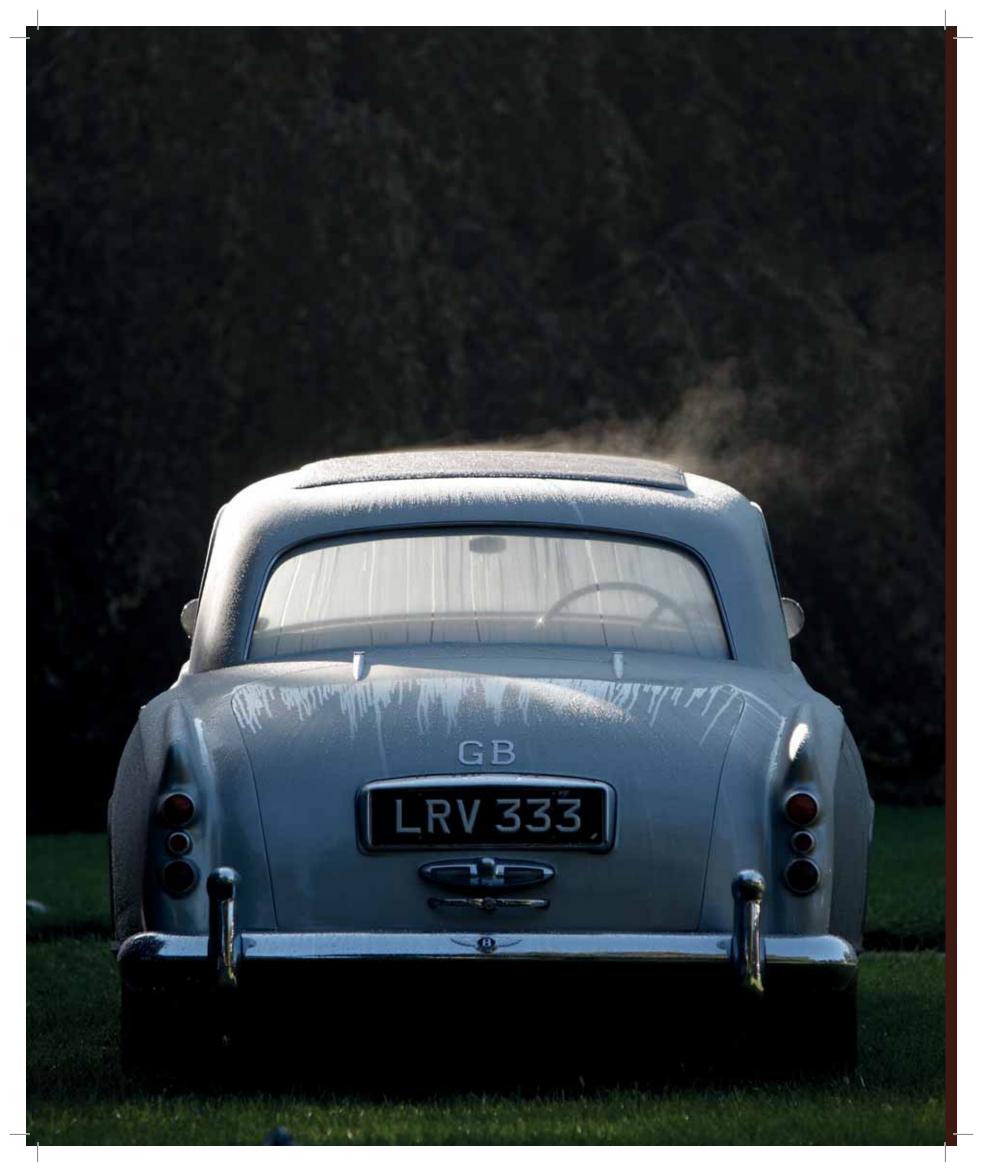
u n i q u e s

special ones



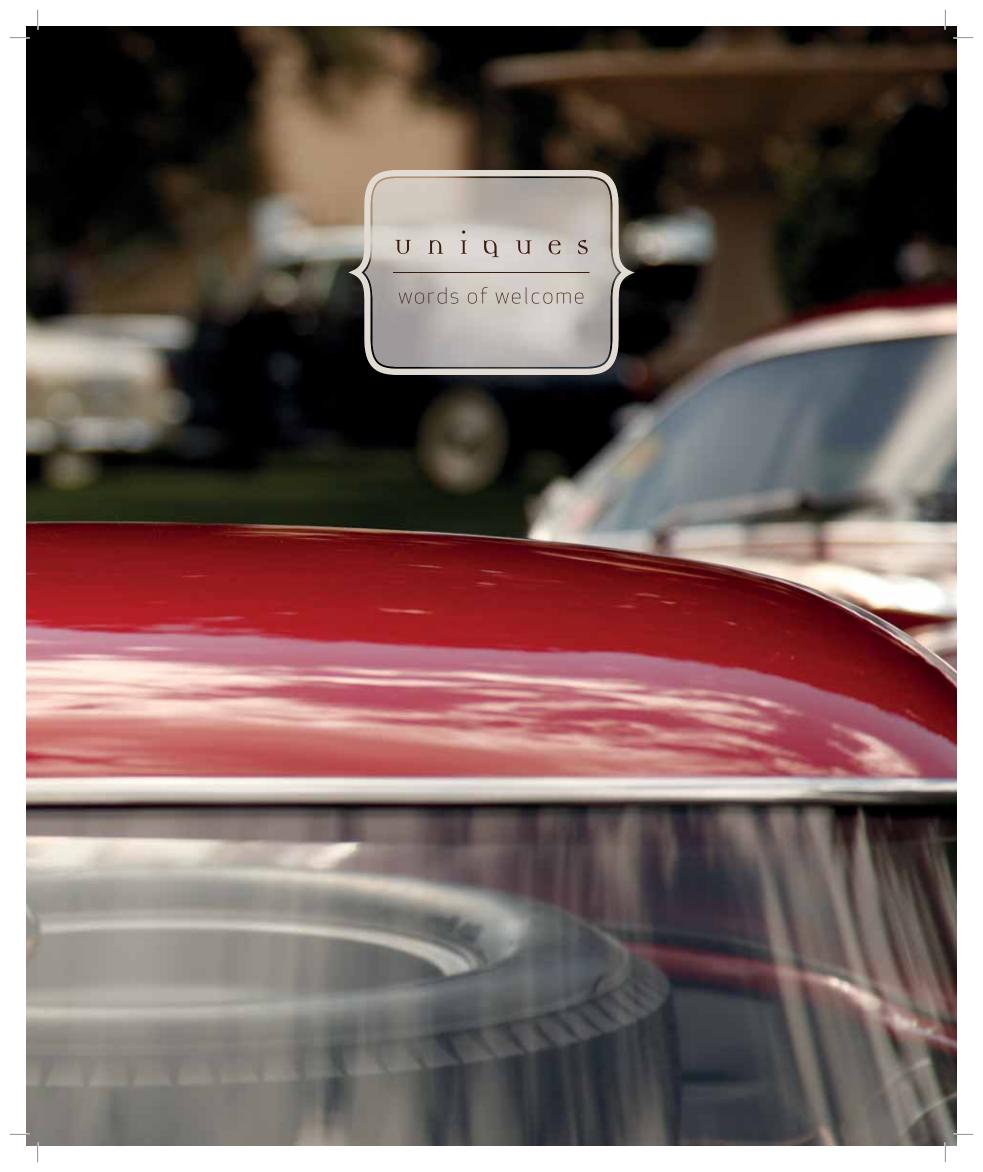
Discover the unique world you can be part of.



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Cannes?No, thank you



ROLL SCENE TAKE 5
3 16 5

EVENT # 12 2011

DIRECTOR MAC GROUP

When organizing your event, we aim for results, not rewards. At MAC Group, our focus is on results.

Our in-house services allow us to direct the whole project, up down to the smallest finest detail.

If you are interested in results versus rewards, MAC group is your preferred best choice.

Marketing & consulting

Production & organization

Relationship & communication

Eco-mission



Sandro Binelli

President of MAC Group



I am delighted to have the opportunity of presenting for the second year in a row *uniques special ones*, an event that already became a rendez-vous for collectors of unique items and objects from the high range world.

