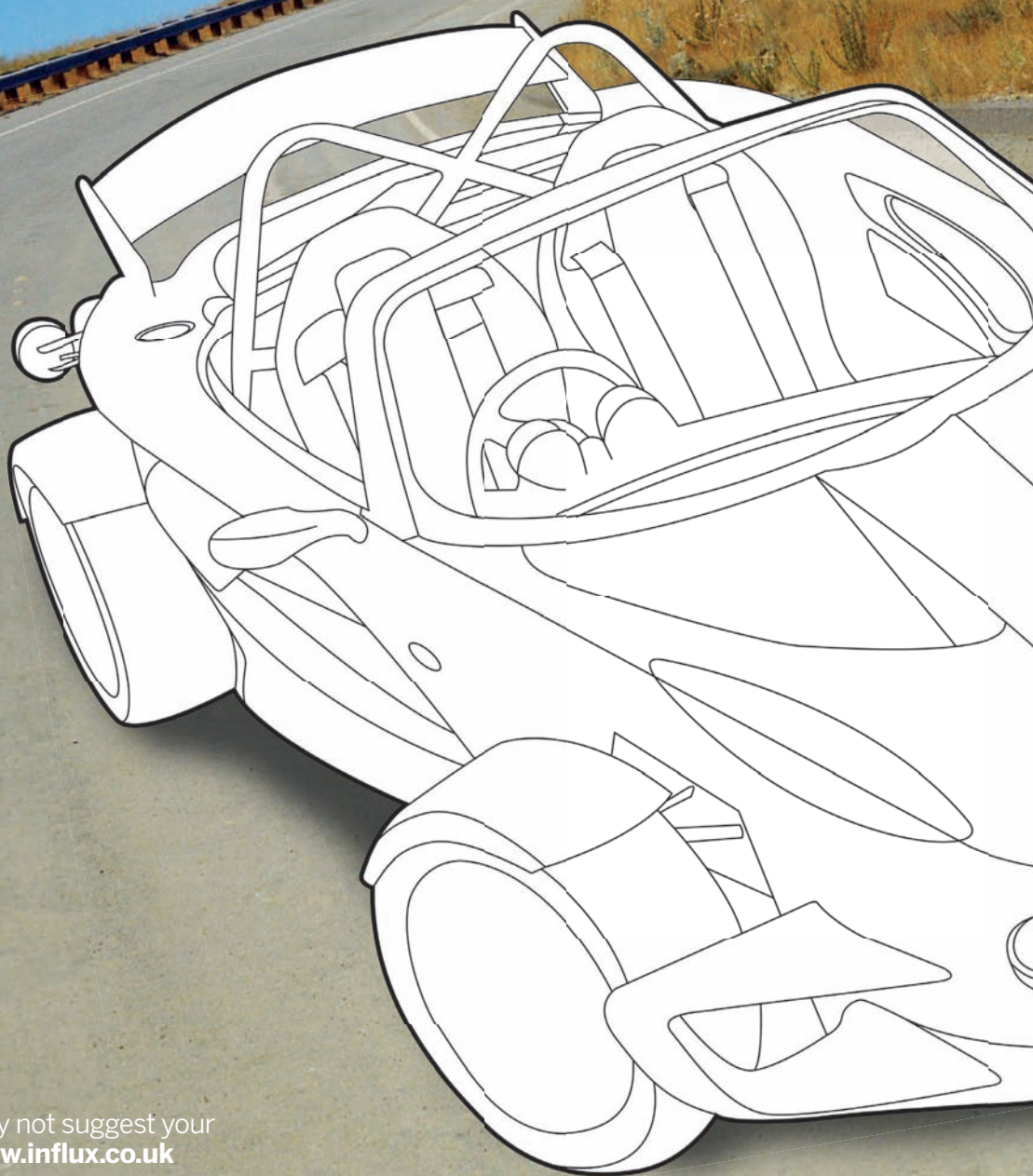
On the podium after the Grand Final, the pubescent brolly babes have donned their stilletoes again and are leading out the victorious boy racers to collect their trophies. I catch sight of the Sovereigned One. He’s hunkered down on his haunches, comforting his son, who is distraught and crying – a smudge of black besmirching his fluorescent green racing suit. “Don’t worry son, I hear him say, “you’ve still got your golf and your football...” ✱



