

RETROMOTIVE

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155 GTA

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LIV WATCHES

★ IMAGES LIV



LIV has developed an enviable reputation in the watch world.

LIV Swiss watches is a brand which started out as a Kickstarter crowdfunding project in 2014 and has evolved into a highly successful premium brand.

Husband and wife team Chaz and Esti Chazanow were motivated to create a brand which had a point of difference from the luxury David Marvier watches that are highly desirable but not attainable to most in high-end shops.

Cutting out the middleman yet not skimping on craftsmanship and quality, LIV has developed an enviable reputation in the watch world.

It uses premium materials which are handcrafted in Switzerland built to heavy duty standards but undercutting mainstream luxury brands by huge margins.

The range of LIV watches caters for all tastes under the categories of Chronograph, Diver's, Automatics and LIV Art pieces including the Genesis GX1 collection which was the first model offered by LIV in 2015 and has become the most desired.

LIV's Rebel-AR collection pays tribute to the classic car racing era with variants stretching to Le Mans, Gulf, Valencia, Monza and Sebring.

Florida-based LIV's model range adds sophistication and points of difference without being lumbered with huge price tags.

Those in the Rebel range can be ordered for less than \$700 USD.

FRONT END

RETROMOTIVE

Get ready for an unparalleled adventure as we dive into the stories gracing the pages of *Volume 20 of Retromotive Magazine*.

Across these pages, we discover that the love for classic cars and the commitment to their preservation continue to thrive, inspiring individuals to break boundaries, redefine standards, and create automotive masterpieces that captivate the hearts of enthusiasts worldwide.

Our first stop?

An Italian love affair with Alfa Romeo. Claudio del Gallo's quest to create the ultimate Alfa 155 GTA is a mesmerizing journey through the annals of motorsport history. We'll delve deep into the racing prowess and road-going elegance of this Alfa Romeo masterpiece, a car that stirred Alfisti's souls when it graced the scene in 1992.

But that's just the beginning. We explore Aubrey Automobiles, a restoration company with a twist. Operated by the indomitable Georgia Peck, it's a woman-owned haven for classic Land Rovers. Dive into Aubrey 001's transformation, a Series III Land Rover that redefines restoration standards.

Next, we unveil "La Regina," the story of Lancia's Delta Integrale—a rally legend that conquered hearts and racetracks worldwide. From a humble family car to a rallying behemoth, this is the stuff of automotive dreams.

"The Blue Wonder: Mercedes-Benz's Speedy Racing Car Transporter" takes us back to 1954 when Mercedes-Benz built the world's fastest truck to transport racing cars. It's a tale of speed, innovation, and racing glory.

"Volvo's 850 Series: From Family Car to Weekend Track Toy" chronicles how Volvo's 850 series evolved from a family car to a track-ready icon. Discover the magic that made it a timeless classic.

From the waves to the wheels, Arnaud Biancini's journey is a mesmerizing tale of surfing, vintage cars, and jewelry making. It's a story where passion knows no boundaries.

Franck Allard, the titan of French insurance, shares his passion for racing and vintage cars. His collection, including the rare Allard "J2 Competition," is a testament to a life well-lived.

And finally, we delve into "Preserving Memories" with Greg Weeder's remarkable journey with a 1975 International Harvester Scout II. A testament to cherished memories and family history, this Scout bridges the gap between old and new, offering a nostalgic yet contemporary driving experience.

As you delve into these stories, we invite you to reflect on what drives your own automotive passions. Share your thoughts with us, and together, let's continue to fuel the flame of automotive enthusiasm.



*"Let's continue to fuel the flame of automotive enthusiasm."
Jacek Dudasz, Retromotive Sept 2023*

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ALFA ROMEO 155 GTA

✦ WORDS JOHANN VENTER ✦ IMAGES STEFAN KOTZE







A

lfa Romeo had threatened to produce a road going 155 GTA Stradale but only got as far as a single prototype.

So, to hell with still - born projects of which the automotive world has amassed sheds full over the years.

Enter Claudio del Gallo who decided to build his own 155 GTA and add some Italian racing flare to his obsessive plan.

“I was completely obsessed with the racing 155 GTA and that only became more intense when the 155 TI V6 DTM won the DTM in 1993,” Claudio begins.

“And then Fiat faltered at the opportunity to create the 155 GTA Stradale road car, so I decided to make my own,” he declares.

Across these pages you will notice the unmistakable presence of a Lancia Stratos, one of the most celebrated rally cars of all time. Read more at the end of this feature in the footnote.





For now, let's just get a better understanding of the Alfa Romeo 155 - the first Alfa that was designed from the ground up by Fiat, since its takeover of Alfa in 1986. Structurally it was built on the Fiat Tempra and Tipo platform. It replaced the Alfa 75 and took on a smoother approach to the wedge-shaped design, which had become ubiquitous with Alfa. The less angular curves meant it could achieve

an impressive drag coefficient of just 0.29. But the Alfisti were not impressed and the 155 received a frosty reception when it was launched in 1992. The front-wheel-drive architecture is what rattled the hornet's nest, as purists and journalists alike felt that it was not fitting of the sporting heritage that the Alfa Romeo badge had garnered.



It was offered with the 1.7-litre, 1.8-litre and 2.0-litre Twin Spark engines. At the top of the pecking order was the 'Busso' 2.5-litre V6, adapted from the 3.0-litre V6 found in the 164, delivering 164bhp. And of course, the Q4 which was a Lancia Delta Integrale parading as a 155. The Integrale underpinnings included the 2.0-litre, 16-valve, turbocharged drivetrain, good for 190bhp that is fed to

the four-wheel-drive system which gave the Integrale its rallying credentials.

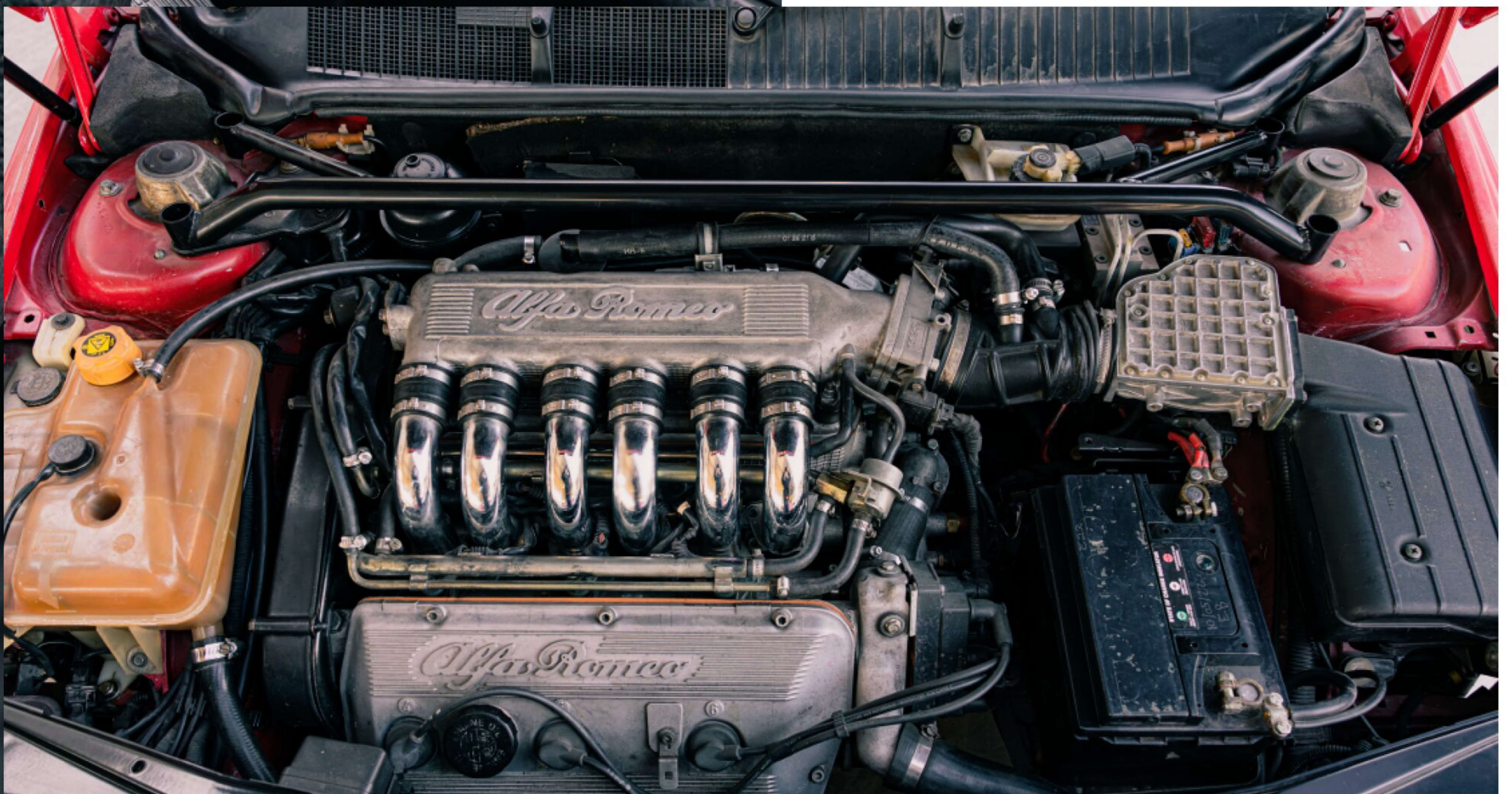
Owners of the 155 were however less than impressed with the handling of the car and Fiat heeded this concern, releasing the wide-body iteration in 1995. The wider body was to accommodate the wider track which included wider wheel arches which better suited the car.





The 155 also received an updated steering mechanism which stemmed from the Alfa Corse 155s, called 'Quick Rack'. These changes resulted in a much sharper steering and vastly improved the handling dynamics of the 155.

There were also engine upgrades for the four-pods, doubling valve capacity from eight to 16 and switching from chain - driven camshafts to belt-driven. Production of the 155 ended in 1998 with 195,526 built after a six-year run.











SELENIA
MAGNETI MARELLI
PIRELLI

The Alfa Romeo 155 TI V6 DTM (then Deutsche Tourenwagen Meister, now: Deutsche Tourenwagen-Meisterschaft) made use of a longitudinally placed 2.5-litre, V6 engine, producing 420hp. The tried and tested transverse six-speed, semi-automatic gearbox and four-wheel-drive system from the Lancia Delta Integrale was once again put into use. The 155 TI V6 DTM drew first blood at the opening round of the 1993 DTM season at Zolder, Belgium, with Larini qualifying on pole position and triumphing in both heats. Larini would go onto dominate the season with 10 wins from 20 starts, winning the 1993 DTM Championship with some of the most memorable battles against the Mercedes-Benz entrants.

Alfa Corse's crowning glory would be to also take the constructor's title that year. Thus, making the Alfa Romeo the only manufacturer outside of Germany (and the 155 in particular) to have ever won the DTM title. It also managed to secure the most number of DTM victories between 1993 and 1996, racking up a total of 38. In 1994 the 155 secured both the British and Spanish Touring Car Championships and would go on to win the Spanish Touring Car Championships twice more in 1995 and 1997.

Hot on the heels of the highly victorious Italian touring car racing campaign in 1992, it was decided to develop a road going 155 GTA Stradale, to commemorate Alfa's success on the track.

The 155 had an illustrious racing career with development of the first competition example having started prior to the first production car driving off the factory floor. Fiat canned the Lancia WRC programme at the end of 1991 and moved Sergio Limone, head of Lancia Corse and his team to Alfa Corse, who had already started to develop a 155 contender for the 1992 Italian Superturismo Championship.

The 155 GTA used the Lancia Delta Integrale fundamentals, which include the four-wheel-drive system and

the 2.0-litre 16-valve turbocharged four-cylinder engine which was capable of well over 400bhp - above and beyond what the Lancia was allowed under WRC regulations.

