

## Raising Hope & Funds at the Petersen Gala - a Celebration of Automotive Past, Present & Future With VW, Tesla & NIO

Lynn Walford - Oct 20 2022



The Petersen Automotive Museum's 28th Gala brought together international auto enthusiasts representing legendary iconic brands of the past, present and future. The event raised funds for the museum and honoured those who have changed the landscape of car history and philanthropy.

The museum is an ideal location for such a dazzling gala. The building on Museum Row in Los Angeles glimmers like the chrome fenders of a sports car. The lighting inside the museum highlights radiant automotive finishes. The upper parking level housed a monolithic tent with sparkling lights and mirrored tables adorned with massive white rose centrepieces on silver platters.

### Cars as Art, And Art on Cars

Next to the tent was the NIO EP9 art car, where socialites and automotive celebrities posed for selfies. The electric EP9 broke lap records and was hand-painted by artist Ornamental Conifer, aka Nicolai Sclater. The vehicle was simultaneously being auctioned online. The EP9 carbon fibre body was designed by David Hilton for aerodynamics. The pre-auction minimum estimated value started at \$800,000.

Stewart Reed, Department Chair, Graduate and Undergraduate Transportation Design at ArtCenter College of Design, commented about the museum and the EP9 to Auto Futures.

"Southern California is the centre of automotive culture, the Petersen Museum is the centre of Southern California's automotive culture--- its epicentre. Everything is here. It is not only a celebration of the history of the automobile and mobility, but also the infrastructure built around the automobile," said Reed.

"The Petersen is also about, 'What is the future? Where are we going? How can new technology - like automation, electrification and connectivity be effective? All the things we are dealing with every day affect how we think differently about the design of not only vehicles but the environment where they work."

"The EP9 is one of those extravagant expressions of automotive technology. Some have made the case that the highest level of technology descends from aerospace down to aircraft. Then from aircraft down to the highest end of motorsports. From the highest end of motorsports down to the most exotic cars where the EP9 sits," said Reed, "The whole idea of celebrating the surfaces with enjoyable art is just an add-on to the genius of this car."

Franz von Holzhausen, chief design executive at Tesla, praised the museum and talked about his design philosophy.

"The Peterson is the best automotive museum in the world. Because they have the best people behind it. The beauty of the museum is that the people are the most enthusiastic about cars. Beyond that, they have an amazing space to see stuff you have never seen before," said von Holzhausen.

"Cars are art and also a commodity that we use every day. We forget a car is a piece of art," said von Holzhausen. He noted about his approach to Tesla vehicle design, "the heart of design is always based around efficiency."



## Awards And Honours

Inside the tent, a lavish dinner was served. On stage the Robert E. Petersen Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Dr Herbert Diess, former CEO and Chairman of the Board of Management of Volkswagen AG.

"I am very proud of what we have achieved. And I am especially proud about the Porsche IPO (which was already mentioned) that allows Porsche to fly much higher," said Diess.

"Thank you. There is so much support for quality here. I was really touched by the amount of love the brand receives here," Diess said about Los Angeles.

"I think the automotive industry has such a bright future and is changing so much. The next ten years probably will be more challenging but also more rewarding than the last fifty were, because the car is changing so much. The car is becoming a device. I am sure that cars will remain precious objects and they will be luxurious. They will tell something about the people driving them. They will be emotional and exciting. In the future, they will become much more complex, much more of a device I think it is a beautiful future. I feel very much at home with so many car enthusiasts. I am looking forward to the next ventures in the automotive industry. Thank you," added Diess.

Teens who are part of educational programs at the museum were asked to stand and were applauded by the audience.

A special award was given to board member Phillip Sarofim. The Petersen is becoming more inclusive with new board members such as its newest member Juan Gonzalez, Chairman and CEO of GRUMA, and first women board member Dr Sabrina Kay. She updated the donation process using the latest mobile technology and acted as a hostess.

"I have the honour of being the first female board member of the Petersen Automotive Museum, and I know I won't be the last," said Kay.

"One of the many reasons why this museum is special is that cars not only provide transportation for human mobility. They also represent the history, society, and moment in time of our impressive progression as a human race," added Kay.

"As a tech educator and investor, I was pleased to lead the text2pledge campaign to raise funds for educating the public on its impact on our life and culture. The possibilities are limitless in what we can do together," said Kay.



## Raising Funds And Sparking Interest in the Future

SMS donors and the amount pledged were projected on the walls. Some amounts donated were in the tens of thousands of dollars. Exclusive outings and cars were offered up for live bidding by attendees.

There was the F1 Grand Prix Super Ticket package for two. The couple will attend the first F1 in Las Vegas with a private chartered jet to the event, lodgings at the Wynn Hotel and viewing of private collections in Northern California.

There were six tickets sold for a private charter to Scottsdale, Arizona and tours of rare private collections. A luxurious Scottish Highlands retreat for four couples at TighanTuir included a picnic, golf, fishing, a three-star chef and optional clay shooting. The Hispano Spain Experience for two featured a visit to the Hispano Suiza's Private Atelier.

A new electric beta test Meyer Manx 2.0 dune buggy was also auctioned off.

Although the museum is still calculating the final tally, the event was financially successful. "The 28th annual gala raised more funds than any previous gala in the museum's history. More than 25% of the total funds were raised through the sale of the Nio EP9," said Michael Bodell, Chief Operating Officer, The Petersen Automotive Museum.



Throughout the event, there was a spirit of great love for automobiles. It was inspiring while aligning with the museum's legacy and objectives.

Terry L. Karges, Executive Director of the Petersen, summed up the museum's objectives in the Gala program.

"The Petersen exists to serve the public by sparking the interests of future generations who we are counting on to face the challenges that lie ahead. The Petersen Automotive Museum ensures that artefacts from our automotive past and present will survive to inspire future generations for centuries to come."

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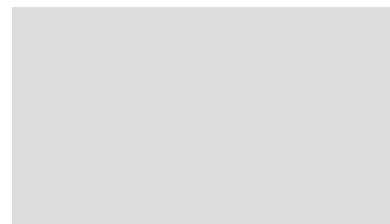
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