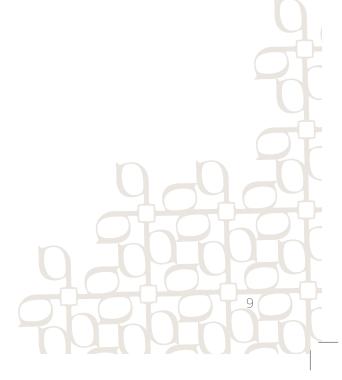
The creation of an event able to be a Concours, an exhibition and international relations gathering all in one was a project we've carefully studied and designed for years to then realize it: meeting the approval of many experts of the sector and car enthusiasts at its start up was a pleasant gratification. This year uniques is specially built around the eternal concept of Excellence and it is able to impressively gather in just one place whoever excels in whatever field, becoming a point of reference for their own self individuality and their Manufacture and Craftmanship.

The Unique Cars International Concours, heart of the event, involves selected cars of categories and criteria where uniqueness is the distinctive element, while the format we have applied welcomes the involvement of both luxury and sports car manufacturers as well as coachbuilders. It is a special honor to announce that uniques special ones will host the European première of the latest 'Alfa Romeo TZ3 Stradale' by Zagato: it makes us particularly proud to receive, after only one year, the recognition to be a stage of such an importance to be employed for a première of this kind. Zagato will really be an outstanding presence this year: on top of the TZ₃, the Milanese atelier will bring to Florence its "Contemporary" cars, built between 2000 and 2010 and never showed all together. Among them the achingly beautiful Aston Martin V12 Zagato, recently confirmed for production. We are very pleased to have again a significant number of cars in the Concours: the carefully selected audience and the city of Florence complete the picture.

Sure that we're heading in the right direction, in 2011 we decided to hold it once more in the beautiful scene of Florence. Last year warm welcome received from Authorities, from the Municipality and the local community made it an easy step to come once more to this beautiful city, which is itself the symbol of uniqueness and a place of excellence

But it is not simply a concours: uniques special ones also has on display exceptional handmade articles, fashion accessories and one-off designer creations of such a high standard as to make it an exhibition and a meeting point for anyone who recognizes himself in those distinctive values of the unique. My heartfelt thanks go to Stefano Ricci, exceptional designer who doesn't simply makes his showpieces available for exhibition: he believed in this project from the very beginning and keeps on associating its

name and brand to *uniques special ones*. Please allow me to thank our partners Marcello Fratini, Monty Shadow, Franco Cologni, Tenuta Argentiera and Officine Panerai. My thanks also go to Florence's Mayor, Matteo Renzi as well as to Adolfo Orsi, Tom Tjaarda and to all judges who took part in the concours. A special thanks to Andrea Zagato for all the masterpieces he shared with us. And to the Centro Storico Fiat di Torino for the striking Mefistofele. And of course I want to remember the important support of two prestige companies as Mercedes-Benz and Richemont. Last but not least my thanks to the collectors who became spokespersons of the uniques project in the world.



Matteo Renzi

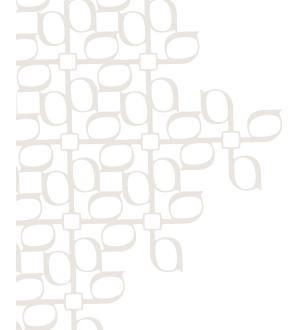
Mayor of Florence



It's our pleasure to have the event "Uniques special ones" back in Florence. For the second year we're honoured to host people who love 'unique pieces' and rare items from every kind of field. And Florence, the cradle of uniqueness, of genius that cannot be repeated, unique itself in every piece of stone set in centuries, cannot but offer its entire beauty to your convention, for the guest to enjoy.

It is fascinatingly contrasting how the serial product for excellence, the car – something that in the idea of the most ones is the symbol itself of mechanical, dull and characterless work – can generate an event like this one that you organize, about uniqueness. It is the demonstration that we can find, we have to find uniqueness and excellence everywhere. The pursuit of excellence, as the one of Beauty, is a duty that we have inherited from our great past. It is not something that we have to look for or expect to find only now and then. Uniqueness as the expression of each excellence and speciality is something that we have the commitment to accomplish everyday, in every single action of our life. It is the best part of everybody, the uniqueness of everyone of us, that has to be free and become the symbol of our lifestyle. In Florence, this is what we're trying to do: on the path of our ancestors, we are working for giving the best to our citizens, for their best quality of life. This is what we call "wellness": the beauty of living in Florence.

I hope you'll enjoy it too, during your staying here, and will continue feeling here as at your own "unique" place.