In 1992 Alfa returned to form after the Germans had dominated the Italian Superturismo Championship, ruling the roost from start to finish, with Nicola Larini taking the Championship. This was all a precursor to what Alfa really wanted, the crown jewels of the touring car racing - winning the DTM Championship.







It was also meant to go after the BMW E30 M3 and Mercedes-Benz 190E market as both of those models had achieved success in touring car racing. The development of the 155 GTA Stradale was left to Abarth engineer, Sergio Limone. Limone once again relied on the fundamentals of the Lancia Delta Integrale, which meant the 2.0-litre turbocharged four-cylinder engine, good for 190bhp and the four-wheel-drive architecture. On the outside it took on the aggression of the racing 155s, with substantially flared arches, deep, imposing, front spoiler with air intakes, pronounced side skirts, wider rear bumper and a substantial wing. It was presented to the Fiat management who felt that it needed a more powerful six-cylinder engine, that could also produce a deeper more distinctive sound – more in-line with the Alfa lineage. This in effect was the death of 155 GTA, as the six cylinder was not compatible with the Lancia Integrale four-wheel-drive suspension. A separate production-line would have to be developed for the 155 GTA, which would come at an astronomical cost,

which the Fiat management duly turned down. The 155 GTA was however displayed at the Bologna Motor Show, in December 1994. That same year it also served as the medical car, at the Italian Formula 1 Grand Prix at Monza which was driven by Fabrizio Barbazza. Thereafter it ended up in the hands of Tony Fassina, winner of multiple Italian Rally Championships, he sold it to a friend in Germany in 1998, it returned to Italy in 1999 when purchased by a collector. Subsequently it was purchased by Rino Anello and then put up for auction by Bonhams in Padua October 27, 2018, but did not sell.

Zagato was also spurred on by the success of the 155 GTA and the 155 TI V6 and thought that he could convince Fiat to do a limited run of a road interpretation of the race car. The styling would mimic that of the race car with a wider track and blistered wheel-arches, a large front bumper with deeper spoiler, air intakes, Venturi lip and side skirts, at the back it would have a more pronounced bumper, lower spoiler and wing.



The suspension was updated with adjustable gas dampers, variable rate springs and was also lowered by 1.34 inches and fitted with special 17-inch light alloy wheels. Like the race car it would be powered by the Lancia Delta Integrale 2.0-litre, 16-valve, turbocharged four-cylinder engine and would be driven by all four wheels. Zagato named it the 155 TI. Z (Turismo Internazionale Zagato) and presented it at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1994, but unfortunately a struggling Alfa did not have the appetite. Undeterred, Luca Zagato turned to a Japanese investor to fund the project and registered a new company called Z Automobili, to produce the 155 TI. Z solely for the Japanese market. After all, Zagato had managed to sell over 100 Autech Stelvios in Japan a few years earlier. A total of 21 cars were hand-built in Italy and shipped to Japan, between 1995 and 1997. And 13 were equipped with the 2.0-litre Twin Spark, six were the Q4 derivative with Integrale engine and running gear. One received the V6 'Busso' engine and was badged the GTA.Z, and one has remained a mystery in terms of the powertrain.

Let's now turn our attention to the 155 in this feature. Claudio del Gallo is second generation Italian, and has owned this 155, 2.5-litre V6, for the last seven years. Over time Claudio has owned a couple of Alfas, which comes as no surprise.

They say that you are not a true petrolhead until you've owned an Alfa. He had sold his previous 155 'Busso' which left a gaping hole in his heart, until he found this one.

"It has always been my dream to create my own Alfa Romeo 155 GTA...a cross between the outstanding racing cars and the road version of the GTA, which Alfa should have built. I've always had a passion for cars, with Alfas and Fiats having been the dominant forces. I'm a very patriotic Italian. I was at high school when the 155 GTA won the 1992 Italian Superturismo Championship. The following year Alfa entered the 155 in DTM, and the 155 was supreme that year, taking the championship. And for the next three years became the car to beat in German touring car racing," he enthuses.

"So, from the outset I had a clear understanding of what I wanted this car to be, it had to have the 'Busso' motor (the V6 being reflective of the 155 TI V6 DTM), which were quite rare in South Africa. I had the 155 for barely a week before I started stripping it.

"I got in touch with Anton Dekker of Exclusive Conversions, to bring the vision in my head to life. I did plenty of research and found that no two race cars were the same and discovered quite a bit of variation.

Alfa Romeo



I then provided numerous images to Exclusive Conversions which they emulated, to bring my manifestation to life. It is not representative of one car. Instead, I took what appealed to me, so you'll see various elements from numerous different race cars and the same goes for the livery,"

The aero appendages are reflective of the racing 155s. "The flared arches are made from fiberglass, as well as the bumpers, but the side-skirts, rear diffuser and wing are carbon fibre. I wanted this to be a road legal, usable car and therefore retained the interior with all its creature comforts and that is where the GTA road car comes into the equation.

"The engine has been balanced and blueprinted, whilst fitted with a 3.0-litre crankshaft for better compression, and the cylinder heads have been gas-flowed. To accentuate that legendary Alfa V6 soundtrack,

I added a bespoke exhaust, which I think just sets off the right tempo. "The exhausts have carbon tips to complement the rest of the carbon elements."

Sourcing the wheels proved a challenge with the resulting Speedline wheels purchased from the United States after a world-wide search to match what were used on the competition machines.

"I searched the world and was prepared to do anything. Eventually I found these Speedline wheels in the US. Initially the company selling them would not give me the time of day. I persisted and they put me in touch with a distributor in Joburg (Johannesburg), just to find that they did not have the PCD for the 155. I would have thought that they were centre lock wheels which is exactly the effect I was going for. I considered adaptor plates but could not bring myself to go that route.







“Then the Yanks contacted me, and my Italian charm had eventually paid off. They stated that they had received an order for blank wheels with no holes for the studs, and if I was still interested they could include a set for me as a favour. I jumped at the opportunity...the cost was stratospheric, but I had to have them. Once the wheels arrived in South Africa, I had to have the holes drilled, that entire process took about two years,” he points out.

The phenomenal outcome is quite striking. The magnificent red paint covered in Alfa Corse livery of your choosing makes this an Italian masterpiece.

There is also an interesting reason why Claudio opted for #33 as part of the 155 GTAs battledress. “It is of great religious significance, del Gallo remarks. “Jesus died at the age of 33. If you look at the number plate it is CD 33 GR GP. I was issued this plate, it is not a personalised plate, but you could read it as Claudio del Gallo

(CD 33 GR), and 33 to match the livery, while the ‘R’ stands for racing.”

The build process took four years which was blown out by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Claudio’s Stratos started life as a kit car, made by Carson Automotive Engineering in the UK. It was successfully raced in the UK and then made its way to the Western Cape, in South Africa, where it also campaigned.

Claudio found it 20 years ago in poor shape after years of racing. So, he then set about creating a Stratos Tribute that would be true to his vision of what a Stratos should be. The Honda/Rover 2.5-litre V6 was immediately abandoned and replaced with an Alfa 3.0-litre V6 quad-cam, which was later bored to 3.5-litres. It is finished in the Stratos East Africa Safari Rally livery, with gold wheels. Weighing only 880kg, it can achieve the 100km/h mark in under four seconds, in part thanks to the semi-slicks that have been fitted to improve traction.



1973 LAND ROVER

★ WORDS **GORDON LOMAS** ★ IMAGES **GF WILLIAMS, SAM CHICK PHOTOGRAPHY**





L

ovely Landy.

Georgia Peck was born with the automotive gene.

But it wasn't until early 2022 that she decided to take a rather large leap of faith and begin a unique bespoke business of putting her stamp on classic machines.

Aubrey Automobiles, a woman-owned restoration company based in London, England, was off and running.

The fledgling company unveiled a 1973 Series III Land Rover to the world earlier

this year at Switzerland's kitsch International Concours of Elegance (ICE) on that frozen St Moritz lake.

Revived in meticulous detail, the Land Rover represents the first (Aubrey 001) commissioned project by Peck's company. The finished product is a remarkable achievement since it was saved from becoming a rusted part of the landscape in country England.

Designed and constructed for a family in Switzerland to enjoy a fun and flexible lifestyle, the 'Landy', in its ostentatious bright orange hue is a remarkable feat of passion, vision and attention to detail.







**“BASED IN SOUTH-EAST ENGLAND,
THE WORK COVERED EIGHT MONTHS AND
MORE THAN 1000 HOURS.”**

The all-encompassing process involved a full body rebuild, conversion to left-hand-drive, the 2.25litre engine and transmission, which now has an overdrive, were rebuilt, as well as the suspension and brakes are new on a new galvanized chassis. Aubrey engineered removable B-pillars (more about that later), and the rare and expensive Wenge wood sourced from Africa was fitted to the interior decking and drinks cabinet while Connolly leather wraps the interior with the six seats (yes six) fully heated.

A few technical mod-cons were also added to bring the Landy into the 21st century like Apple CarPlay and a modern audio system. Electric power steering as well as a full electrical rewire, new steering column, steering box axle, fuel tank, fuel lines and

a modified cooling system with an electric fan adds to the comprehensive restoration. A bespoke 6-point MSUK certified removable roll cage adds to safety enhancements while a Defender-style side ladder enables easy roof access.

Among the exterior elements are galvanized front bumper and exterior trims, a Series IIA metal grille replaces the plastic Series III grille, upgraded chrome trim indicators and rear brake lights, heated period fold-down split windscreen with galvanized trim with the period-correct orange-hued machine shod with Goodyear Wrangler all-terrain rubber. An interchangeable bespoke ski and bicycle rack with Wenge wood trim adds currency to what is an adventurous package.



Georgia Peck explains the reasoning behind establishing the business was fired by the love of her late grandfather.

“My grandfather (Harry Aubrey Peck) was my inspiration to get into the classic car world. He sadly passed away when I was a baby but as a child, all my Christmases, my father would bring down all these fantastic 1920s and 1930s films taken on the family camera of my grandfather racing or driving cars, so he was really my inspiration as a child. He was my hero and who I wanted to be like when I grew up. He is one of the reasons why I got into old cars. So, I thought I would honor him by calling the business Aubrey which is a unisex name. That’s how the name all came about.”

Peck wants to concentrate on restoring 4x4s, classic Land Rovers, which she has

an unwavering passion for.

She has worked with Jaguar and Land Rover in the past with her other company, Aubrey Peck, that deals with car makers with international rallies, product launches, client events, PR and marketing et al.

In 2022 Jaguar Classic commissioned Aubrey Peck to do a special drive program from Coventry, in the Midlands, to Geneva which celebrated the 60th anniversary of the E-Type, the timeless sports car that was famously described by Enzo Ferrari as the most beautiful car in the world.

While there is a 1980’s-spec Mercedes-Benz G-Wagon in the Aubrey Automobiles workshop now, it is Land Rovers that remain the core focus for Peck.



“I love Land Rovers. They are a car that I grew up with, a car I learnt to drive in and I love classic cars. Over the years I’ve worked in the classic car industry and experienced some incredible cars, concours standard cars, Italian sports cars and the like. So, I wanted to make Land Rovers which had such a huge sentimental value to people to be more valid in today’s world.

Quite a lot of them will be left in a field or will have been used on a farm and you can’t really take them into London. People don’t really love them as much anymore.”

“There are a lot of other companies I’ve seen that would take a Land Rover and drop a Corvette engine into it or something which it doesn’t necessarily need. There are a lot of these overly macho things and design tweaks which I really dislike. I think it is quite disrespectful to Land Rover as a brand to make unnecessary changes.

So, I wanted to be respectful to the manufacturer of the cars that we are restoring but to

also make them relevant in today’s world so that my customers and their children can enjoy these cars.

The customer of this Land Rover who is in Switzerland is in his 50’s but has children ranging in age from 7, 12, 14 and 18 so we have built it for him to enjoy but also for his children to enjoy.”

