

CLASSIC DRIVER

Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este 2005



Europe's most esteemed competition for beautiful motor cars once again found itself at the wonderful Villa d'Este by Lake Como in Northern Italy. This year's Concorso d'Eleganza celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Pininfarina Design Studios, as well as 50 years of the BMW 503 and 507 sports cars.



The competition included fifty four Classic, and eight Modern Concept, cars - a superb sight. Every year it seems that the organisers have an ever-increasing pool of the finest cars to choose from. In addition, contemporary designers are eager to have their latest creations showcased with the greats from the past.



The celebration of 75 years of Pininfarina was the highlight of the event. Examples from the past, like the 1947 Cisitalia 202 or the 1954 Lancia Aurelia B24 S, shared the stage with the current design study "Birdcage" Maserati. Founded in 1930, the name "S.A. Carrozzeria Pinin Farina" is synonymous with style and quality. The Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este Design Award 2003 was presented to the company for the Pininfarina Rossa.



On the Saturday, the park becomes the display case for moving automotive jewellery. All exhibits must be driveable, and the participants and public alike can evaluate their relative merits. Many have actually been driven to the event, and some exhibit a certain patina of wear and aging that comes with decades of careful use on the public road.



The following day the public are able to see the cars statically displayed in the gardens of the Villa Erba. Long visitor-queues are a hallmark of the Sunday, not only from members of the public but also from members of the press. The main prize of the event, the Trofeo BMW Group, for the best car of the show, was presented to Shiro Kosaka for his 1964 Alfa Romeo Canguro Coupé Bertone. The car that was created as a

concept for that year's Paris Show.



The press also awarded their prize (the Trofeo Corrado Millanta) to this car, while the public's Coppa d'Oro di Villa d'Este went to the 1951 Ferrari 212 Export Spider Vignale. In memory of the recently-deceased jury president Carlo Felice Bianchi Anderloni, a special prize was awarded to the car with most elegant body. This went to the 1955 Pegaso Z102BT Coupé Touring. The Trofeo Rolls-Royce, for the most elegant coachwork on a Rolls-Royce chassis, was awarded to a 1927 Phantom I Picadilly Roadster. A 1957 BMW 507 roadster received the Trophéo del Presidente della FIVA.



The Trophée Ruoteclassiche, an award for the finest restoration, was presented to a 1931 Austin Swallow Mk II Sports Saloon. Out of the eight modern concept cars entered, it was the 12-cylinder 2004 Peugeot 907 that won The Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este Design Award.



This year, the subject for the talk on matters of design and styling was "1950 Design", sponsored as before by BMW. A symposium comprising Konstantin Grcic, BMW designer Adrian van Hooydonk, the director of the Ecole Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne, Pierre Keller, Lorenzo Ramaciotti of Pininfarina, and the Director of the Cooper Hewitt National Design Museums in New York, Paul Warwick Thompson discussed 'the influences of 1950s design today'.

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Photos: Gudrun Muschalla and Bernhard Limberger

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