

SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 2026

PRESENTED BY



BARQUETTE CHARITABLE FUND

EST. 2024



1967 MERCEDES-BENZ
250 SL

Honoring 100 Years of Mercedes-Benz

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2026 SPECIAL DISPLAY CLASSES

Tribute to the cars of "The Fast and the Furious"[™] • Tribute to the cars of "Cars"[™] • Turbo Era Cars, 1973-1993

BENEFITING JUVENILE ARTHRITIS

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF Mercedes-Benz



1936 Mercedes-Benz 320 Cabriolet B

A merger that joined two pioneers from the dawn of the automobile By Jim Koscs

This year's Cincinnati Concours celebrates the 100th anniversary of the 1926 merger of German rivals Benz and maker of Mercedes cars, Daimler, that formed Mercedes-Benz. The company traces its roots to Carl Benz's 1886 three-wheeled Patent Motorwagen, the world's first gas-powered automobile.

The young Mercedes-Benz marque issued mid-range and high-end cars through the 1920s. Among the rarest were the supercharged Type S tourer and 120-mph SSK road/race car. The 1930s 500K and 540K had supercharged inline eight-cylinder engines and advances that would become common in other cars much later, including four-wheel independent suspension and vacuum-assisted brakes. In the same decade, Mercedes-Benz "Silver Arrow" racecars won the European Grand Prix Championship three times.

The 1930s Mercedes-Benz lineup also introduced the more affordable, mass-produced 170 series and the world's first production diesel-powered car, the 260D.

Postwar Icons

In 1951, the larger and more sophisticated 220 series and grand 300 luxury model established Mercedes' postwar resurgence. The marque's confidence was on full display the following year, when the super-sleek 300SL racecars scored a remarkable one-two victory at the 24 Hours of Le Mans and a one-two finish in Mexico's notoriously dangerous 1,900-mile Carrera Panamericana road race. Mercedes' U.S. importer Max Hoffman then persuaded the company to build a production

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Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Gullwing



190 SL Roadster



SLR McLaren Stirling Moss



2024 Mercedes AMG GT55 Coupe

Photographs by Gary Kessler



The von Krieger Mercedes-Benz 540K Special Roadster

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version, which arrived in 1955 and cost over \$7,000.

The 300 SL's unusual upward-opening doors, dictated by the racecar's complex chassis design, earned it the "Gullwing" nickname. Mercedes made 1,400 Gullwings through 1957, replacing it with the 300SL roadster. Hoffman had also spurred Mercedes to produce the similarly styled but much more affordable 190SL roadster.

The marque gained momentum in the 1960s, launching several iconic models. Its all-new 1963 SL roadster (W113) earned the "Pagoda" nickname from the detachable hardtop's concave surface. The 230SL launched the series with a 2.3-liter inline-six. A 2.5-liter version made it the 250SL in 1966, followed by the 2.8-liter 280SL from 1969 to 1971.

The 1967 250SL concours feature car belongs to Bill Taylor, a collector who has shown several cars here since the event's inception. He has also for the past 40 years helped Glenn Talley restore Mercedes cars, including this SL bought from the Nippert estate in Cincinnati. Louise Nippert, who had died in 2012, continued her philanthropy after her husband, Louis, died 10 years prior. The great-grandson of Procter & Gamble founder James Gamble, Louis was majority owner of the Cincinnati Reds

Major League Baseball team through the 1970s.

"Glenn remembered he'd worked on one or both of their Mercedes," Taylor says. "We fully restored the 250SL, and we went a bit overboard on it."

A highlight of ownership, he says, was driving the car on the 11-mile, 318-curve "Tail of the Dragon" mountain road straddling North Carolina and Tennessee.

The 1960s also saw Mercedes surpass all luxury sedans at that time with the extraordinary 600. The standard-wheelbase version of this large model cost a whopping \$22,000 in 1965, four times the price of a standard Cadillac. Significantly, the 600 debuted the first Mercedes-Benz V8 engine, a big 6.3-liter unit that gained further renown powering the elegant yet exhilarating 300SEL 6.3. This 300-horsepower midsize sedan could show its taillights to some of the period's sports and muscle cars.

Mercedes-Benz retained its penchant for pinnacle convertibles with the 1969-1971 280 SE 3.5 cabriolet, attracting Hollywood and music elite and others who could afford its \$14,000 price. It was rare, with just over 1,200 built.

