

Motor Cars as Art

[Paul A Ebeling Jr](#)

paul@livetradingnews.com

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Motor Cars as Art shown in Kansas City Missouri

One Sunday each year, the Art of the Car Concours is presented on lawn of the Kansas City Art Institute campus.

Lined up on KCAI's main Green are the much admired works of artists and engineers from the automotive world's Golden Ages

Last year, a collection of 212 vintage cars, trucks, motorcycles and pedal

cars were displayed for the guests.

1st prize went to Peter Mullin's Talbot-Lago T 150 CSS seen below.

Peter Mullin's Talbot-Lago Figoni and Falaschi T 150 CSS won People's Choice Best of Show in Y 2012.

The KCAI event was created by Marshall Miller, a noted free trade zone legal pioneer, grew up in Kansas City. Marshall's father liked cars, but family finances did not allow for any exotics. But, his father encouraged his interest with a Road & Track subscription from the early 1950s.

Mr. Miller got involved with collector cars when he bought a 1931 Ford Model A for his father in Y 2000. It was the same year, model and color of his father's first car.

Mr. Miller's own first collectable was an MG TC, like those he had admired in Road & Track so long ago. Mr. Miller, his father and his 2 sons began to go to travel Concours' around the country including Pebble Beach and Amelia Island.

Soon after Mr. Miller wanted Kansas City to experience the great cars he had seen in his travels. Since no similar event occurred in Chicago, Denver, St. Louis or Dallas, Mr. Miller created a venue in the Midwest for vintage vehicle owners and those interested in viewing them.

He approached the Kansas City Art Institute about using their grounds. Since his wife had been on the Board for 20 yrs, the last 5 as Chairman, it was not a difficult proposition.

Mr. Miller wanted to keep things simple, low cost and eclectic, so he eliminated judging and classes, resulting in a collegial rather than competitive atmosphere. There are 30 odd awards, but sponsors and the public decide who wins them and who gets the trophies. The latter are mostly designed by Art Institute Students and Alumni.

A preview of select cars is held in front of their building the same day to promote the next day's Concours.

KC's Country Club Plaza, built by JC Nichols, a visionary developer, is considered to be the US' 1st US Auto-centric Shopping Center.

The fact that Mr. Miller is the head of a large enterprise is evident in both the Concours' organization and in some of his decisions.

The Kansas City Art Institute provides public relations, advertising, website services, grounds management, security, event check-in and financial management.

The 7th Edition of Art of the Car will take place on Sunday, 23 June. Admission is \$12 in advance and \$15 same day to a show that has continually raised the quality of the motor cars on display.

This year will feature a special Saturday event, "Meet the Legends – A Conversation with Sir Stirling Moss, Denise McCluggage, Remembering Masten Gregory." Gregory, a Kansas City native, was one of the earliest Americans to make an impression in European road racing after World War II, and a well-known character in an era known for idiosyncratic race drivers.

Since Messrs Moss and McCluggage are fine storytellers, I know them both, the afternoon will be memorable. Masten's brother, Riddelle, a racer, and a storyteller in his own right, will be there too.

The Plaza area has many hotel options and hundreds of shops and restaurants, just across the street from the Art Institute is the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, one of the US' finest.

An exhibition that will be mounted at the time of the Concours is Modern Mexican Masterpieces with an emphasis on the work of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, that is really good work IMO, I remember the first time I experienced it in Mexico City in 1967. So, if you find yourself in Kansas City, Missouri on 23 June this year do not miss these treats.