

THE SAINT-CLOUD GRANDS CONCOURS D'ÉLÉGANCE 28TH AND 29TH JUNE 2008



PRESS KIT

Harking back to the tradition of the great concours d'élégance motor car competitions of last century, on the weekend of 28th and 29th June 2008 Editions LVA, publisher of three collectors' cars titles (*La Vie de l'Auto*, *Rétroviseur* and *Autorétro*) is organising the Saint-Cloud Grands Concours d'Élégance, an international event that is destined to become a great classic of its kind.

This event will be staged in the prestigious historic setting of Saint-Cloud Park and will include various shows and special events on the theme of collectors' cars.

To mark the event, a Bugatti Royale, affectionately known as the 'Napoleon coupé' (the very one used by Ettore Bugatti), will make the journey from Mulhouse to Paris and on to Saint-Cloud Park. The 'Napoleon coupé' is one of the seven Bugatti Royale chassis built between 1926 and 1933, and to this day it remains the most extraordinary car in the entire history of the automobile. Admiring its lines is always a pleasure and seeing it in motion is a privilege. The Napoleon coupé will arrive in Paris the day before the Saint-Cloud Grands Concours d'Elégance event opens and will undoubtedly be the event's star attraction. La Cité de l'Automobile (National Museum, Schlumpf Collection – www.collection-schlumpf.com), which owns this flamboyant 'rolling sculpture' (to use an expression dear to the famous American designer Gordon Buehrig), has thus become one of the partners of our event. The Bugatti Royale is "a car designed for kings but that kings have never bought." Designed by Ettore Bugatti, it was intended to be the ultimate motor car but unfortunately failed to enjoy its expected success. Only seven chassis were built between 1926 and 1932 (fitted over the years with eleven different bodies), but only three were sold new. The four others were used for a while by Ettore Bugatti, including the famous 'Napoleon' coupé, whose unforgettable lines were created by the precocious talent of his son Jean, who designed them at the age of only 20. One amusing detail is that the radiator cap on the 'Napoleon' coupé is actually a sculpture of an elephant created by Rembrandt Bugatti, Ettore's brother. A miracle of family unity, the Royale therefore succeeded in winning both the approval of Jean, the man destined to succeed his father, and that of the person who chose to pursue an artistic side in his career, Rembrandt. But the 'Napoléon' coupé was also influenced by Ettore Bugatti's wife. The roof of the passenger compartment is fitted with panoramic windows. Legend has it that Mrs Bugatti wanted to look at the stars when travelling in the Royal at night. The exceptional dimensions of this car (a wheelbase of 4.27 m and wheels exactly 1 metre in diameter), its power (unrivalled in its day) of 300 horsepower at 3,000 rpm and its exceptional torque produced by a phenomenally large 12.67-litre engine, put it far beyond the international competition. Capable of a top speed of over 180 km/h, the Royale stood out above all because of the smoothness of its monumental straight-8 engine that belied its size and weight. Everyone who has driven it has been struck by its 'quiet power' and the Olympian purr that this moving monument makes when its engine is running.

So, watching it arrive along the road at the Saint-Cloud Grands Concours d'Elégance is an exceptional event. After departing from Mulhouse, the 'Napoléon' coupé will drive to Sochaux and the Musée de l'Aventure Peugeot before continuing to Paris for an exclusive parade which will take it to Saint-Cloud Park.

THE COMPETITIONS

Concours d'élégance

The two concours d'élégance will be the highlight of the weekend. Two separate categories will be featured: the production car category, presented on the Saturday, and prestige and exceptional cars, due to take place on the Sunday. Each category will consist of sections covering different periods representing most of the history of the automobile, from the 'Belle Epoque' to the present day. In each competition, thirty-five carefully selected cars and their crews will process in front of the public and will be judged by a jury of specialists and celebrities in an atmosphere worthy of the great concours d'élégance of days gone by.

Each of the processions, which will take place around the fountains in the Lower Park, will last for around an hour and a half in a colourful show combining history, design and French elegance. The marks awarded by the jury will above all take into account the authentic condition of the vehicle on show and the dress and presentation of its crew.

Concours d'état

In addition to the concours d'élégance, fifteen vehicles selected on the basis of their state of conservation or the quality of their restoration will compete against each other in a 'concours d'état'. On show over the two days of the event, they will be classified in two categories, one for restoration professionals only and the other for amateurs and clubs. A jury of specialists will judge their compliance with the original according to the standard rules.



Well attended by clubs

A large number of clubs, the associations that are an inevitable part of the collectors' scene, have been invited to the Saint-Cloud Grands Concours d'Elégance. It is an opportunity for them to present to a wide public their programme of activities and the most representative cars owned by their members. A special trophy will be awarded to the club having made the best use of its space and the most original presentation. It will be awarded each year.