Mercedes, as well, developed many automotive safety innovations, starting in the 1950s with crumple-zone body structures. A dizzying array of desirable cars offered over the past half-century should ensure this historic automaker has a steady presence at concours events for decades to come.



The tuner-car culture meets the concours community By Jim Koscs

Twenty-five years ago, “The Fast and the Furious”™ sent a fleet of wildly customized, tire-burning street machines roaring across movie screens, instantly becoming a pop culture touchpoint for those who own, build, or just admire them. This year’s concours celebrates the cars of the F&F movies in recognition of the tuner-car community’s decades-long impact on the wider enthusiast car world.

Benny Rodriguez, chairman of the concours class host committee, helped choose models like those featured in the films.

The green 1995 Mitsubishi Eclipse is a fan-built replica of a car driven by Los Angeles undercover police officer Brian O’Conner, played by the late Paul Walker, in the original 2001 F&F film. The 1994 Toyota Supra is a factory-stock example of the customized Supra that he also drove.

The mingling of Japanese and European tuner cars with hotrodded American muscle cars has long been one of

the keys to the F&F franchise’s global appeal. In the first movie, a crime story centered on the dangerous, illegal Los Angeles street-racing scene, the Supra squares off against a supercharged, wheelie-pulling 1970 Dodge Charger in a heart-stopping race scene.

Although cars and characters changed across the 11 movies in the F&F series, the producers paired them in a way that reflected how real-life tuners form bonds with their unique automotive creations. Some models seen in these movies and displayed at the concours, including the Japanese 1995 Nissan R-33 GT-R and British 2000 TVR Tuscan from Britain, were never officially sold in the U.S.

Those cars, and many more like them, were privately imported by enthusiasts availing themselves of the EPA/DOT exemptions from U.S. emissions and safety standards for vehicles at least 25 years old. The F&F films likely inspired many fans to import their own dream cars, so you might say that what began as art imitating life has flipped the script.



2021 Toyota Supra



2012 Lexus LFA Coupe



1996 Acura Integra GS-R



1995 Toyota Supra



Replica 2006 Piston Cup Racer™ "Lightning McQueen"™

Special Tribute: The Cars of Pixar's "Cars"™

An animated favorite earned
kudos for its authenticity *By Jim Koscs*

If you're the kind of car enthusiast who can spot the incorrect-year cars that sometimes appear in period movies and TV shows, you probably shouted for joy (at least in your head) when you saw the 2006 Pixar animated film "Cars."™ Although created and marketed as a family movie, "Cars" became a fast favorite among car enthusiasts around the world for one overarching reason: authenticity.

The computer-generated cars in "Cars" talked, emoted, and sometimes moved like humans, yet they looked like real cars. Photo-realistic detailing emphasized accurate

designs, colors, and technical features such as suspension and exhaust systems. Pixar's artists even studied and replicated light reflections in paint and chrome on the film's cars.

"AutoWeek magazine called the original "Cars" 'the best car movie ever,'" proudly recalls Jay Ward, Creative Director of Franchise at Pixar Animation Studios. "Why? Because we got the automotive details right like no other car film, live-action or animated, had ever done before, taking the time to get everything from the engine sounds to the NASCAR track marbles accurate."



1951 Hudson Hornet



1976 International Loadster Replica "Tow Mater"™



1992 Mazda Miata Replica "Mia and Tia"™

From Track Debris to Racing Legend: The Real Story Behind Doc Hudson and the Hudson Hornet

Ward was referring to the chunks of tire rubber that race cars shed, which can be as slippery as marbles to drive over. The first "Cars" story revolved around a NASCAR-like Piston Cup race, and car buffs especially appreciated the film's historical accuracy, particularly in its veteran racecars.

"Doc Hudson," voiced by late actor and racer Paul Newman, was based on the Hudson Hornet factory

team cars that won three consecutive NASCAR Grand National Manufacturer's Championships from 1952 to 1954. The concours displays the blue Hornet, which represents that great American brand's racing glory.

Even today, many car buffs would immediately recognize the film's Strip "King" Weathers, a blue 1970 Plymouth Superbird wearing #43, as an homage to Richard Petty, who was known in NASCAR as "the king."

The character's seven Piston Cup trophies matched Petty's seven Grand National and Winston Cup championships. Notably, Petty won 18 of the 1970s' 48 races in his own Superbird.

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