What has been transformed into Aubrey 001 had been left rotting, inside and out, in the fields for years. The chassis was falling apart, the engine was shot and there were probably less than a handful of things that Peck’s team could salvage from the car. One was the original safari roof.

“There were about two weeks in the workshop to restore the roof fully,” Peck begins. “We rebuilt the engine, and it was a real labor of love that’s for sure. We had the trimmers doing the interior and had the people doing all the woodwork, the engine specialists doing the rebuild. We have the most amazing team all based in the village together. We have three people in the workshop full-time. There are a couple of others who we sub in to do the work.



“After starting the company in February 2022, our first build was a 1973 BMW 2002 race car which we did in the Jägermeister livery; however, the core focus of our company is custom-build 4x4s which are designed for a luxury lifestyle and adventure.

The priority for Aubrey Automobiles is to do up old Land Rovers with another two orders in the pipeline, one is destined for Australia, and one is going to Iceland. The Australian order is like the orange example in this feature - Series III, long wheelbase.

“They are going to all different places in the world, and everyone would like to use them for different purposes,” Peck adds. “People have all different design ideas. Someone would like to build a bar in the back and a BBQ and custom-built beds. In essence all our totally bespoke to people's needs and lifestyles.

“Our business practice is that we don't just like to do customizations. In other words, you don't just give us a car and we change the interior or change the paintwork, anyone can do that. We take every single part, every nut and bolt and rebuild it all in-house.

So, it becomes fully engineered by us and we know that everything has been done to a standard and done properly.

These are not simply cosmetic changes, its full mechanical builds as well. Also, a lot of these customers don't supply the cars. We must source the base vehicle, or you supply us with the car. The challenge is that sometimes the market has loads to choose from other times they are a bit low on the ground.”

We made mention earlier of the removable B-pillars. This allows for eight (repeat eight) different roof configurations. Peck explains: “With the two-door model, when you fold the windscreen down you take the door tops off which I affectionately call ‘brick mode’. With the four-door station wagon there is a B-pillar so you can't usually convert it into ‘brick mode’ or take the door tops off or fold the windscreen down. So, we engineered removable B-pillars so that in the summer you can lift the roof off, you can put a canvas top on, you can remove the door tops, remove the B-pillars and fold it all the way down into ‘brick mode’ It is the first convertible station wagon that we know of in the world which is quite cool.”



Peck notes that her business maintains respect for the original manufacturer which cannot be said for some restoration businesses.

“For us to be doing these sympathetic restorations with such attention to detail and the engineering involved from our people in the workshop who are highly skilled with degrees in engineering sets us apart from the others. I would say we are a cut above the rest in terms of our skill set.

I do all the design and that is led by other amazing classic cars.

There is an element of our design that has been heavily influenced by some of the luxury classic cars that we’ve experienced.”

At St Moritz, Aubrey 001 was mobbed by hundreds of classic car lovers who wanted to know more about how a 1973 Land Rover has been reborn with such attention to detail and sympathy to its origins.

“There must have been about 300 people who had their photo taken with the car over the two days. (And) we also received three orders for similar projects,” Peck remarked.

CHEVROLET CORVAIR

★ WORDS & IMAGES DAVID MARVIER









A

rnaud Biancini was at a Paris motorcycle show when I met him about 10 years ago.

I was exhibiting a series of photographs from a motorbike trip to Argentina, and he and his wife Alexandra were exhibiting their work as jewelers.

We've remained close friends ever since, thanks to our shared passions. They created their brand, ABMAD, a few years ago, inspired by their lifestyle of surfing, vintage cars, tattoos and music.

Arnaud is a real jack-of-all-trades. In summer and winter, he packs his longboard onto the back of a splendid 1962 Chevrolet Corvaire 95 and sets off to ride the waves on the French Atlantic coast.

But he's also interested in fashion, always very attentive to his style, design, music, vintage cars and motorbikes. Together with his friend Frank, also a jeweler, the pair delved into American culture, collecting rare and unusual machines for over 30 years.

In the 90s, young Arnaud, a bit of a rebel, hung out with a gang of bikers and tinkered with motorbikes while listening to rock'n'roll. They are really a bunch of '50's nostalgics, fans of rockabilly, banana haircuts and patina leather.

By the time he was 19, he could afford a beautiful BMW R75 5 Series bike which he would swap for a Les Paul Deluxe Custom Gibson guitar. Arnaud is a real rocker. He later sold it and opted for a 6 Series.

This was the start of his adventure into the land of vintage machinery.

He was already toying with the idea of buying an old machine and, while out for a ride, he came across an old Series 2, lying carelessly on the side of the road. In a way it was a real barn find.

He stopped, chatted to the owner and bought it. What followed was a long period of restoration that would last four years.

It was four years of hard work, in collaboration with his friend Olaf, to get this beautiful bike back on the road. "Engine, chassis, paintwork, electrics. Everything had to be done", Arnaud confesses.

But life sometimes throws up surprises, and this one is a big one! His wife Alexandra gave birth to beautiful little Agathe, which radically changed the young dad's priorities, so he sold his motorbike after barely 500 km of enjoyment.

Arnaud and his family travelled in an old Toyota 4X4 HDJ 61 V6 Turbo Diesel 4L, that would transport them and their boards on surf trips. They spent almost all their weekends by the sea, looking for the best waves and the best bivouacs.

The couple had their eye on VW Combis, which were already quite expensive at the time. But Arnaud called on his patience and scoured the classified ads day after day until he came across one from a radiologist in Bayonne. He offered €5,000 for a magnificent example that had been left dormant in a garage for a good decade. This was an entirely original model with period Westfalia equipment!

The purchase was made from looking at photos of the Combi with Arnaud picking up his new catch with his father who had a can of petrol under his arm. What met the pair on their first physical sighting of the VW was that plastic was still covering the seats (wow, we have ourselves a bargain).

After some refreshing work, a complete paint job and the installation of Kadron carburetors, it would be driven on many of the country's roads including those of Portugal and the wild Algarve.

Then, after 7 or 8 years of fun, one Christmas evening, on a whim, he put it up for sale for €30,000 just to see. And surprise, surprise a few days later, the vintage Combi changed hands without any quibbling.



Arnaud also owned a 1964 C10 Chevrolet, ordered and restored in Los Angeles by a local Frenchman who specialised in import/export.

But he missed the van life concept and with the colossal coup he pulled with the Combi, he had enough money to achieve his new dream: a Chevrolet Corvair 95.

For the record, the Corvair was one of the first vans made in the USA. The designers of the famous Chevrolet C10 were inspired by the look of its front-end. It's easy then to make the connection that Arnaud has with the Corvair 95. Both generations of the Corvair were built off General Motors' Z platform. The same platform was also used for the Corvette and the Saturn S-Series. It was ultimately replaced by the Opel-developed Delta platform.

This van is a real little jewel on wheels, powered by a 6-cylinder flat rear engine, which is easier to maintain and much less expensive than a big V8. It's a highly versatile vehicle you can use as a daily driver, ideal for surf-trips on the Atlantic, but also for comfort on urban journeys or trips with friends.

It's lower and wider than its German counterpart and works better with its manual gearbox and long transmission ratios. But finding a Corvair 95 was easier said than done.

"The idea to find one was really complicated," Arnaud explains. "The Americans don't really want to sell them and there are very few models in Europe, even fewer in such good condition. I tried one in Bordeaux, a few miles from my garage, but the price was prohibitive, and the van was in very poor condition, all corroded and damaged, almost a wreck."





Displaying his typical patient approach, Arnaud came across a classified ad online, illustrated with hundreds of photos.

"AM I DREAMING, OR DID HE JUST WINK AT ME"? ARNAUD SMILES.

In its light blue hue with a wide white line down the side, the gleaming van seemed to be just waiting for the providential click of an aficionado.

Different from the 'Greenbrier', the civilized version, this is a Corvair95, a tradesman variant for a plumber or deliveryman, for example, entirely covered with sheet metal, except for the front windows, of course, and sometimes the rear ones. (On this model, the side windows were added later, as you will learn).

In the 1960s, the Corvair was produced by Chevrolet in two different versions: the van and the pick-up. The all-sheet-panel 'Corvan' and the 'Greenbrier' in 6 or 8-door glass versions, capable of carrying up to 9 people. There was even a camper van version. From the end of '65, Chevrolet and its European competitor Volkswagen decided to abandon the small rear-engined vans in favor of conventional, water-cooled, front-mounted engines.

Like the VW purchase outlined earlier, a confident Arnaud bought this vehicle based on sighting photographs. The seller was in fact a major garage in The Netherlands, a serious purveyor of classic cars. After a few phone calls and delivery by flatbed truck, the van finally arrived in France. Always meticulous, Arnaud completed a safety check, without finding anything alarming.

It was originally imported from Oregon, in the United States Pacific Northwest where it was restored with great care before leaving to roll under European skies.

The interior layout is entirely period, with furniture that is atypical and charming. In the 1960s in California, small custom companies equipped this type of vehicle so that the lucky owners could go camping and surfing on the coast. A small advertising plaque from the equipment manufacturer at the time remains attached to the inside pillar of the side butterfly doors, which reads: "Compact Camper CAC Enterprises, Southern California".



The wood used to make the furniture appears to be Japanese with the stamps still visible. Whether the furniture was entirely assembled in the Japanese archipelago and then exported as is for installation is a mystery. Unfortunately, knowledge of the subject remains somewhat limited. But in the end, it's just a tiny detail.

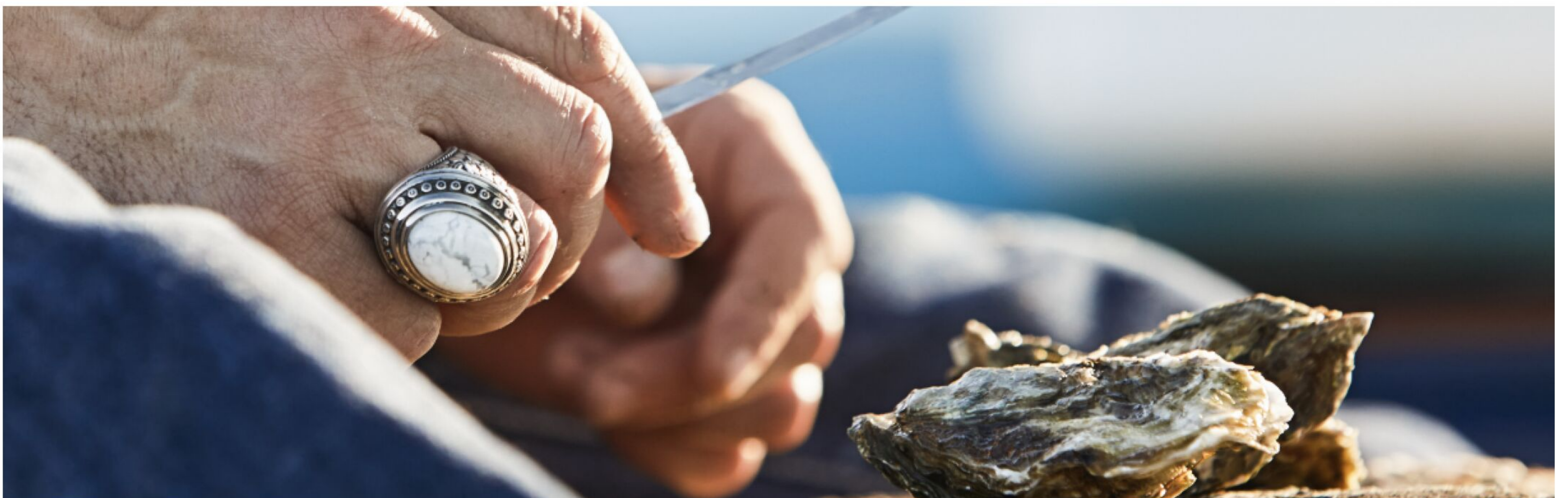
The interior remains a little spartan, even if in very good condition, as can be seen in my photo spread across these pages. The washbasin is fully functional, as is the cool box that is a must for sipping a nice cold beer as you get out of the water, or a platter of chilled oysters, a great specialty of the region.