# 10 **influx** future. classics

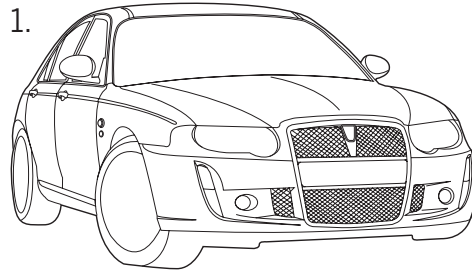
Adrian Flux's experts  
present a list of cars  
they believe will be  
much sought after  
in years to come...

**Illustrations** Phil Nicodemi



Disagree with our top ten? Why not suggest your  
own future classics over at [www.influx.co.uk](http://www.influx.co.uk)





### 1. Rover 75 V8

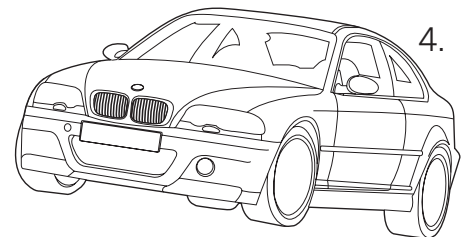
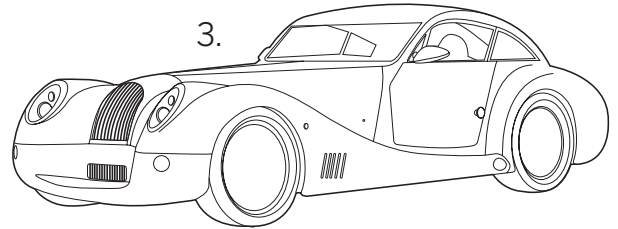
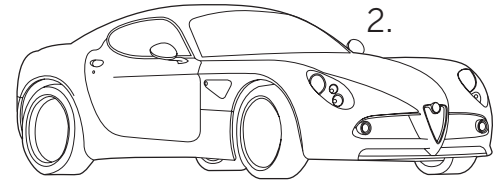
**What a great idea** to install a Mustang engine in a Rover  
**Sadly, the last whiff** of the great British limousine

### 2. Alfa Romeo 8C

**Echoes of a bygone era** with the sumptuous curves of its 1930s inspiration  
**Brutally feminine**, the 8C looks like a TVR with class.  
A real design statement

### 3. Morgan Aeromax

**Forget the flat-cap** and tweed overtones – this is a proper supercar  
**But with only 100** ever made, you'll be hard pushed to get hold of one



