

CLASSIC DRIVER

[Porsche love was in the air at Luftgekühlt Munich](#)

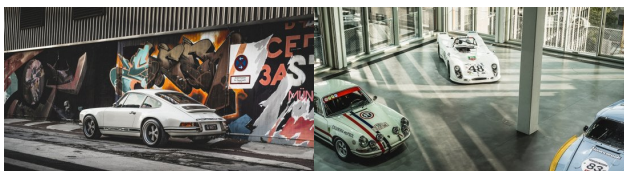
Lead

With Californian nonchalance and a stunning selection of classic Porsches, Luftgekühlt celebrated its German premiere in Munich last Sunday...



It's quite odd that it took a group of petrolheads, racing drivers, and creative minds from Los Angeles to travel to the home of Porsche to show the German scene how to celebrate the iconic sports cars from Zuffenhausen in an easy and contemporary way. With the help of their master of ceremonies Jeff Zwart, Patrick Long and Howie Idelson – the founders of the California Porsche fan-fest Luftgekühlt – conjured up a Porsche meeting in the Werksviertel Mitte in Munich like nobody in Germany has experienced before.

More than 150 air-cooled Porsches from across Europe and even the USA were lined up on the industrial and unpretentious terrain, between shipping containers, coffee shops, and graffiti-covered walls. In between, a casual crowd walked and talked cheerfully. And everyone from smartphone-wielding teenagers to racing legends and design grandmasters stuck to the democratic American dress code with tee-shirts, trainers, and baseball caps.



Of course, the Swabian connection to California is steeped in tradition – together with the cosmopolitan coolness factor, Porsche owes some of its most desirable sports cars to the ingenious US importer and influencer Max Hoffman. A brand missionary targeting the rich and beautiful people of Hollywood, Hoffman nudged Ferry Porsche to produce the original Speedster. Sometimes, it just takes an outsider's perspective to highlight the true potential of a brand.

The Luftgekühlt team was officially brought to Munich by Porsche – since Patrick Long's early Works racing days, the road between Zuffenhausen and Los Angeles is short. The brand also took over a majority of the organisation and, with the support of the Munich-based photographer and founder of *Curves* magazine Stefan Bogner, lured some of the most prominent Porsche collectors from the region. Needless to say, the 'squad' was very impressive. On Saturday morning, several cars had already been craned up to the rooftop bar of München Hoch 5. They included the Porsche 908/2 in which Steve McQueen and Peter Revson came second at Sebring in 1970, in addition to a glorious rally-spec 911 S/T in a Repsol livery and [the light blue 935 of the notorious JLP Racing Team](#).



During a short drive to Tegernsee, we sat beside Patrick Long in the passenger seat of a Porsche 911 T from 1969, resplendent in 'Bahama Yellow'. As a factory Porsche driver, the 37-year-old Californian has started all the most important races including Le Mans, Daytona, and Sebring and carried home quite a number of class wins and

overall victories. In 2014, he came together with creative director Howie Idelson to organize their first Porsche meeting in Venice, under the mysteriously named 'Luftgekühlt'. "We wanted it to be a casual car meet that you could take your family along to," recalls Long. "In the photos from those early meets, you can see children and dogs walking everywhere among the cars."



The casual concept clearly struck a nerve and has been gaining momentum from year to year, to the point where the air-cooled Porsche meeting has become a worldwide phenomenon. In the spring of 2018, it attracted over 600 cars to its fifth Californian edition, while in August, Luftgekühlt celebrated [its British debut at the former RAF bomber base at Bicester Heritage](#). Long is rather proud that 'Luft', as it's become known in the scene, has come to the home country of Porsche. "I'm also pleased to see so many friends coming from around the world to Munich to experience the local Porsche culture. We're now something of a travelling circus."



In the concept of Luftgekühlt, the racing driver, film director, and photographer Jeff Zwart believes it's essential that the cars are staged in such a way that they correspond with their surroundings, thus offering photographers unique photo opportunities. The effort is worth it – there are over 125,000 photos on Instagram under the hashtag #Luftgekühlt. And while the German *Porsche Sharia* likes to discuss the historic correctness of washers and wheel nuts, at Luft, multi-million-dollar factory racers stand quite happily beside fictitious restomod 911s or highly patinated 356s.



The highlights of Luftgekühlt in Munich included an orange Porsche 914/6 – one of the three factory cars that swept the podium at the 1970 Marathon de la Route – and the replica of Ferdinand Porsche's Berlin-Rome car, in which the Austrian Michael Barbach has invested over 9,000 hours. The adventurous team next to it, with its rusty red 911 complete with surfboard and matching scrambler on a trailer, came from Hamburg to shake up the Munich scene with some Nordic neighbourhood flair. Meanwhile, among the various restomod 911s, we loved Markus Haub's stone-grey homage to 911R and, of course, the [Singer that we accompanied on an Alpine tour last year](#).



With his slate-grey Porsche 912 shipped all the way from New York, the American designer Carl Gustav Magnusson proved that it's not all about the 911. Its individual details are superb, from the specially designed engine cover to the French yellow headlights. Even the ex-Porsche design chief Harm Lagaay was taken with the unique car. Across the lineup, Danny Dart's Porsche 964 RS reminded us of the brand's younger racing history, which itself is a hot topic in the collector car world right now.

That countless teens in Luftgekühlt tee-shirts strolled enthusiastically among the car and a schoolboy loosely steered a Porsche 906 into position is proof that the car scene – at least in this concept – suffers no generation problems. On the contrary, the Californians have managed to make the old Porsche scene as casual as skateboarding or surfing.



Even more important than the choice of cars was, ultimately, the mix of people from around the world and the relaxed atmosphere. Rarely have we felt so comfortable or talked to so many people at a stiffer concours event. If you want a taste of the future of automotive culture, then don't miss the next edition of Luftgekühlt.

Photos: Stefan Bogner for Classic Driver © 2018

Gallery

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