The newly built gallery has been designed and custom-built to accommodate a roof tent, while respecting the original spirit. Agathe, the little one, sleeps downstairs, while the parents have access to their sleeping quarters via a retractable ladder, also white, located at the rear of the vehicle.

Mechanically, the Corvair95 was extremely sound, but in the spirit of optimisation, Arnaud fitted it with an electronic ignition and an additional oil sump for better cooling. The all-aluminum engine is very reliable and light but tends to heat up in summer. He has changed his tired starter motor and gained seven kilograms in the process. The front and rear drivetrains had to be rebuilt after a few months of use.

In order to obtain a braking system with more bite than the original one, a disc conversion was carried out at the front. The wheels are 15 inch instead of the traditional 14. As for the engine, it was changed at the time for a Corvair car model, this time developing 110 bhp and replacing the original 95, which was a little sluggish.

In a nod to his jewelry making prowess, an elegant personal painting on the sides of the truck, depicting Arnaud going surfing, was done by Regarfix, one of the best calligraphy painters in France.





Arnaud doesn't stop there in his mechanical peregrinations. He has since sold his Chevrolet C10 to buy a magnificent Volvo P1800 ES estate. But that's for another story.

In addition to all his passions and a job in an architecture firm, Arnaud launched the ABMAD adventure in 2012.

And what are the origins of the name ABMAD?

These are his initials, of course, but also those of his wife Alexandra Biancini and their daughter Agathe. And 'Mad' is for the rebellious side that has never left him.

"I couldn't find a ring that really matched me," Arnaud reflects. "I thought I'd design them myself. That's how I started, and now they're on the fingers of a lot of people in Europe and USA, from guys in fancy suits to die-hard bikers.

"I start by drawing, then modelling in 3D, like a sculptor. Then, the file is sent to a foundry who sends me the model out of the mold. Then comes the long process of polishing, cleaning and adjusting the material. Each ring is unique, designed according to the personality and desires of the customer. If it gets lost, it's all over!"

A bit like his Corvair.



LA REGINA: LANCIA'S DELTA INTEGRALE

★ WORDS MALIA MURPHY ★ IMAGES STELLANTIS





P

Passione. Emozione.
Energia. Bellezza.
The machines of the
eighties and nineties
had it all.

While the flashy grandeur of Italy's *le macchine* influenced more than a few enthusiast greenhorns to plaster the likes of the De Tomaso Pantera GT5, Lamborghini Athon, Maserati Kyalami, and Ferrari 512 TR all over their bedroom walls, few examples of Italian engineering captivated the adolescent mind quite like Lancia's rowdy little rally cars.

In the shadow of more ostentatious siblings, Lancia's influence on Italian car culture was not always recognized — abroad, the tiny Turin-based automotive manufacturer relied heavily on its World Rally Championship (WRC) imprint, its cultural impact arguably paling in comparison to more exotic brands that had already set out to define Italy's motoring identity to the world. As the decades rolled on however, Lancia would forge a rich history for itself through technical innovations and motorsport successes. Founded in 1906 by Fiat racing drivers-turned-businessmen Vincenzo Lancia and friend Claudio Fogolin, the Lancia story was off and running.



LANCIA

D M HF 299

TURBO GARRETT

speedline

speedline

GARRETT TURBO

JOLLY CLUB

Fidel Lubrificanti



REPSOL

REPSOL

MICHELIN

MAGNETI MARELLI

WRC ICE RACE
145
REPSOL

REPSOL

SCHMITTEN
Zell am See-Kaprun

WALD

REPSOL

Zell am See-Kaprun

LANCIA
SANTO

Toto
GLSPORT
SCORCO
Speedline
PILSNER

REPSOL



Fascinated by the sciences and even more adept at applying them, the combined efforts of both men and a team of talented engineers would lead them to pioneer certain automotive inventions. In 1913, the Theta became the first full-production vehicle in Europe to be equipped with a full electrical system. The Lambda, which began production in 1922, saw the implementation of an inclusive spring-in-hydraulic damper system as an independent suspension. The late forties saw the Series 3 Ardea enter the market with the first five-speed transmission in a mass-produced car. Intrigued by various engine configurations, the company would also eventually release the world's first V6 engine in the 1950 Aurelia, soon thereafter becoming the first automotive outfit to develop a V4 power plant.

While the public was kept busy admiring such successes, Lancia was struggling. After the death of his father, Vincenzo's son Gianni fell victim to the company's burgeoning accomplishments as the quality and craftsmanship which had initially delivered them such prosperity had begun to consume them. A constant, almost obsessive attention to detail and vicissitude meant that the very

same thing that was allowing for the company to blossom was the same thing that was also delivering it to its certain demise — a mosaic of mechanical innovations, superannuated manufacturing machinery, and little assembly overlap between existing models made it impossible to break even. Without the proper antidote, such a potent dose of stardom would surely turn what had appeared to be a mutualistic relationship between brand success and product quality into a parasitic one — one where Lancia was burning the candle at both ends as a last-ditch effort to retain its newfound fame whilst also turning a profit.

Motivated and courageous behind the wheel just like his father, Gianni's passion for motorsports drove him to hire Vittorio Jano in 1945. Jano was a highly decorated motorsports engineer and automotive visionary who had previously delivered great work to Fiat, Alfa Romeo, and Scuderia Ferrari. Despite some small racing success in 1951 with Umberto Maglioli and Giovanni Bracco and in 1954 with the great Alberto Ascari at the Mille Miglia, the looming overhead expenses of running such an operation were further sealing Lancia's fate.



After eight years under Gianni, Lancia was then handed off to the Pesenti family in 1956 as the company's losses continued to swell into the tens of millions—despite expanding into the production of more specialized vehicles geared towards public transport and the military. Luckily, the late Vincenzo Lancia's prior experience as a chief inspector and test driver for Fiat seemed to be memorable enough for Fiat not to forget their existence. Seemingly keeping Lancia in their good graces, Fiat then sought to buy the company and preserve the heritage it had shaped.

Assimilating to Fiat ownership in 1969, Lancia would hold true to the ideals of its racers-turned-founders, furthering the marque's involvement in motorsports and pushing it to new limits, all the while attempting to preserve the original soul and intention behind its creation. With Lancia's Fulvia acting as a foundation in company values, Fiat continued to maintain brand expectations through the production of purpose-built rally cars like the iconic Stratos and the Rally 037, asserting the brand's rally capabilities once more as they continued to win WRC championships left and right.

Yet there was one specific recipe that they had not yet tried—one that had everyone yelling Ammazza!

The concoction? A spirited little number that puts the "hot" in the hot hatch—the Lancia Delta Integrale. Surely, after back-to-back to back wins Lancia would fall short somewhere, giving their competitors the edge. Surely, the public would tire of seeing the same models dominate the gravel. Not only did this never happen, but it never could also have; Turin brass would simply prove yet again that they could win with any new creation, on any new platform. Lancia had perfected the rally recipe—and choosing its foundational mirepoix for such a motorsports stew was even easier.

The answer had been there all along in the form of the 1980 European Car of the Year, a front-wheel-drive, pleasant-looking compact dubbed the Delta. Capitalizing off the brand's celebrity status and unremitting successes in the volatile Group B rally era, transforming the family favorite into a bonafide race car was not only a financially brilliant play, but a surefire way to prevent the company's rather negative history of near bankruptcy from repeating itself. The investment would prove fruitful in not only increasing sales of the base Delta, but also in conceiving and developing the single most successful rally car of all time: the Lancia Delta Integrale.





Following the tragic loss of Lancia's talented Henri Toivonen in 1986 and the consequent termination of Group B racing, its current racehorse, the Delta S4, was no longer within racing regulations. With a mid-mount 1.8-liter twin-charged inline-four encased within a Kevlar body, the 500-horsepower terrain tackler was essentially a Formula One hatchback with torque for all situations. Equipped with all-wheel-drive and weighing in at just under 2,000 pounds meant that the S4 could easily do zero-to-sixty miles-per-hour in under 2.4 seconds, all while simultaneously alternating between oversteer and understeer when confronted with different traction conditions—performance figures that would push such a vehicle into hypercar territory today. Coupled with a skilled driver, the Delta

S4 was unstoppable, making it a tough act to follow when developing its successor. While the release of GT, High-Fidelity (HF), and HF Turbo variants of the base Delta continued to deliver the perfect amount of pizzazz to most enthusiasts from the sidelines, the already (or rather, unintentionally) homologated Delta HF four-wheel-drive racing in Group A soon found itself at the zenith of a petrol head's wish list. Competent and experienced, it also soon became Lancia's new bid for a replacement. Acting as a successor to the Delta S4, the road-going Delta HF 4WD with its 2.0-liter four-banger would now carry the weight of its predecessor's experience into the WRC's Group A, having already met the 5,000 - model production requirement as a road-going version regulated by the FIA.

The formula worked — the four-wheel-drive, turbocharged hatchback won nine out of thirteen championship races, securing both the 1987 WRC Manufacturers' and Drivers' titles on a platform that had less than two hundred horsepower. Besides being wickedly capable, the Delta HF 4WD was simply an apex predator by nature as it had no direct competition—other rally-adept brands like Audi simply did not have the level of preparedness, or luck rather, that Lancia had benefited from come the end of Group B with their rally-ready family car.

Finally, in 1988, Lancia would further refine the Delta HF 4WD, fully converting it from a gifted family car to legitimate rally monster and entrusting it with its new title: the Delta HF Integrale 8V. While similar in layout to its siblings, the HF Integrale 8V would see an increase in power from 165 horsepower to 185 horsepower thanks to a larger Garrett turbocharger, an improved cooling setup, a refined suspension, amplified braking power, bigger wheels and tires, and beefier wheel arches to match. A 1989 improvement to the model's lifecycle saw the introduction of the Delta HF Integrale 16V, complete with a more responsive turbocharger good for a healthy 200 horsepower, an even more efficient intercooler setup, a bulged hood, and revised badging.

For countries like Germany and Switzerland, which enacted certain environmental regulations, Lancia complied with mandatory emissions equipment, resulting in a measurable horsepower loss for both models.

But, of course, they didn't stop there—harkening back to their meticulous roots, Lancia began nit-picking the already-perfect setup, slaving away once again behind blueprints to create the Delta HF Integrale “Evoluzione” in 1991. They had masterfully done it, again.

The “Evo” was a hit, but enthusiasts everywhere didn't need to be told that. Based on the Integrale 16V, the Evo's boxy, wide, and aggressive styling married perfectly to its mechanical improvements: a ten-horsepower bump from the 16-valve, longer suspension travel, four-pot calipers, a widened track width, multiple air intakes, and a new and reinforced five-spoke wheel design, among other things. It was so popular amongst Italians that it earned the name “Deltona”, or “Big Delta” as a compliment to its design. Despite Lancia's exit from manufacturer-funded rallying in 1991 after great success with the Delta Integrale 16V, the Delta Integrale Evoluzione would then go on to find a very happy home with privateer racing team, Jolly Club.



FIRE
EXIT

J

VERDE



Funded by Martini Racing, the privateer teams would take the Evo to the dirt in the 1992 season, ultimately allowing Lancia to clinch its sixth and final consecutive World Rally Constructors' Championship and end its homologation of the Delta Integrale—very “Jolly” indeed.

Still on a winner's high, Lancia decided to deliver the world one last Delta Integrale in 1993 as a parting gift and a thank you—the Evoluzione II. Free from the regulatory vices of Group A, Lancia worked on turning the Evo 2 into a more sophisticated, civilized hatchback. It had 215 horsepower, thanks to new electronically governed computer wizardry for the engine, and provided a tamer, albeit more comfortable, experience for its driver. The Integrale legacy would then stop there; in 1994, the Maggiore factory pulled the curtains closed on one of the greatest hot hatches ever made.