### 4. BMW M3 CSL

**A lightweight**, race-spec version of the standard M3  
**Really**, what's not to like?

### 5. VW Lupo GTi

**Captures the spirit** of the Mk I Golf GTi  
**City car** manoeuvrability, hot-hatch performance

### 6. Renault Avantime

**Who wouldn't want** this bizarre coupé/MPV hybrid?  
**The car** that helped close the Matra production line

### 7. MG TF

**The last proper MG** the Longbridge company made  
**Although it's still** short on street cred

### 8. Mk I Ford Focus RS

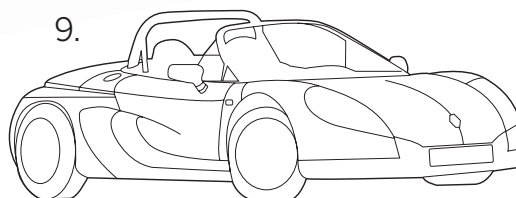
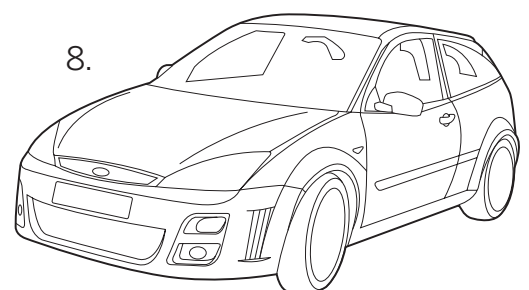
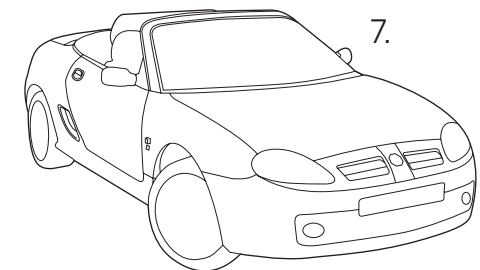
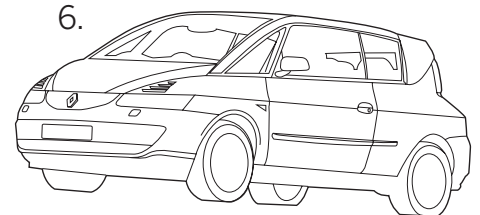
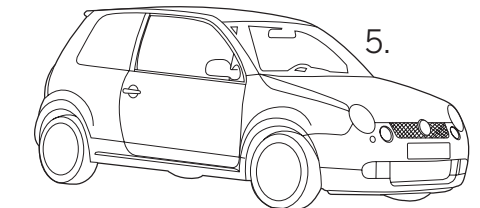
**Don't you just love** those massive wide arches?  
**Nothing apologetic** about this bad-boy street racer

### 9. Renault Sport Spider

**For those who feel** the Lotus Elise is just a little too civilised  
**A decade old** but still turning heads

### 10. Lotus 340r

**A limited edition** Lotus sports car?  
**Talk about** a niche of a niche...







**influx06**

Caravan



# FOR INSTANT HOME JUST PULL T@B

They may be the scourge of holiday motorists across the land, but you'd have to be pretty cold hearted not to feel something for the retro-chic curves of the new T@B caravan

**Words** Matt Gamet



"A caravan gives you freedom to hit the open road whenever you feel like it."  
Our comprehensive caravan cover has been designed to give  
you great value for money – page 60



**O**K, WE KNOW. IT'S A caravan. And camping is cool and caravans are not. But bear with us, OK? Not only is the credit crunch squeezing hard, but the weather is awful. So, the two things we Brits are doing this summer – camping and staying at home for our holidays – have been hit with a hefty volley of slings and arrows. And if these wet summers and gloomy economic forecasts are reality for the foreseeable future, then we best be prepared.

The answer, perhaps, is one of the genuinely cool (looking) caravans from German manufacturer T@B. Hitching one of these babies to your rear end means you can explore this green and pleasant land while retaining your credibility. Just think: you could become a member of the next wave of coolness; a caravanning creed that has ditched the 'Replica Fibreglass Tumour' school of design along with the velcro safety sandals and misshapen taupe trousers with legs that zip off at the thighs. Designed as if

**Van go**  
The T@B\_XL looks confidently as if it *wouldn't* explode and scatter like grandad's ashes if attached to an enthusiastically driven Porsche Cayenne Turbo

to placate hardened, 'van-hating petrol heads, the T@B range now includes the new XL, styled to evoke the chrome-laden halcyon days of the American automobile. As well as those strikingly retro-futuristic teardrop lines, the luxury XL's double axles come bearing gorgeously dished alloys and prop up a classic diner-themed interior – but with a plasma screen and a plethora of neat ergonomic touches. Pity the cab and the engine come as extras. ✱

[www.springbankleisure.co.uk](http://www.springbankleisure.co.uk)



# influxdirectory

Find a hassle-free insurance policy to suit your car, your lifestyle and your budget

## CAN WE HELP YOU?

ADRIAN FLUX IS ONE of the UK's largest specialist motor insurance providers, covering everything from classic and vintage cars, right through to heavily-modified sports cars. We use our specialist knowledge to offer great rates covering almost every vehicle imaginable, with special rates for classic cars, hot hatches, high-performance cars, modified cars, 4x4 vehicles, kit cars, grey imports and many more. Because the insurance we offer is tailored to your exact needs, all of our quotes receive the attention of a specialist underwriter, so you'll get our best quotes and a faster service over the phone.

