

THE VINSON VIEW

Quality maniac and master shopper Nick Vinson on the who, what, when, where and why



MEMORABLE MOTORING COLLABORATIONS

Audi TT Pavilion by Konstantin Grcic, 2014
A polygonal gazebo with a little nod to Jean Prouvé's prefabricated houses (pictured)

Scholten & Baijings' Colour One for Mini, 2012
Reduced to its parts, then reimagined with plenty of the duo's signature graduated colouring. Sadly too deconstructed to drive

Prada Genesis with Hyundai, 2009
Only three were constructed, with Prada-made alloy rims and signature saffiano leather interior

Smart Fortwo Toile H edition by Hermès, 2008
Ten models were made in ten colours, all specially upholstered inside by Hermès

Fiat 500 by Domeau & Pérès, 2004
Designers Domeau & Pérès' 2004 retrofit was the ultimate upgrade for a vintage Cinquecento

Cadillac Seville by Gucci, 1979
Two hundred were produced with golden GG logos and horsebit-trim interiors. One made its way from Florida to the Gucci Museum, Florence

Alexander Calder's BMW Art Car, 1975
Commissioned by driver Hervé Poulain who raced the car at Le Mans. Since then, 16 other artists have added to BMW's Art Car collection

01 Taken for a spin

Designer cars rock, but leave out the merchandise

I'm not a frequent visitor to motor shows, but I have noticed an acceleration of activity from the automobile industry at furniture, design, art and fashion fairs.

This June in Basel, at Design Miami, Audi and Konstantin Grcic introduced the TT Pavilion, a fun structure made from timber and seven tailgate doors from the Audi TT sports car. I liked it for being expressive rather than purely functional (and imagined it in the garden for breezy, shaded cocktail parties). Other stand-outs have been The Dwelling Lab in 2010, where Kvadrat, Patricia Urquiola and Giulio Ridolfo turned the BMW 5 Series GT inside out; Scholten & Baijings' Colour One for Mini in 2012, which dissected the car in a conceptual way; and our own Wallpaper* Handmade collaborations with Jaguar and the likes of Vincenzo de Cotiis (see W*185).

Back in the 1970s, American car brands joined forces with European fashion labels, resulting in the Gucci Cadillac Seville as well as Emilio Pucci and Givenchy's Lincoln Continentals. Today, Fiat partners with Gucci on a special edition of the Fiat 500, and Maserati with Ermenegildo Zegna on a limited-edition Quattroporte.

Then there's Riccardo Tisci being wicked and piling up burnt-out Mercedes-Benzes and BMWs in the centre of the runway for his S/S14 show for Givenchy. I challenge car

makers to knock on Comme des Garçons' door; if Rei Kawakubo agreed to collaborate the result could be the most memorable yet.

There are also plenty of product collaborations from car marques, some of which make more sense than others. Custom-made in-car audio such as Audi and Bang & Olufsen's five-channel surround sound and the Naim for Bentley system are no-brainers. On the fashion front, there's Zegna's Owner's Collection for Maserati, Louis Vuitton's carbon-fibre luggage for BMW's i8 model, and Lamborghini's pairing with Carshoe; the two Italian brands created a special shoe for their joint 50th anniversaries last year – and why not, as Carshoe is a driving shoe? John Lobb partnered up with Aston Martin in 2012 to create driving shoes – not the most exciting product ever, but the two British brands represent the very best in class and are a match in terms of heritage and know-how. (Less clear is why Aston Martin launched another range of shoes with Italian producer Pakerson this June at Pitti Uomo.)

Many high-end car companies produce a lot of merchandise. Presumably these souvenirs are lucrative, although they've little to do with the brands' core clients. But what worries me more are furniture ranges with token design touches, as they don't represent the hand-built craft of the brilliant cars they're named after. I hope this idea stalls. ✱



02

Italian pit stop no. 1

The city of Arezzo offers leading fashion retailers like Sugar and Voga Shop, a perfect lunch at Le Chiavi d'Oro, and Nero Design, for Giuseppe Friscia's ceramics (pictured). www.sugar.it; www.vogashop.com; www.ristorantechiavidoro.it; www.nero-design.it



03

Italian pit stop no. 2

Over in Florence, Aquazzura, the shoe label founded just three years ago by Colombian-born designer Edgardo Osorio, opens its first store (pictured), at 12 Lungarno Corsini, by interior design office Casa Do Passadiço. www.aquazzura.com