If you were unfamiliar with Lancia to begin with, it would be hard to believe that an automaker that now only sells one model in one country could have ever influenced the world of rally. That one brand could have had such a cultural impact on not only one singular nation, but the entire world. And that out of such a star-studded cast of characters, each with their own motorsport successes, one machine became the most successful rally car of all time under the most successful manufacturer in rally of all time.

With the rather mundane Ypsilon remaining as Lancia's only surviving model today, enthusiasts beg to return us to the days when Lancia named its cars after Roman roads, or Greek letters—but give them the power of the Greek gods to match!

Bring back the essence of the Delta Integrale, for she remains “La Regina” of Lancia.

LAMBORGHINI LM002

★ WORDS DAMION SMY ★ IMAGES LAMBORGINI









H

OUSEWIVES OR
HOWITZERS?

There are two Lamborghini SUVs in existence: *which one are you?*

The latest is named after an extinct breed of domestic cattle, that also sounds like an innocuous body part, or perhaps not so far from urine: the Urus. Or Urethra. Then, is it ‘your-russ’, ‘ooooo-riss’? Add a few letters, and you’ll get Uranus. Replace only one ... and we’ve hit rock bottom. It’s fitting that it means fat cow, too – as the Urus uses the underpinnings of the Volkswagen Touareg and multiple VW Group SUV siblings, too.







IRONICALLY, IT'S LAMBORGHINI'S VERY OWN KING OF SUVs WHICH HAS A TEUTONIC NAME: THE LM002, THE ULTIMATE RAGING BULL.

Despite the clinical name, the 'Rambo Lambo', as it was dubbed after Sylvester Stallone bought one, appeared at the Geneva Motor Show, in 1982; and it is such a curveball, a left-field whacko crazy idea which crushes the superficial Urus into social obsolescence. And dare I say it, unlike the Urus, the LM002 is a true Lamborghini.

A literal weapon, the three-tonne LM002 was built to win a US military contract – beaten to it by AMG's Hummer – and was never intended for public consumption. Making a Lamborghini off-roader in the early '80s was like McDonalds introducing a vegan burger at the time; or even a salad: it was so off script it seemed insane. To decide to sell it to the public was confirmation that someone at Sant'Agata was truly nuts.

The LM002, then, is Lamborghini's warped sense of civility '80s style. It took a spaceframe chassis festooned with sharp, angular aluminium, and fiberglass panels – as if the design office only had set squares and a ruler. It's a literal war truck, powered by the Countach's V12, and loaded with leather and excess to tackle the desert. It's Eddie Murphy in 'Delirious': rebellious, young, arrogant, authentic, and out to fuck everything.

When the LM002 was launched in 1986 – Lamborghini's 'Fuck years' – the Italian car maker was run by 29-year-old Patrick Mimran, who'd taken over in 1981 (yes, at only 24!). With his brother Jean-Claude, both sugar-cane magnates, Lamborghini went from bankrupt, state-seized basket case to bold, bullish and '80s brilliant.



Car companies' products reflect the persona of them. An artist and poet, Patrick Miram was a crazy, constantly scarf-wearing, French-Swiss lunatic – in the best possible way. He looks like he's about to light a cigarette, draw in and exhale in your face, as he slowly says, 'Fuck ... you'. He's a stark contrast to the narcissistic, corporate psychopaths, who often chase CEO roles today.

That could be partly why the LM002's brutal design looks straight out of an '80s video game: perfect for a 'Toy Story' cameo, in 1992. The Urus, instead, is more likely seen riding on 23-inch wheels on 'The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills'.

With styling which mimics the Aventador (not named after a cow breed), it's made to stand out in West Hollywood – not conquer small nations. While the Urus does one of these things, the LM002 will effortlessly do both.

With the military deal up in smoke, the decision to build a "civil" version of the roughhouse LM002 probably went along the lines of, "Fuck it, let's sell it!". The gas-addicted LM002 would be perfect for oil-barrens of the Middle East, who cared as much about the LM002's gluttonous thirst as they did its \$120K list price (\$290K in 2021 dollars). And if the V12's 455hp wasn't enough, you could tick the L804 option for a 720hp version designed for powerboats ...



With 641hp and 190mph top speed, the \$222,004 Urus is hardly dull to look at, or drive; but it follows the completely rational “me too” need for an SUV, and underneath that rakey exterior – ‘inspired’ by the Aventador (re: mimicry) – is effectively a parts-bin SUV. Urus’s claim to fame as the world’s fastest SUV is hollow, too: that’s like boasting about being the world’s lightest obese person, or the most honest liar. Even this boast is shared, its 190mph, matched by the Bentley Bentayga Speed ... that shares its platform and engine. Gulp. Oh, and the Audi RSQ8 ... that shares its platform and engine. At 183mph, slightly slower is the Porsche Cayenne... that shares its platform and engine. A true Lamborghini?

You might wonder how, after the beautiful Miura and edgy Countach, the LM002 could be considered a true Lamborghini. Yet, think of the genius of the Miura from what was ... a tractor company. The well-worn story of its genesis from Ferruccio Lamborghini’s poor experience as a Ferrari customer is one of the greatest “Fuck youse” in automotive legend. The sharp-edged triangulated Countach, too, was shown in 1970, only four years after the curvaceous Miura.

Ferruccio Lamborghini had vision – and huge balls. Lamborghini did what it wanted and answered to no-one. It also haemorrhaged cash like many of its drug-addicted celebrity customers.

Yet, it was this single-minded anti-establishment spirit that saw 328 road-going LM002s produced between 1986 and 1993. At the 2018 Urus launch, sales targets of 3500 annually were announced. Exclusivity: LM002, thanks. It’s also more expensive than a Urus, too – and significantly costlier to run, too, thanks to unmentionable gas mileage, and extremely hard-to-find parts – including those unique Kevlar-reinforced Pirelli Scorpion tires especially developed for it.

The Urus comes up against ever-tightening emissions, more stringent safety requirements, and pressure to produce more and more profit, as line-ups become homogenised. It’s a success, sure – with record sales and profits for Lamborghini in 2020, Urus its best seller – but a measured contrived low-risk corporate decision. There were no red flags to a bull, or the Accounts Department.

Surely, the LM002 was a massive failure, then? The concepts that led to the LM002 may have sent the brand to bankruptcy; but enter the Minrans, and Lamborghini, once again, had the balls of Ferruccio's era, and – hear this Elon Musk – also turned a profit. That success caught the eye of the legendary Lee Iacocca, who had taken over a struggling Chrysler, brilliantly repaying its seemingly insurmountable US government loan in a return to solvency. The Mirmans, who'd purchased Lamborghini for \$3 million, in 1984, sold it to Chrysler, in April 1987, for \$25.2 million. Let's not talk about how Chrysler went from there ...

Mimran, though, went on to more art and visual poetry – see billboards in US, one of which reads “Art is where you least expect to find it”; that may be your thought when you stumble upon his “world's tallest giraffe” sculpture, or an LM002. Crazy, brilliant, nonchalant. Lamborghini was simply one of his art projects.

AN LM002.
CRAZY, BRILLIANT,
NONCHALANT.







That's the LM002 in a nutshell. It genuinely ignores form for function, without a care, as a product of that glorious era of Lamborghini – Mimran's Lamborghini. Its energetic brilliance is truly unique – like Mimran. Literally a weapon, its parts did not come from other brands. The only cow reference is the leather seating. It has a persona, a swagger, and a history which can't be replicated.

There is little doubt that the Urus is what Lamborghini needs to survive today; but, if the Urus is the successor to the LM002, then Arnie and Danny DeVito really are twins. That '70s and '80s rebelliousness no longer exists in Sant' Agata. Like the urus cattle breed – it's extinct. Yet, an SUV for the brand, these days, is like a Russian election: a forgone conclusion, but a hollow victory – and at what cost? What does the badge mean in 2021, when styling is the only defining difference between Urus and its stablemates? It is not ballsy – it is common sense. It is not trend setting – it is following the crowd. Ferruccio Lamborghini and Mimran's Lamborghini were never followers.

THE BLUE WONDER

★ WORDS/IMAGES CHRIS ECKERMANN/MERCEDES-BENZ









T

he Mercedes-Benz pick-up truck that is nicknamed “Blue Wonder” may be one of the most spectacular transporters of all.

For sure, it had the distinction of being the fastest truck in the world for a long stretch of time. The Mercedes-Benz Renntransporter was specially built in 1954 for the transport of racing cars. Painted in its striking blue livery, it leaves a lasting impression. The build of the blue transporter was initiated by the legendary Alfred Neubauer, racing manager of the Mercedes-Benz Grand Prix team from 1926 to 1955 (except for WWII) - from the beginning to the end.

Initially, Neubauer had worked as a chief car tester for Austro-Daimler, under Ferdinand Porsche. Porsche changed over to Daimler in Stuttgart in 1922, taking Neubauer with him. After the merger of Daimler and Benz in 1926, the Grand Prix team of Daimler-Benz was managed by Neubauer. The work was quite successful, with the Porsche-designed Mercedes-Benz SS/SSK/SSKL winning repeatedly. Even before the merger, both Benz and Daimler racing cars competed successfully in international races.



What followed was the era of the so-called “Silver Arrows” during the 1930s. The Mercedes-Benz racers clad in shining aluminum were very successful in several racing series. And good success in races meant good sales or at least good image-building for a company. For the transport of the racing cars, equipment and spare parts a small fleet of blue-colored Mercedes-Benz Lo 2750 trucks drove across Europe. This lasted until 1939, when the outbreak of WW2 saw the sporting rivalry on the tracks switch to a deadly rivalry on the battlefields.

It wasn't until February 1951 that Mercedes-Benz factory racing cars returned to the tracks. Three pre-war W154 machines raced successfully at two Argentinian races. It was again Neubauer who led the racing activities. Yet, new race cars were needed but time and money for their development were short.

The founding stone of the further race activities was the new representative saloon of Daimler-Benz. In April 1951, the new Mercedes-Benz 300 (W186) was presented as the top model of the Mercedes-Benz passenger car range. Based upon this model, three variants of a sportier two-door version Mercedes-Benz 300 S were presented in October 1951.

In March 1952 the next car of this family, the Mercedes-Benz 300 SL racing sports car (W194) arrived. It borrowed components like axles, transmission and the basic engine from the Mercedes-Benz 300 (W186), while using a lightweight space frame. The gullwing-doored Coupe is powered by the M194 engine with a displacement of 2,996 cc and an output of 170 hp. It was highly successful in 1952, being on the podium at Italy's revered Mille Miglia, the Le Mans 24-hours race, the Nürburgring Anniversary Grand Prix for Sports Cars and the Carrera Panamericana. The string of victories of the new car would be the catalyst to thrust the brand in grand prix racing. The board of directors at Daimler-Benz decided on entering Formula 1 in 1954. The pressure on the racing team was enormous. Everything is on the move between several races and countries and time is critical.

This prompted Alfred Neubauer to work on a solution of transporting racing cars quickly between several countries, or indeed back to the racing department in Stuttgart for repair or replacement during the training and races. That was essentially the catalyst to set up a transporter that could cut travel time - and what could be faster than a racing car when it comes to transport race cars.



And so, a new racing transporter was built by the Mercedes-Benz test department in 1954. But time and money were cramped for the construction of new components. So, parts were taken off the shelf from the Mercedes-Benz 180 "Ponton", Mercedes-Benz 300 S and Mercedes-Benz 300 SL. As base of the design, a cruciform oval-tube frame from the Mercedes-Benz 300 S was taken and extended in length. A manual 4-speed transmission, a dry-sump lubrication system and hydraulic duplex drum brakes with air-cooled light-alloy drums were further technical details. For a low stance, the cabin was mounted in front of the engine and in front of the wheels - an extreme form of cabover design / forward control design. A pair of aluminum rails and ramps were mounted at the rear to host race cars like the gorgeous W196 R grand prix machine and 300 SLR (W196 S).