History of the automobile

No major open-air event is complete without an exhibition. To add to the atmosphere at the Saint-Cloud Grands Concours d'Elégance, a series of exhibitions will take visitors back through the already long history of the motor car.

Starting with the event's broad central area set up for the museums and various themed exhibitions including the one for the star attraction, namely the Bugatti Royale 'Napoleon coupé', which will be arriving by road.

Cars of the century:

The theme is the ten cars most representative of each decade that left a mark on their day in the collective memory of the people of France. This exhibition will be at the entrance to the event. Each vehicle on show will be accompanied by a panel describing the car's context. It's sure to awaken nostalgic feelings in lots of visitors, both the uninitiated and informed collectors.

The manufacturers of Hauts-de-Seine:

A great many makes of car (Delage, Donnet, Unic, La Licorne, Hispano Suiza, etc.) were made in the department of Hauts-de-Seine at the beginning of the motor industry. A dozen vehicles from the ranges made by these firms, most of which are no longer in existence, will be on show in Saint-Cloud Park to remind visitors that this department has gone down in history as the 'birthplace of the modern motor car' as we know it today.

Lorraine Dietrich B3-6

The model that won the Le Mans 24 Hours in 1926, the first car to exceed an average speed of 100 km/h in this event, will also be on show during the first Saint-Cloud Grands Concours d'Elégance. The Le Mans 24 Hours circuit (which in those days was 17.262 km) saw the victory of three Lorraine Dietrich B3-6s that year, which was also the make's second victory in the race, with only 13 cars of the 41 that had started the race being placed at the finish line. To celebrate the presence of the winning crew's B3-6 from the 1926 race (Robert Bloch and André Rossignol), a one-off collection of a dozen cars has been prepared by the Lorraine Dietrich Club for this one-of-a-kind exhibition.

Auction

Artcurial, which has chosen to be associated with the Saint-Cloud Grands Concours d'Elégance since the very beginning, will of course welcome the 'Napoleon coupé' when it comes to Paris. In the meantime, the staff at this famous Paris auction house will be delighted to announce the first cars registered in the day's sale schedule organised for the Saint-Cloud Grands Concours d'Elégance: a 1958 Pegaso Z102 Touring, a Bugatti Type 40 roadster with compressor, a 1934 2-seater Alfa Romeo A6C 2300 Spider, a 1913 15hp Brasier limousine (an original saloon in perfect condition) and a first-hand Delage DM with bodywork by Autobineau, these are a taste of what rare-model enthusiasts can get their hands on during the event at the Saturday evening auction by Artcurial.

Strange visitors...

Laurel and Hardy, Colombo and his 403 cabriolet and Marilyn Monroe will be there throughout the weekend. Even better than the real thing, these legends of film and television will be livening up the avenues of Saint-Cloud Park by providing surprises galore. And who hasn't dreamed of having their photograph taken with Marilyn Monroe?

Village

A village of around twenty tents for collectors' cars professionals will be awaiting visitors: automobilia, spares, insurance, rally and competition organisers, leather and bodywork cleaning products, the list goes on ... Here, both informed amateurs and the uninitiated will find every facet of the collectors' car world. There will be another area for contemporary artists, who will be showing their work on the theme of the automobile. Culture, elegance and motor cars will be the main ingredients of this fantastic weekend.

Collectors' area

Collectors' cars will of course be welcome at the event, even if they are not all entered into the event's competitions. With so many vintage cars around, visitors will be able to take a fantastic trip back in time. They will bring back some wonderful memories for lovers of vintage cars and anyone who simply wants to relive the atmosphere of their youth. A vast area is being set aside to park these cars, with room for up to 700 collectors' car from all over, which will be able to enter the event grounds free of charge.



PROGRAMME OF THE SAINT-CLOUD GRAND CONCOURS D'ÉLÉGANCE

Saturday 28th June:

- 7.30 a.m. - Open to participants
- 9.30 a.m. - Open to the public
- 11.00 a.m. - Arrival of the Bugatti Royale
- 2.30 - 4.30 p.m. - Concours d'élégance: production cars
- 5.00 - 7.00 p.m. - Auction
- 7.00 p.m. - Closed to the public

Sunday 29th June

- 7.30 a.m. - Open to participants
- 9.30 a.m. - Open to the public
- 10.00 a.m. - 2.30 p.m. - Brunch
- 11.00 a.m. - 12.00 p.m. - Grand parade in front of the fountains
- 2.30 - 4.30 p.m. - Concours d'élégance: prestige and exceptional cars
- 5.00 - 5.30 p.m. - Prize giving for the concours d'état and club trophy
- 7.00 p.m. - Closed to the public

Admission: €14 for one day, €22 for both days
Free admission for children under 12.

INFORMATION

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Freelance journalists are requested to enclose a letter of confirmation from their commissioning editors.

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Accreditation is open until Monday 16th June 2008.

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