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The Bridge: Part Exhibition, Part Garden Party, Part Dream Car Show

By Tamara Warren

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The Bridge 2021 event, photos by Michael Foster, Robin Trajano and Tony Laiacona.



SHAMIN ABAS
COMMUNICATIONS FOR ULTRA-LUXURY BRANDS

Bridgehampton, New York has a dashing history in motorsports circles. The great British racecar driver **Stirling Moss** once called the Bridgehampton Race Circuit the most challenging track in the United States. The former track is now an exclusive, private golf course owned by the car collector **Bob Rubin**, and since 2016, it's been the setting for an annual event that pays homage to exquisite sports cars. For lovers of high-end car culture, it's become a hot ticket event in early fall. The guest list is exclusive and invite-only, ranging from club members to CFDA-winning fashion designers to top car collectors.

The Bridge—like almost every other event in the world—was canceled in 2020. Yet this year the Bridge was back for a fifth year with a fervor on a glorious bright blue September Saturday. Located on Rubin's sprawling green course overlooking the Peconic Bay, 320 cars with impeccable provenance were on display. "It's where **Mario Andretti** taught **Paul Newman** how to race," said car collector **Jeff Einhorn**, one of the Bridge's three founders. "It's still very rustic. The Chevron Bridge still welcomes you when you come."



The Bridge car show is part exhibition, part garden party, part dream car show. Rubin and luxury marketer **Shamin Abas** are also founders. “There’s an underpinning of a passion for contemporary art, even in the architecture of the club and the sculptures throughout the grounds,” Abas said. “Art is infused in a strong way. It’s the magnificence of seeing these incredible cars and how it becomes art as you’re looking at is rife throughout the whole experience.”

On the eve of the event, collectors ushered in their cars for a private reception. A parade of pristine Lamborghinis added to the pageantry. For the main event on Saturday, guests arrived by shuttled tour buses in the afternoon. (At a car show, the parking lot is its own mini car show.) The expensive sheet metal found on rare Porsches and Ferraris at the Bridge gleamed in the sunshine. “There’s no ropes, no stanchions, there’s not a single lawn chair,” Einhorn said of the way the cars are displayed in contrast to other car shows. “Everything is a perfect photo moment.” At most car concours, owners compete for awards and prizes. At the Bridge, it was all about pure admiration for the vehicle, as guests showed off insider knowledge on what’s what to their friends. Cars worth millions of dollars were artfully parked on the green, among a dozen food stations.



Some of the highlights of rare cars on display included a 1964 Ferrari 250 GT/L Berlinetta Lusso, a 1956 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing, several Porsches speedsters, and a 1972 Corvette Stingray. **Rally**, the platform for investment into collectible assets, showed a plum 1994 Lamborghini Diablo SE30 Jota, one of 28 made, and a blue 1975 Renault Alpine A110, once described as a French 911.

Some cars on view were actual works of art, including the **Calder Car**, an artist-proof, overseen by **Alexander Rower**, founder of the **Calder Foundation** and Calder's grandson. Rower remembered seeing the original car as a child with his grandfather at the **Whitney Museum** in 1976. He recalled asking his grandfather if he could start up the car inside the museum. "He thought that was really funny that I wanted to start the car inside the Whitney Museum, you know with exhaust fumes and noise and all of that. Obviously, we didn't start it, but he said he was going to make one for himself—meaning his artist proof. He was going to make his own version of the car for himself, and then two weeks later he died. So that was like a super memory of mine and his intention of making an artist proof resurfaced every few years when I saw the car," said Rower.



A few years ago, Einhorn helped Rower track down a rare 1975 BMW 3.0 CSL in northern Europe, which was then rebuilt by the **BMW Group Classic** for the Calder Foundation. The car was painstakingly modified to mirror Calder's original rendering, and painted by **Walter Mauer** who painted the original car in 1975. The artist's proof debuted in **Berlin Neue Nationalgalerie** a few months ago, before being shipped to the Bridge for its US unveiling. Rower drove the car himself onto a hill overlooking the bay and revved the racing engine, which produced a thrilling chortle. From the Bridge, the Calder artist proof was headed to the local cars and coffee meetup by police escort and off to West Palm Beach, Florida for display at the **Norton Museum**.

Artists's personal cars were on display at the Bridge including **Daniel Arsham**'s sunny yellow 1973 Porsche 911 RS, and an adorable baby Porsche Junior. Other cars featured were chosen in pure fun such as a 1958 Volkswagen bug, converted in 1964 to look like a Fiat Jolly in a dune buggy section of the show.



Like other prestigious car shows **Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance** and the **Villa d'Este**, modern brands see the appeal of getting in front of the crowds at the Bridge. An electrified Canoo van offered a peek at the future of mobility from the West coast EV startup. New cars on view included the Ferrari 296 GTB, the all-electric Lucid Air Dream Edition, the McLaren 765LT Spider, and the Bugatti Chiron Pur Sport, seeking to woo the car collecting crowd.