In the middle of the transporter, a pair of spare wheels and the struts for the ramps found their place. Inside the cabin, the sports seats are covered with the checkered design that can be found in the MB 300 SL as well. The wheelbase measures 2900 mm while the length stretches to 6750mm. The total weight is quite low, topping 2100kg without the race car on the back. The heart of the transporter, the M 198 engine (taken from the Mercedes-Benz 300 SL (W198) with its total displacement of 2996 cc had an output of 192 hp.

This was enough to carry a car and go swiftly.

While the 300 SL achieved a top speed of 260km/h, the transporter had a top speed of 165 km/h - with a car on its back. For context at that time, a VW beetle had a maximum speed of 115 km/h, a Mercedes-Benz 180 reached 126 km/h maximum speed and even the fastest Porsche 1500 S had a maximum speed of 170 km/h. The fuel tank had a capacity of 150 liters, allowing the transporter a decent range without stopping. While the factory just named it the high-speed racing car transporter, it was nicknamed "Blue Wonder" by the public. The frightfully fast (for that time) transporter allows the transport of spares or the repair in Stuttgart overnight. The blue-skinned beast became a perfect advertisement for Daimler-Benz. The one-off unit was finished in 1954 and can be seen at the races during that season. The truck draws as much attention as the racing cars and their drivers.

The unique transporter was used from mid 1954 until the autumn of 1955, when Daimler-Benz stopped its racing activities after the calamity at Le Mans. It was displayed for a while, then used within the Stuttgart-factory and finally scrapped in 1967 at the request of the great engineer Rudolf Uhlenhaut but the reasons were never publicly disclosed.







A first (not exact) replica was home-built in Sweden at the beginning of the 1990s and today sits in Jay Leno's Garage.

In 1993, Stuttgart gave the order to the restoration company MIKA GmbH in the North of Germany, to build a replica from scratch based on pictures as technical drawings did not exist. It took seven years and 6000 hours of work.

The truck can be seen in all its complexity in the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart today.

Another good-looking but rather obscure replica exists. However, the owner wants to remain anonymous so that Renntransporter sadly won't feature in the pages of cool magazines like Retromotive.



NEW LEGEND, GREG WEEDER

★ WORDS/IMAGES SHAUN MALUGA









W

hen a family heirloom is passed down it can be a difficult decision on how best to honour and preserve that memory.

For Greg Weeder, that heirloom came in the form of his grandfather's 1975 International Harvester Scout II.

The International Harvester Scout was the precursor to the modern SUV, taking inspiration from the rugged and minimalist Willys Jeeps, which were created for use in World War II, and adding a few more features and comforts for daily use. The early Scout 80 and 800 models were still fairly spartan machines by today's standards. By the 3rd generation, the Scout II had implemented a level of refinement and modern technology into their new chassis. The result was a relatively comfortable and, more importantly, capable vehicle.



Greg's grandfather, Grandpa Doc, used his Scout exactly as the designers envisioned. During the week he would drive it for a short half a mile commute to and from work. Come the weekend it doubled as a hunting vehicle and Grandpa Doc had no qualms about throwing a deer over the roof before hosing the Scout off and driving it to work the next week.

This wasn't Doc's first Scout. When his previous Scout II ran into some mechanical issues on the highway he decided to make the most of a trade-in deal at the time rather than spend the time to address the issues. This new Scout was a bit of a "dress up" vehicle with some fancier options (for a Scout) such as large faux wood panelling down the side, chrome roof rack, automatic transmission, and pastel like IH Glacier Blue paint.

As a child, Greg remembers travelling in the Scout with his siblings and fighting over who got to light their grandad's cigarette using the old push button lighter that came standard in every car in the 70's. At 10 years old Greg remembers joining his grandad on deer hunts, sitting on the tailgate and taking a little nip of peppermint schnapps to celebrate if somebody shot a deer. "At 10 years old that's a pretty special memory." Those memories have stayed with Greg his entire life.

When Grandpa Doc passed in 2002, Greg took ownership of his Scout to preserve and honour all of those fond childhood memories. Initially Greg drove the Scout II in a very similar manner to his grandfather; a half hour commute to work and the odd trip out to the country with his family on the weekends. The only real modification he made was replacing the original 2-barrel carburettor with a 4-barrel from a 392 engine. In hindsight, Greg wishes he had just overhauled and tuned the original carburettor correctly. "You really had to pump it to get it to start."

When Greg and his family moved to Omaha, Nebraska, the Scout went to a friend's yard where it sat out in the weather and deteriorated quickly. International Harvester had a reputation for not using the best steel in their vehicles and many people claimed their Scouts were already rusting when they came out of the factory. The rumour was that IH bought the steel kept at the edges of the storage facility as it was more exposed to the elements and therefore cheaper.

By the time Greg got to Omaha, the fuel tank was also full of rust and the filters needed to be replaced regularly to prevent fuel starvation.





As tough as the old IH motors were, when you have a 40+ year old vehicle, it's not uncommon for parts start to fail on what feels like a regular basis. Mechanics that are willing and able to work on and maintain this old technology also become harder to find. Each trip for Greg started to come with the extra element of wondering if he was going to make it home and, although all part of the adventure, it became a bit of a liability for a hard-working young family with limited free time.

With all these little quirks adding up the Scout sat for years barely being used and gradually deteriorating. A friend of Greg's happened upon a Scout focused shop in Ames, Iowa called Anything Scout.

Anything Scout started as a Scout parts shop in California when Sean Barber and his wife, Heather, purchased the business in 2003. They started out selling parts as a certified Scout/Light Line Distributor and soon moved the business to Ames, Iowa as they felt it was more in line with the Scout's Middle American origins. With America's appetite for dropping an LS into anything with four wheels, Anything Scout began to make a name for themselves engineering Scout LS conversion parts that they sold through their website.

The Scout meant too much to Greg to let it rot away, the old memories with his grandfather, the new memories road tripping with his family.





He went to see what the guys at Anything Scout could do about refreshing his Scout. When he arrived, he was introduced to one of their recently finished Scout II builds from their premium, sister company, New Legend.

The philosophy of New Legend is to retain the soul of a 50-year-old truck, but with the comfort, safety, performance & reliability of a new vehicle, all while paying attention to the fit and finish of every detail. It's a delicate balance, one that may lean too far one way or the other for some people, but there is no doubt the vehicles they are creating are nothing short of spectacular.

New Legend took the groundwork LS swapping engines from Anything Scout and elevated the build quality to another level. The phrase "*the Singer of <insert car model here>*" gets bandied about, but if it exemplifies a company at the peak of their game resto-modding a particular vehicle, New Legend could certainly be considered the Singer of the Scout community.

The New Legend build that Greg first saw was a flawless Scout II, powered by a modern,

6.2 litre LSA engine from a Cadillac CTS-V pushing 600hp. The interior was plush, adorned in rich, durable saddle leather that seemed right at home in the Scout cabin. The exterior was painted a sophisticated Metallic Gray, with black stripe decals down the shoulder line. A beautiful balance of the modern and retro, toughness and refinement.

Upon witnessing a Scout in this condition, it's probably hard to imagine your own as anything less. Still, Greg didn't set out for one of their full New Legend builds. He was leaning more toward more of a restoration, fixing the rust and paint and maybe an engine swap for improved reliability. At some point in the process though the decision was made to go for the full New Legend package which included a full frame swap to a modern, modified Jeep JK chassis to improve ride quality and handling.

The heart of a New Legend series Scout is the LS conversion, in Greg's case, a Chevrolet L96 6.0L engine making 360 hp. The engine is expertly integrated into the engine bay, how you would expect it to look if IH was installing LS engines in some alternate universe.





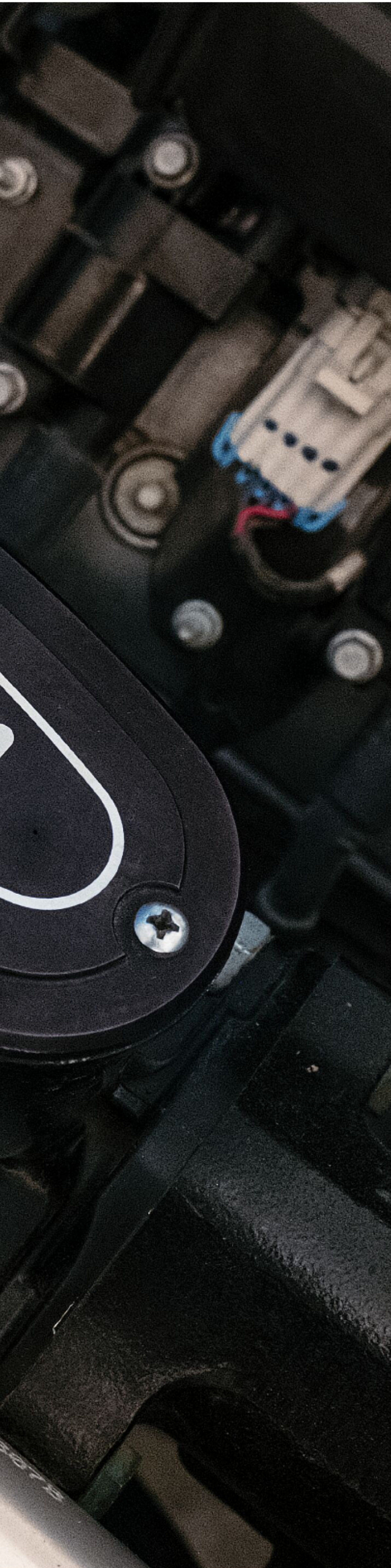
For New Legend there is a constant battle between improving functionality but retaining the spirit of the original Scout. In that regard, a lot of the original touch points are preserved to invoke a sense of the past. The original steering wheel, shifter and knobs and controls from the dash are retained, a direct and tactile connection to the past. Power windows and power locks are never considered, but you will find a modern, retro styled radio, 3-point retractable seatbelts and other imperceptible modernisations such as the extensive heat and sound insulation. Gauges retain their original look but are modified to work with the new drivetrain components.

The aesthetic decisions were a collaborative process, ultimately chosen by Greg but guided by Sean in a direction that he felt would stay true to the essence of the Scout. Funnily enough, when presented with three shades of blue for the paint, unbeknownst to him, Greg chose Ford's own Glacier Blue. It's a different shade of blue to the original IH Glacier Blue, but another charming connection to its past.

Another tasteful modernisation was the reintroduction of the faux wood vinyl decal. Rather than filling the entire side panels akin to the original, the vinyl decal was reduced to five inches and is an elegant touch that both modernises the look, while invoking the charm of the 70s. The interior got a full makeover with custom tan leather wrapped Corbeau seats, cloth inserts and matching door panels. A 6-point roll cage that facilitates the 3-point seat belt harnesses front and back and an integrated interior light remains affixed to the cage if the roof is ever removed.

At the end of the day, the result is a vehicle that looks timeless. It looks simultaneously vintage and modern but with performance that is most definitely rooted in the 21st century. You're essentially riding on new technology, connected to a cab, style and aesthetic from the 70's. Even today, with the transformation the Scout has gone through, some of the smells inside the cabin still remind Greg of riding along with his grandad all those years ago.









Buicks of this level are often labelled garage or trailer queens, but that was never the intent of New Legend, or of Greg, when they set out on this restoration. New Legend regularly host overlanding trips all over the US to encourage their customers to use their vehicles, have adventures and build new memories for their owners.

Over the past few years, Greg has packed up the Scout along with wife Danelle, daughters Olivia and Lauryn and their large dog Murphy for trips to Wyoming, Wisconsin and Tennessee. Others were surprised to see Greg driving the immaculately restored Scout through streams in the trails around the Tennessee Dirt Devil, but Greg wanted to use it like Grandpa Doc used it.

Every trip has its wear and tear, but it was never meant to be a museum piece, regardless of the amount of work put into it.

Greg is not sure what his grandad would make of the Scout today. He believes Grandpa Doc was a bit of a purist at heart. While it may not be a faithful restoration, it is a stunning reimagination, sympathetic to the spirit of the original Scout. If the goal was a vehicle capable of creating new experiences, stories and memories for his family, he would surely have to be happy with that. The Scout is still making memories for Greg's family and will all of its improvements, will continue to do so for hopefully another 50 years.

