

Q&A

The Bridge continues to challenge concours preconceptions

September 14, 2018



The Bridge 2017. Image courtesy of Capitol Sunset Photography

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Automotive event The Bridge, returning for a third year, is designed to offer a more intimate alternative for luxury brands and affluent car enthusiasts than larger shows and competitions.

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This year's garden party is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 15 in Bridgehampton, NY and coincides with an invitation-only art show. The annual car exhibition primarily features classic sports and competition cars that raced at the historic track, or would have eligible to race there in the late '50s or '60s.

"Our focus is on providing an environment for the most prolific collectors of both classic cars and contemporary art to gather and share their passion with fellow collectors in a private setting," said Shamin Abas, cofounder of **The Bridge**, New York.



The Bridge cofounders Jeffrey Einhorn, Robert Rubin and Shamin Abas (left to right). Image courtesy of Capitol Sunset Photography

In this Q&A, Ms. Abas discusses the origins of The Bridge and what sets the event apart from other automotive

exhibitions. Here is the dialogue:

What inspired the creation of The Bridge?

The namesake event that takes place at the illustrious golf club, The Bridge, pays homage to the history of the Bridgehampton Racing Circuit on which the club now sits. Developed by Bob Rubin, who raced at the track in its heyday, the grounds of the Rees Jones-designed course still have elements of the old raceway present, including the original viewing bridge.

The clubhouse itself, designed by world-renowned architectural firm Roger Ferris + Partners, was inspired by a turbine that was found in the pits. The event was cofounded by myself, Bob Rubin and Jeffrey Einhorn in 2016.

How will the third edition be different than the first two years?

Since launching, the event has been gaining notoriety amongst some of the top collectors around the U.S. This, in addition to the draw the club itself has for ultra-luxury brands, has generated significant interest from the types of sponsorship partners we imagined having as we steadily grew.

This year, we are thrilled to have back all of 2017's partners including presenting partner Richard Mille with Bell Helicopter, NetJets, Burgess, Sherry-Lehmann, Karma, McLaren, Pagani, Nicholas Brawer and Uovo, and this year, in addition we have been able to attract Douglas Elliman, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, Riva, Berluti, Bugatti, Terrafugia, MAT, ATS and Fiji.

This year, the exhibition will feature more than 160 rare classic cars and the contemporary art fair that coincides, The September Art Fair at the Bridge, will feature 12 of the world's leading galleries.



The Bridge 2017. Image courtesy of Capitol Sunset Photography

Why is the event invite-only? How are attendees selected?

In consideration for the privacy of the members of the club, the event is, and will always remain, by invitation only.

Some of the cars that are exhibited at The Bridge make their way to The Bridgehampton Museum on Sunday morning for The Bridge Cars & Coffee, which also draws some incredible classic cars. That event is open to the public and attracts a wonderful crowd of enthusiasts from all over the New York area and more than 300 cars.

What impact do sponsors see from The Bridge?

For sponsors, it's a two-day affair that starts on Friday evening when we host a reception at The Bridge for the collectors whose cars will be shown at the Saturday garden party. The sponsors can be set up for that evening, if suitable, but more importantly, the intimate 150-person environment offers a great opportunity for them to be personally introduced to the collectors and begin new relationships with these often difficult to reach individuals.

On Saturday, the guest list is made up of members of the club and their friends, the top customers of the partner brands, and specially invited guests of ours, providing a highly desirable opportunity for them to get to know the guests. Each of the brands have top executives on hand, in some cases the founder or chairman, and the automotive partners typically bring a chief designer or engineer, which proves to be highly effective in engaging with attendees.

We are also now seeing the beginnings of our partners choosing to use the date to unveil something new, such as Richard Mille, who will debut a never-before-seen limited-edition watch for the Americas; and Berluti, who will reveal a one-off motor bike that was created in partnership with Triumph.

What sets The Bridge apart from other automotive events and car shows?

We have been told by many people that The Bridge will be the Pebble Beach of the East Coast' or that it feels like

Quail did before it got so big,' and while we are flattered by this of course, Bob, Jeff and I are unified in our vision for keeping The Bridge intimate and by invitation only. However, our future plans do include adding other linked events to take place the weekend of The Bridge, making it the multi-day destination we envisioned from the beginning.

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