## WHY CHOOSE ADRIAN FLUX?

- We have a panel of over 40 insurers – we search all of them to get the best deal for you.
- Our expert staff use their knowledge and experience to find you the perfect policy.
- Over 150 exclusive insurance schemes. Get a policy tailored exactly to your needs.
- Our UK-based staff are genuine enthusiasts.

## MOTORCYCLE ACTION GROUP



## Take action on your bike

Why special deals for **MAG members**? Look deeper into the work of MAG and you see why

➔ THE MOTORCYCLE ACTION GROUP EXISTS NOT JUST TO FIGHT FOR riders rights – everything from bike-safe barriers to congestion charging – but to preserve and enliven a whole lifestyle. So, alongside serious campaigns, such as No To Throttle Control, MAG gets involved in more lighthearted events, such as The Second Laugh Out Loud Rally, A Bit Of A Do and Spat Out Of Hull.

Adrian Flux, through its bike department, Bikesure, offers preferential rates to MAG members because we share the same passion. MAG spokesman Ian Mutch had this to say: "The world of insurance is full of incomprehensible excuses that bewilder the rider and senseless rules frustrate the goal of getting a policy that suits. The difference with Bikesure is they recognise that the 'one size fits all' principle is too blunt an instrument to work in the insurance market. The flexibility and 'can do' character that's come with the information revolution has raised expectations to levels that Bikesure are eager to satisfy. They don't try to fit square plugs into round holes – they reshape the holes. This is the kind of co-operative attitude that MAG demands of its partners, on behalf of its members, and it's where Bikesure scores above the competition."

**MAG**  
mag-uk.org



## MOTORBIKE OPTIONS:

- Up to 15% Discount for MAG members
- Cover for riders coming back from bans
- Limited mileage discounts
- Free legal expenses

**Bikesure**  
Freethinking Insurance

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## PRESTIGE CARS

# Performance cars

If you drive something special, why should you be penalised for it?

➔ A supercar isn't a runabout that just happens to go fast. It's unlikely to be used in winter, on school runs or for trips to Ikea. It may well be imported and have the steering wheel on the 'wrong' side. At Adrian Flux we know this, which is why we offer a range of options to tailor your policy to your dream car. If you only do a limited mileage, keep it secure and join a club you'll find your premium a pleasant surprise!

## FAST CAR OPTIONS:

- Protected No Claims Bonus
- Insured to drive other cars
- 90-day European green card cover
- Agreed value cover
- Imports, prestige and modifieds covered
- Discount schemes for Audi, Porsche, BMW, TVR and more
- Female driver discounts
- Experienced driver discounts



"WE OFFER A RANGE OF OPTIONS TO TAILOR YOUR POLICY TO YOUR DREAM CAR"

## CLASSICS



# Classic car insurance

The best deal for your classic machine

➔ IF YOU PREFER YOUR MOTORING raw (complete with the perils of ancient engineering), then Adrian Flux is your first port of call. We've been insuring classic vehicles for 35 years, and pioneered limited mileage policies. Many insurers simply see your classic as 'old', but that fails to recognise its true value. At Adrian Flux we offer agreed

value cover, so you know exactly what you're getting – and what you get if you have to claim. Plus, if your marque has an owners' club, you may find the cost of joining is more than covered by the savings on your premium – not to mention the benefits of direct access to expert advice and rare spare parts. We'll even help you find a club to join.

## CLASSIC CAR OPTIONS:

- Policies for cars as little as five years old
- 'Laid Up' cover for ongoing projects
- Agreed value cover
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## Mini insurance

Austin or Rover, Cooper or standard, Moke or Marcos...

## MINI OPTIONS:

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- Modified or custom
- Chilli, Cooper Works Packs etc insured like-for-like
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- Owners' club discount



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**KIT CARS**

## Kit car insurance

We make policies for cars you make!