VOLVO 850 R

★ WORDS MALIA MURPHY ★ IMAGES VOLVO CARS









G

ROCERY-GETTER,
PAVEMENT-HITTER
- THE ULTIMATE
SLEEPER

The Swedes have a history of building rather indestructible machinery, most of which isn't what you would consider snabb—though it is affectionately delivered, enthusiasts do call them bricks for a reason. While their sizable production of trucks, buses, and construction equipment doesn't exactly warrant a double-take, their end-all, be-all solution to nine-to-five boredom certainly will.

There seems to be a stigma surrounding a car enthusiast family — welcoming children into the world doesn't necessarily mean your meaningful machinery has to say goodbye. While preferences vary, there's something to be said for family-friendly functionality imbued with on-the-go fun. Volvo says you don't have to suppress that kid at heart—in fact, why not get the whole family involved.



Wagon, Avant, Touring, or Estate. Whichever word you prefer, our lovable long roofs have been impacting car culture since the early 20th century. In the United States, the infatuation began when the prospect of modifying Ford's Model T caught the eye of various manufacturers looking to make a more versatile commercial vehicle. Dominating decades of consumer trends stateside, it would take Americans until the turn of the century to even consider imported variants. Though these European examples would not be met with the same enthusiasm as they did overseas, often seeing themselves removed from the market entirely, modern American car culture seems to disagree with past opinions, especially when it concerns the Volvo 850 R.

The 850's humble beginnings, however, would start thirteen years before its June 1991 launch date. In 1978, the Swedish marque was concerned with developing the then-new 700 Series, and with little regard to dwindling finances, a new successor to the 300 Series. Deemed "Project Galaxy", the enterprise would be

divided into the creation of two separate vehicles of opposing sizes, the G1 and G2. Consequently, the project would require a new generation of engines to boot. Like a Matryoshka doll, it appeared that Volvo's endgame was becoming harder and harder to achieve, as each step divided and compartmentalized itself into smaller, more intricate tasks.

Nevertheless, Project X-100 was born, marrying the idea of a four-cylinder engine with the engineering versatility of easy evolution into a five or six-cylinder variant. Development of a compact five-speed manual transmission would follow suit, allowing for the transversely-mounted engine to mate comfortably with the gearbox in limited space.

Unfortunately, engineering isn't always a linear process, and the project was quickly turning into a tortuous trip to Wonderland. Volvo had effectively found itself thrown down the rabbit hole and faced with a dizzying amount of prerequisites that only the Cheshire Cat himself could dream of scheming up.

Despite being confronted with a sinuous path to project success, Volvo would take the challenges in stride, confidently introducing the G4 in 1980 as the experimental precursor to both the G1 and G2. A rather prosperous debut of the 760 in 1982 would then boost the Swedish automaker's finances significantly, allowing for the iterative process of Project Galaxy to proceed. Upgrading the X-100 four-banger from four cylinders to five and later six (with the help of Porsche), the entire power plant was then placed into a Chevrolet Citation, which would act as a functional test bench for the revised pairing. Though sporting a rather odd name, the Citation's proportions, layout, and likeness to Volvo's visualized concept meant that it was effective in measuring the company's

reliability claim of over 100,000 miles sans the expensive maintenance and two decades of predictable performance.

Piggybacking off the public's reception of previous Volvo vehicles and the automaker's reputation for safety, Nils Bohlin would introduce the Side Impact Protection System (SIPS) to the Project Galaxy, along with a split rear axle to improve handling. In 1984, Volvo unveiled a fully functional P3 prototype, an admixture of its two competing prototypes, the P1 and the P2. Still rather unhappy with its driveability and rather uncomely looks, lead designer Jan Wilsgaard turned the P3 into the B3, a prototype far more attractive and representative of the project than the original two vehicles.







In 1985 Volvo began to suffer from their vacillating ideas. Seven years had lapsed, and the project's progress was becoming rather oscillatory, if not stagnant altogether. Volvo was spinning its gears but failing to get traction. While technical revisions continued to be made, Volvo turned their focus to the driveability of their new car, which was appropriately assigned to a newly formed "Driving Pleasure Group" within the company. In order to ensure that the vehicle was appealing to both sexes, the specialized team was composed of both men and women who consulted equally on the styling of the car, an inclusive and progressive take that Volvo anticipated would shine through to consumers.

Clear to press on, the program began manufacturing in Belgium, while management continued to approve the addition of creature comforts like airconditioning. Despite quarrels with curious paparazzi, leaked spy photos, and a seemingly infinite number of hoops to jump through, the Volvo 850 enjoyed its long overdue release. Volvo claimed that their "dynamic car with four world-beating breakthroughs" had "aimed for the stars", and with the constellation-level complexity surrounding its conception, it's hard to argue otherwise.

The 850 Series bestowed upon Volvo many firsts — "a transverse 5-cylinder engine driving the front wheels, a Delta-link rear axle which combined the dynamics and ride comfort of independent suspension with the security of a live rear axle, the SIPS integrated side-impact protection system, and the self-adjusting front seat belt mechanism, the ARH reel." As a 1993 model stateside, the 850 became Volvo's first front-wheel-drive car ever. Shortly after, in 1996, the turbocharged estate variant then became the company's first full-production vehicle equipped with all-wheel-drive. Judging by the warm welcome at its unveiling, the 850 was set to be as influential as the brand's already-legendary 240 Series. Such a triumph was as rewarding as it was necessary—the project, unsurprisingly, was the Swedish automaker's most expensive ever, and the country's most expensive industrial undertaking at the time.

In 1994, the 850 dipped its toes into motorsport in the form of the Volvo-backed Tom Walkinshaw Racing (TWR) 850 Estate Super Touring Car, which successfully competed in the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) and secured a best finish of fifth place.






Small victories continued to occur, leading Volvo to place third in the Manufacturer's Championship twice, once in 1995 and another time in 1996. Entrances into the Super Touring category and Volvo Dealer Racing in Europe and Australia continued to increase the 850's fame throughout the racing and consumer worlds. Any publicity made for good marketing, and Volvo had no shortage there. Even prior to 1995, the 850 offered plenty to everyday consumers — traction control, a glass sunroof option, remote keyless entry, and an automatic transmission option, to name a few. But what about enthusiasts that were looking for their next family car turned weekend track toy? Volvo didn't forget about them either.

Enter the limited-edition 850 T-5R — a boxy, rather tame-looking wagon that was anything but. Stealing the 2.3-liter, straight-five from 850 Turbo, the wagon was good for 243 horsepower and 250 foot-pounds of torque. Though the North American market would have to make do with the four-speed automatic instead of the five-speed, acceleration figures put the T-5R neck-to-neck with the V8-powered BMW 5 Series of the time, which ironically had less power. Capable of pulling a 0.29 drag coefficient, equipped with Pirelli tires, and dressed in a tasteful body kit, this “Flying Yellow Brick” was sounding less like your run-of-the-mill grocery-getter and more like a solution to family-friendly track days. Volvo, it seemed, had created the ultimate sleeper — in 1995, no less.





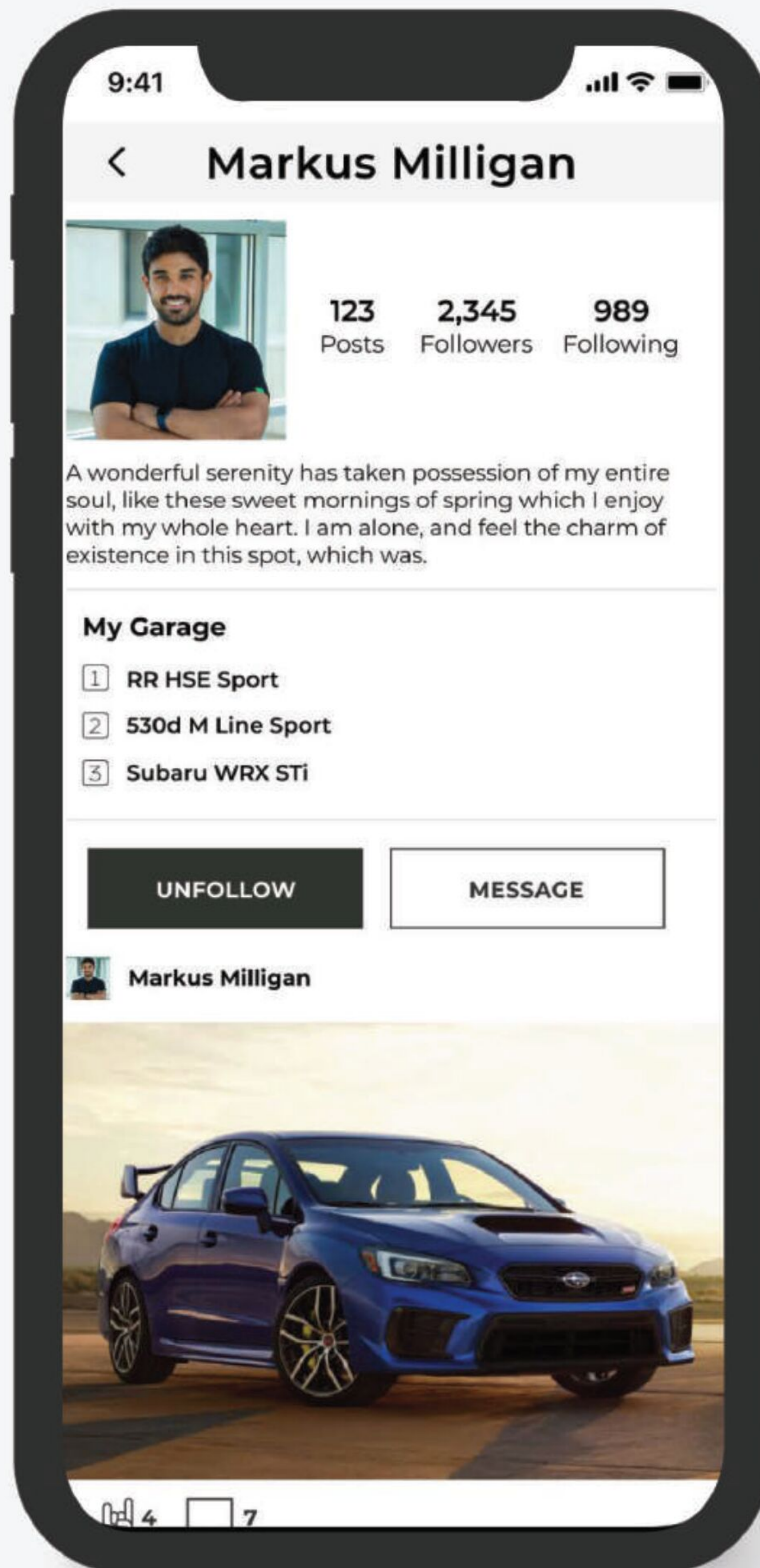
High praise of the T-5R continued to linger even after a second run in 1996, and while the turbocharged wagon was immensely popular, Volvo knew that their limited-edition sport wagon had to stay true to its limited status. Hesitant to ignore the popularity of their beloved new automotive recipe, Volvo brass allowed for the creation of a new high-performance model, meant to embody the limited-edition variant, but not succeed it — introducing the 850 R.

Enamored, enchanted. Gearheads were undoubtedly thrilled, and those with families could share the sentiment. With an upgraded turbo manifold, intercooler, electronic control unit, heavier clutch (for non-U.S. models), and small bump in horsepower, your kids were likely to become enthusiasts too. At that rate, Volvo should have put a clause into their legal statement that said they weren't responsible if your teenagers took your keys. Or your spouse. Or your grandma.

