

Automotive Design Studios Visualize Auto Racing in the Year 2025

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Design Studios Compete in the 5th Annual LA Auto Show Design Challenge

LOS ANGELES – Oct. 20, 2008 – Today’s race cars have ground-breaking technology to improve speed, power, performance and safety but what a difference 17 years into the future can make. Imagine race cars that go beyond the expectations and challenges of racing today, such as never needing to stop for re-fueling or collision avoidance assistance technology for enhanced safety.

Nine of Southern California’s automotive design studios did just that, predicting how auto racing will change by the year 2025. The designs are part of the fifth annual Los Angeles Auto Show’s Design Challenge, where studios including Audi, BMW, GM, Honda, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Mercedes-Benz, Toyota and Volkswagen are pitted against each other to showcase their talents and further explore new ideas in automotive design.

„Automotive designers have always been fascinated with Motor Sports and this year’s Design Challenge has provided them with the opportunity to use their creative talent to look at these cars with new eyes, using innovative technologies and approaches,” said Chuck Pelly, director of Design Los Angeles and partner in The Design Academy, Inc. “This adds to the excitement, interest and personal involvement in the sport that has thrilled people of all ages for many years...and many more years to come.”

Entries in this year’s Motor Sports 2025 Design Challenge include:

- Audi of America Design Center California:

The Audi R25 races in the inaugural Los Angeles round of the ALMS 2025, which incorporates innovations such as high-velocity banks and tunnels. The R25 contains features like the new Dynamic Space Frame, allowing much greater degree of flexibility, integration of circuits and rigidity. It runs on Algae bio fuel for endurance and electric motor capability through Wireless power transfer technology. Staying true to the “Form is Function” philosophy, there is not an ounce of needless element in the R25.

- BMW Group DesignworksUSA:

The BMW Hydrogen Powered Salt Flat Racer reuses existing, ordinary and mundane materials such as old oil barrels and BBQ lids. Friendly, whimsical and sustainable, the concept employs goldfish as “co-pilots” to ensure that the vehicle is running clean emissions (if your fish get sick, you must be running “rich”).

- General Motors Advanced Design:

The GM Chaparral Volt collects and generates its own energy from three different clean, renewable and abundant California resources: Earth, Wind and Fire to create an entirely new category of racing - the eco-triathlon.

- Honda Research and Development, North America:

The Honda Great Race 2025's sonar/echolocation sensors are able to detect changes in speed, terrain, and altitude, allowing it to switch to any configuration to circumnavigate the globe in 24 hours on land through the U.S., by sea through Asia and by air over Europe.

- Mazda R&D of North America:

The MAZDA KAAAN is an electric race car that has a patented electronic tire system to reach 250 mph with no harmful emissions. The vehicles are piloted by individual drivers but teams are made up of thirty cars, all on the track together.

- Mitsubishi Research & Design of North America:

The Mitsubishi MMR25's multi-terrain, omnidirectional wheels consist of eight independently-controlled motors, allowing for "8 x 4" wheel drive so that the car can be driven forward while pointing in any direction.

- Mercedes-Benz Advanced Design of North America:

Luxury racing arrives in the Mercedes-Benz Formula Zero Racer by incorporating the thrill of Formula 1, the track dynamics of the bobsled, and the grace and efficiency of yacht racing.

- Toyota's Caltex Design Research:

The Toyota Le Mans Racer is the ultimate race car that never needs to stop. Powered by highly efficient hydrogen fuel cell electric motors, each of its body panels is embedded with photovoltaic panels to supply electricity when extra energy is needed.

- Volkswagen of America Design Center:

In the Volkswagen Runner Bio Runner, the rider is positioned inside a protective cage on a motorcycle-like saddle with controls attached to the hands and feet. These controls manipulate all wheels via synthetic muscle-based suspension which offers unparalleled control and traction.

Entries will be judged by Tom Matano of San Francisco's Academy of Art University, Imre Molner of Detroit's College for Creative Studies and Stewart Reed of Pasadena's Art Center College of Design. Daniel Simon, an established car designer and founder of Cosmic Motors, is the special guest judge this year. Simon began his design career at Volkswagen and recently published his first book: Cosmic Motors-Spaceships, Cars and Pilots of Another Galaxy.

The winning design will be announced at the Design Los Angeles conference Nov. 20 at the Los Angeles Auto Show. For more information visit online at www.LAautoshow.com.

About the Design Challenge

The Design Challenge is part of the Design Los Angeles automobile designers' conference that has evolved into an integral element of the Los Angeles Auto Show. Entering its fifth year, Design Los Angeles provides designers with leading design speakers and the opportunity to address common issues. More than 500 designers attended last year's event.

The Los Angeles region, long hailed as a leader of creativity and consumer trends, is home to the world's largest concentration of manufacturer design studios, representing automakers from North America, Europe and Asia. It is also the home of Art Center College of Design, one of the world's foremost transportation design institutions where many of today's leading automotive designers began their careers.

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