WINTERTHUR TO DISPLAY ELEGANT AUTOMOBILES OF THE COUNTRY-ESTATE ERA IN MAY

Every Saturday in May Features Classic Cars from 1907 and Later, Plus Related Talks

WINTERTHUR, DELAWARE—More than 50 magnificent and historic automobiles, dating from 1907 to 1959, will be displayed on Saturdays in May at Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library beginning this weekend.

The displays, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, start the 10th anniversary celebration of the Winterthur Invitational. They are accompanied at 1 p.m. each Saturday by related lectures in the museum’s Rotunda.


From 1916 to 1969, hundreds of guests came to Winterthur for glittering social occasions hosted by the du Ponts. They arrived in a wide variety of automobiles that reflected the latest in design and fashion. These weather-permitting displays honor this tradition.

The displays are free for members and included with admission. The lectures are free for members and students and included with admission.

The weekly themes and confirmed automobiles include:


“Don’t Scare the Horses: The Development of the American Estate Garage” is the accompanying talk by Jeff Groff, Director of Interpretation & Estate Historian at Winterthur. Innovation and speed were the keystones of American life in the early twentieth century, with the wealthy embracing every new means of transportation to move about—and to show off their success. At their country places, new types of buildings were designed to house their automobiles, and an important new type of servant was added to the estate staff list—chauffeur. The talk will explore the design and function of these early garages; their evolution into key estate features; and the need to define chauffeurs’ duties, status, and relationships to fellow servants and employers.


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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1927 Rolls-Royce Phantom, Ascot Tourer with body by Brewster & Co. Courtesy of Winterthur.

MEDIA CONTACT
Liz Farrell
lfarrell@winterthur.org
Phone: 302.888.4803
Fax: 302.888.4950

Winterthur—known worldwide for its preeminent collection of American decorative arts, naturalistic gardens, and research library for the study of American art and material culture—offers a variety of tours, exhibitions, programs, and activities throughout the year. General admission includes a tour of some of the most notable spaces in the 175-room house as well as access to the Winterthur Garden and Galleries, special exhibitions, a narrated tram tour (weather permitting), the Campbell Collection of Soup Tureens, and the Enchanted Woods children’s garden. $20 adults; $18 for students and seniors; $5 for ages 2–11.

Museum hours
10:00 am - 5:00 pm, Tuesday- Sunday.

Winterthur, located on Route 52, six miles northwest of Wilmington, Delaware, and five miles south of U.S. Route 1, is closed on Mondays (except during Yuletide), Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.

Winterthur is committed to accessible programming for all. For information, including special services, call 800.448.3883, 302.888.4600, or TTY 302.888.4907, or visit winterthur.org.

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Hampton Wayt, an independent 20th-century design historian, will talk about “Affluence at the Wheel: An Appreciation of Luxury Automobiles from Before the Second World War.” Not all antique cars are created equal—although at first glance they may appear to be. The automobiles of the rich, like their mansions, were often worlds apart from those of the lowest echelons of the invention. He will explore three predominant aspects of automobile design—mechanism, comfort, and style—as sought and enjoyed by wealthy car owners in the earliest decades of the machine’s adoption as a mode of travel.


Gregory Landrey, Dwight and Lorri Lanmon, Director of Academic Affairs at Winterthur, will give the last two talks. This one is called “The Personal Automobiles of Henry Francis and Ruth Wales du Pont, 1916-1969: Grand Motorcars of a Great American Country Home.”


“Automobile Advertising in the 1950s, from Vogue to Sports Illustrated to Television: Selling the ‘New Look of Beauty,’ ” Landrey’s second talk, offers insight into the advertising of automobiles in the 1950s.

Winterthur, 5105 Kennett Pike north of Greenville, is open 10:00 am to 5:00 pm Tuesday through Sunday. To learn more, call 800.448.3883 or 302.888.4600, or visit winterthur.org.

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