No matter who was driving, the 850 R delivered the utmost when it came to driving experience. With a plethora of driving aids at your disposal, a 33.6 foot turning radius, and 142 foot stopping distance from 60 miles-per-hour, you were looking at a car that was as utilitarian as it was a hoot to drive. Though you might have to worry about grandma's lead foot even with the electronic limiter — the speedo will still hit 155.

Today, the 850 R has arguably aged like a fine wine. With such forward-thinking gadgets and timeless performance, it's easy to see (and sometimes hard to accept) why these Scandinavian sport wagons go for so much in the classifieds. You're paying for three cars in reality: a dependable daily driver, a grocery-gettin' family car, and something still fast enough to get you into a lot of trouble.

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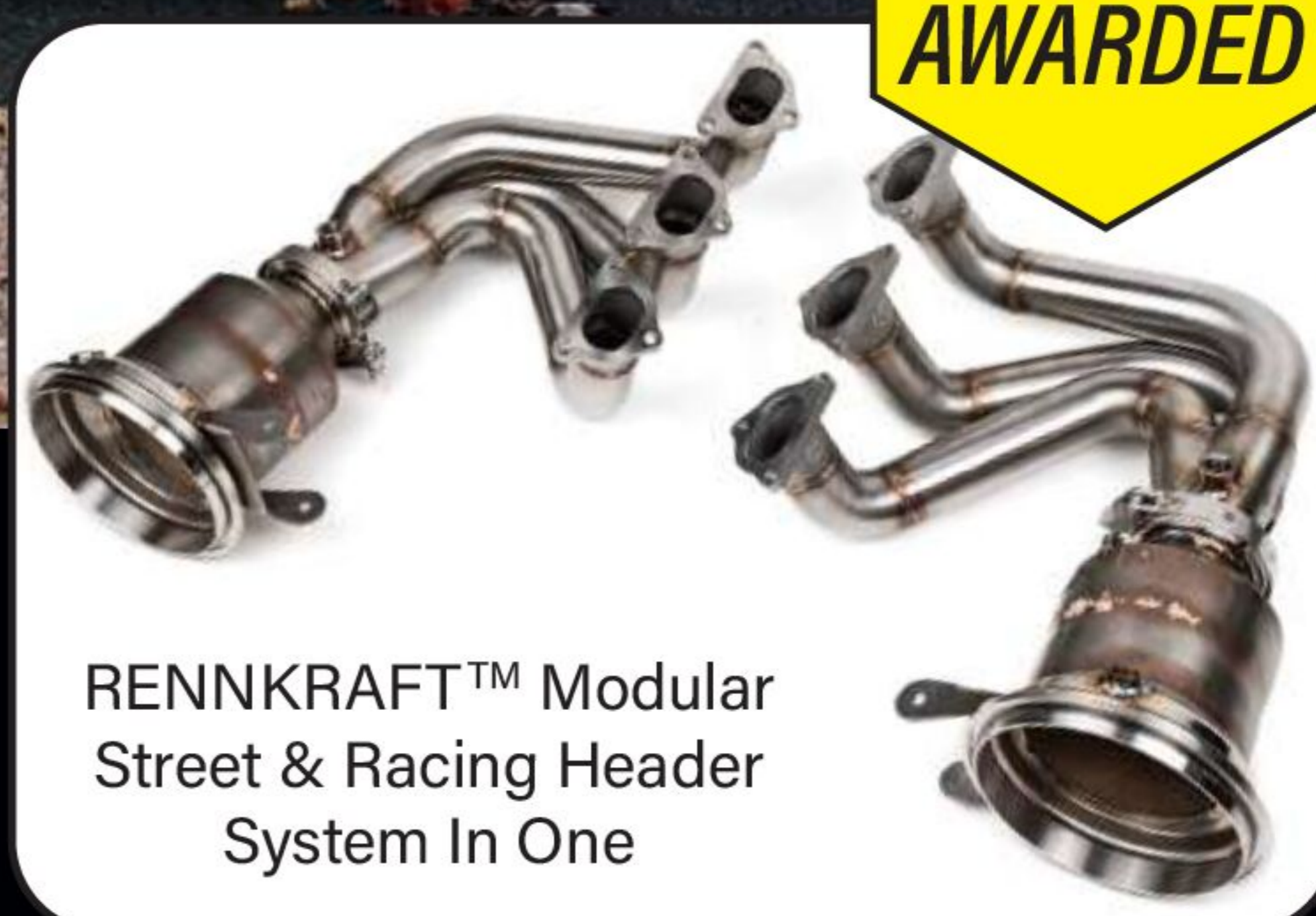
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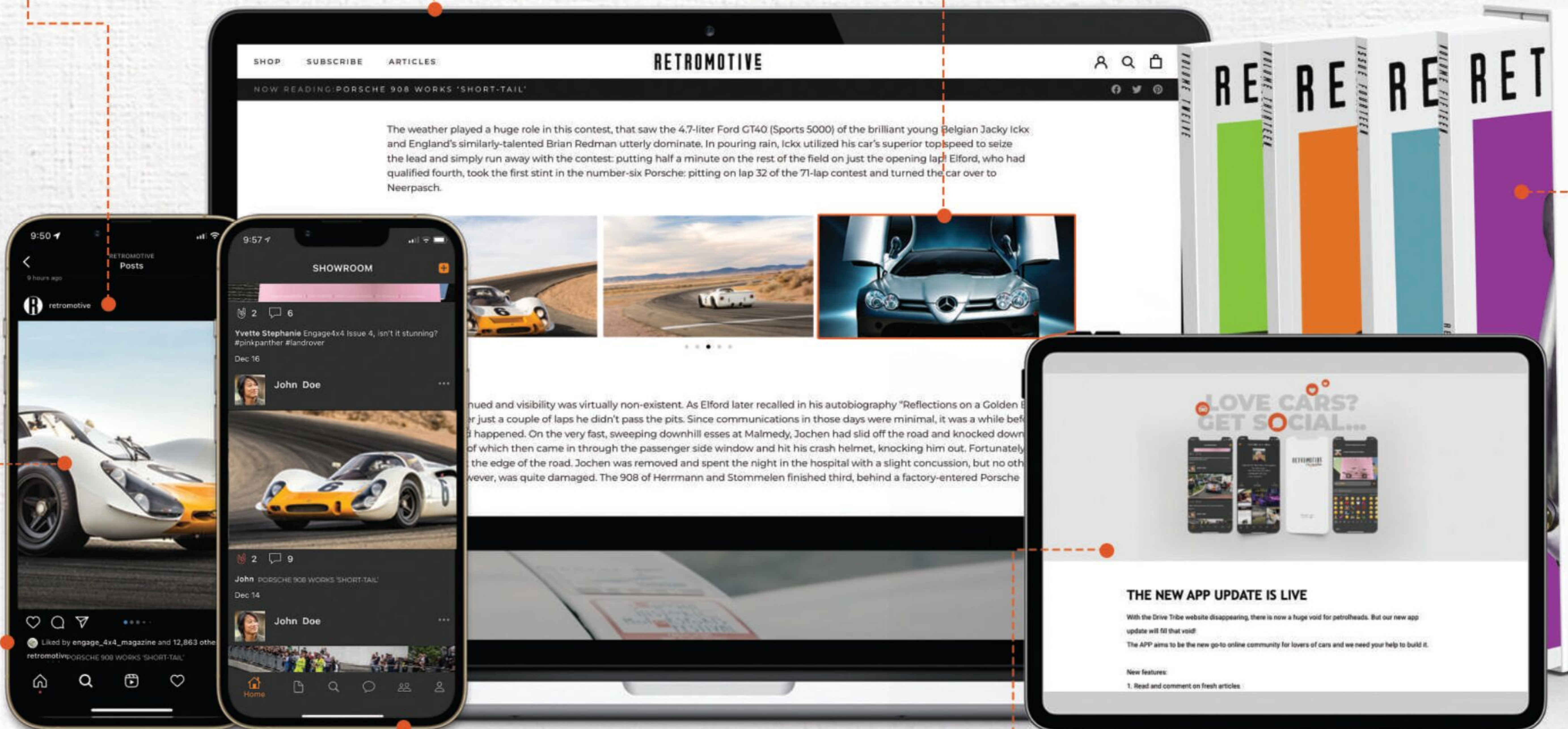
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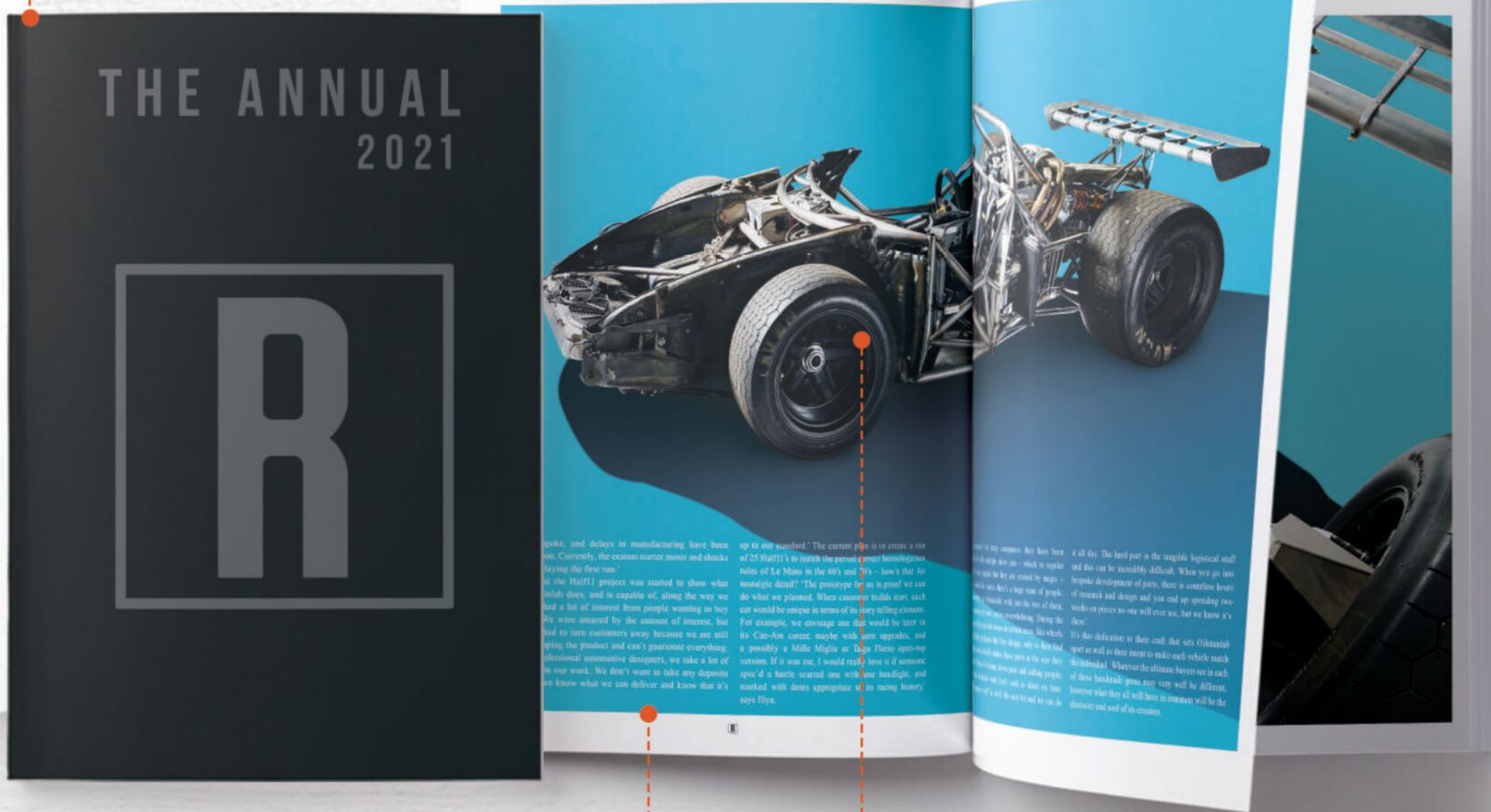
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