➔ **THOUGH WE HAVE SPECIAL SCHEMES FOR** Caterhams, Westfields and Cobra replicas – among many other highly popular kits – we don't just insure the well-known brands. From VW beach buggies to replica Ferraris and even way into left-field (we're talking four poster beds on wheels here!), our 35 years of experience with home-built cars means we can find just the right policy for your custom machine. We can even insure it before it's finished.

**KIT CAR OPTIONS:**

- Build Up cover to protect those valuable parts
- Limited mileage discounts
- Multi-vehicle cover for a single premium
- Rally and trackday cover

**CARAVANS**

## Caravan insurance

Specialist policies for mobile homes

➔ **NOT EVERYONE WANTS THE** expense of a hotel – especially if you have kids in tow. They may be the scourge of summer traffic snarls, but there's no denying that a caravan gives you freedom to hit the open road whenever you feel like it. Our policies include imported models from Europe and America, and we'll even give you up to 120 days free cover when you venture off across the Channel in search of sunshine.

**CARAVAN OPTIONS:**

- New-for-old cover on new caravans
- Awnings insured against weather damage
- Special static caravan options
- Up to 25% discount for No Claim Bonus
- Public liability cover for up to £1000000

**TUNED CARS**

## Modified cars

Tweaked car? We can help you

➔ **YOUR CAR IS** personal, just like your home. But you wouldn't expect to be penalised for the way you decorate your house, and at Adrian Flux we believe you shouldn't suffer for making your car unique either. Truth is, we know that people who love their cars are less likely to make a claim – and that cowardly thieves would rather steal a dull grey saloon than a lime green hatch with gold sparkle. We understand modified cars. That's why we're the first choice for policies.

**MODIFIED CAR OPTIONS:**

- Up to 15% discount for club or online forum members
- Like-for-like cover on modifications
- Limited mileage policies available
- Discounts for security precautions

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- Multi-bike policies
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- Accessories & leathers cover
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#### BIKES

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BIKESURE IS THE MOTORCYCLE specialist at Adrian Flux, and can arrange a policy to suit almost any bike, whether it's a chopper, a thumping British classic, a nitrous-injected sportsbike or a booming Italian twin. Our expert department can find the perfect policy, whether you're 25 and riding an oval-piston Honda NR750, or twice that age and enjoying a belt-driven Buell 1125R. We even offer agreed-value cover and discounts for limited mileage, plus benefits for owners' club members, experienced riders and strong security. From Aprilia to Yamaha and everything in between, we can insure it.



"FROM APRILIA TO YAMAHA AND  
EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN,  
WE CAN INSURE IT"



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Words James Drake

# Rear View

**T**he Maserati MC12 put the hype in 'hypercar'. Only 50 road-legal versions of the ridiculously carnal, carbon-fibre constructed GT racer were pre-sold to a hand-picked cadre of Ferrari's most esteemed clients in 2004, who paid in the region of half a million pounds for the privilege of ownership. Although based on the

Enzo, the MC12 is heavier, slower (it 'only' does 205mph), arguably not as pretty and even less practical than the ultimate spawn of Maranello, but we think you'll agree that this stupefyingly inaccessible creation is possessed of one of the most pulchritudinous rumps on the road. Thank god for the beautiful decadence of the reborn Maserati marque. \*

Like what you've seen? Letters, questions or comments: [feedback@influx.co.uk](mailto:feedback@influx.co.uk)

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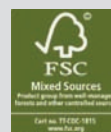
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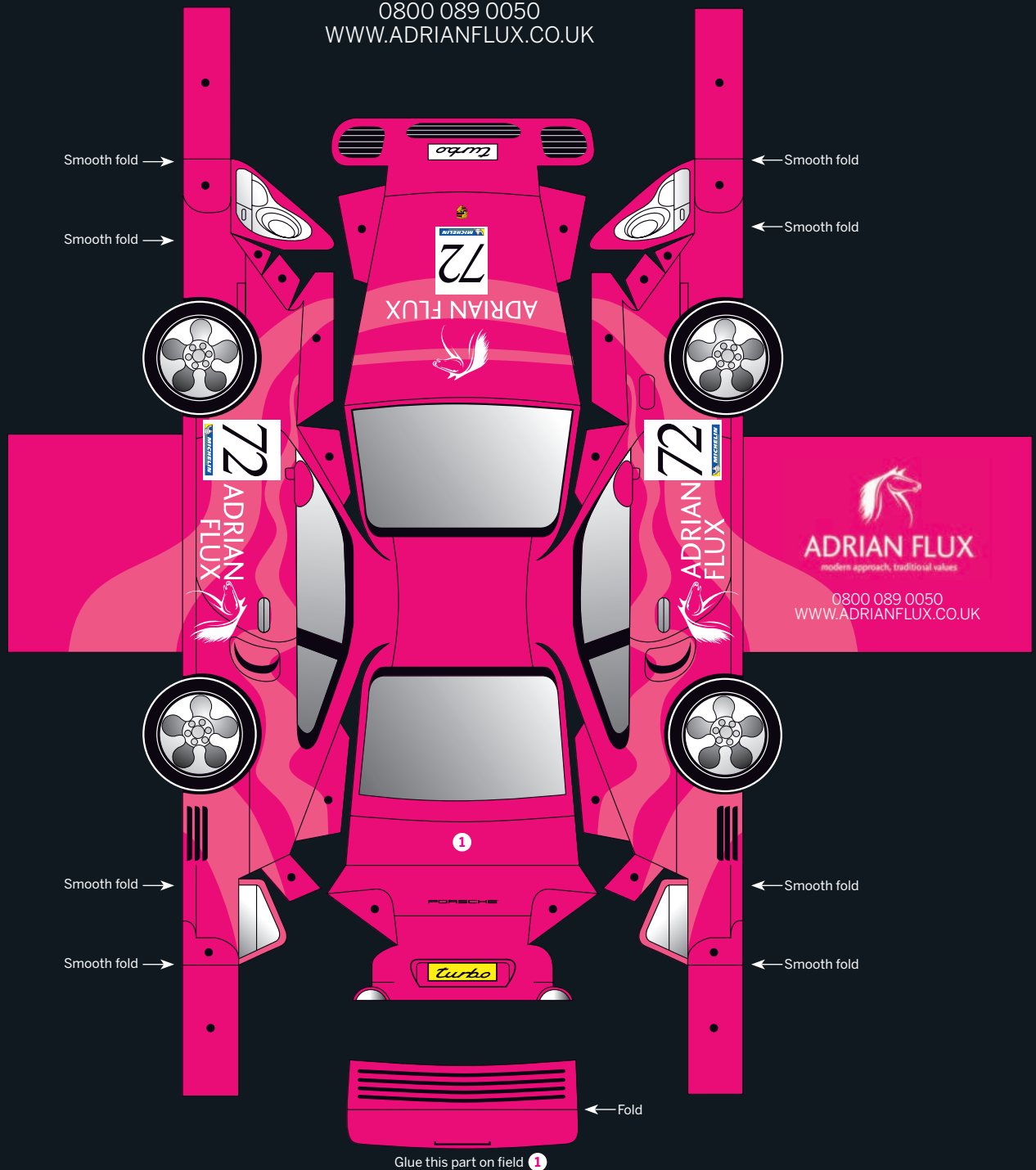
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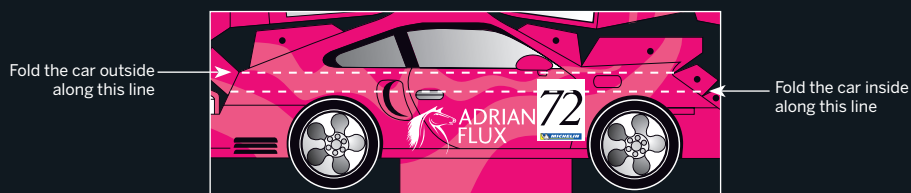


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