Monty Shadow



"The world will be saved by Culture, Art, Poetry, Lunatics and Craftsmen".

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all craftsmen and genuine artists that make the world different and foster as well the art of excellence, i.e. the art of craftsmanship. This has taken place in the unique and prestigious venue of Florence, city of incredible history, heritage, civilization and home to the most fascinating craftsmen of the present and the past.

uniques special ones is in Florence to address a social challenge, a unique art exhibition with pieces related to the automotive world, using craftsmen and arts as a tool for social change. Craftsmen, Culture, Music, Photography carry unanimous endorsement of craftsmen and all environments acting as guardians, trustees and ambassadors all over the globe.

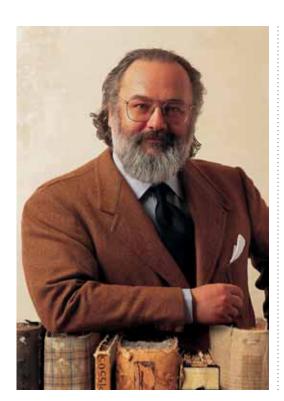
uniques special ones showcases key social issues using the power of craftsmanship and uniqueness, to promote this great event in Florence in the world of craftsmanship.

Will the world respond to the unique Bespoke Art of craftsmanship influence in China and

Asia? Which role will Russia and India have where there is an incredible world of craftsmen? In the European world established craftsmen already exist, as well as in other parts of the world. We will see what the future holds for us and maybe we'll find an answer to some of these questions.

We should talk more about craftsmen and uniques special ones more than ever, because craftsmen will save the world.

Stefano Ricci

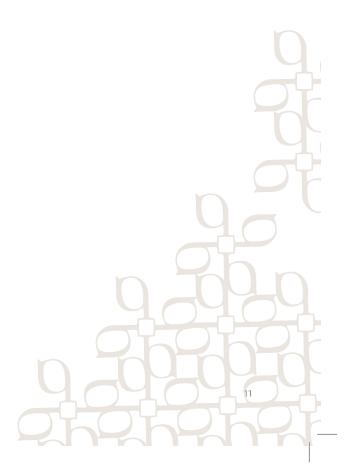


Never compromise quality in favour of quantity. This statement has been my philosophy through decades.

This is why, I am pleased to confirm my support to uniques special ones, that is following this vision

I would like to wish my warmest welcome to the privileged guests of this second edition with a message of emotions.

In a world of great numbers and new technologies, you will join an extraordinary journey into the passion of handcrafted dreams as I have always done with my collections of true "100% Made in Italy".









uniques special ones: the Concours, exhibition and international relations format

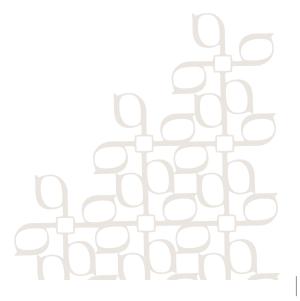
At its second year, uniques special ones renews its original formula providing simultaneously for an international Concours, an exhibition conceived to showcase and add value to 'unique' or 'rare' cars and other artifacts that are limited editions or special due to the role they have played in history, and an international public relations format. In this 2011 edition uniques will celebrate Excellence, through exclusive craftsmanship, manufacture and very special products worldwide.

The heart of uniques is The Unique Cars International Concours dedicated to those special collectors who own cars of which only one was built or remains today: one-off cars, the remaining cars of extremely limited series, prototypes, concept and show cars, famous cars (cars of famous personalities, cars that have become famous for their victories of the past, cars with special bodies, cars with the first or last chassis numbers) and limited edition cars (fewer than 20 examples built or that still remain) are the categories chosen for the selection process of eligible cars. The concept was developed so to be easily exported with its format on an international level.

Once more, specific areas have been reserved to coach builders to give them the opportunity to showcase their pieces: Zagato will be at uniques special ones with a significant number of cars such as the Alfa Romeo TZ₃ Stradale, at its première in Europe – a true event in the event. But also the legendary Alfetta 159, drove by Juan Manuel Fangio to win the 1951 Formula One championship or the Aston Martin V12 Zagato, recently confirmed for production.

Eligible cars have been selected by a commis-

sion, which also entered each vehicle in a specific class: an international jury will be in charge of assigning the awards for each class, while some historic cars and all new cars will be voted exclusively by the public.





The exhibition

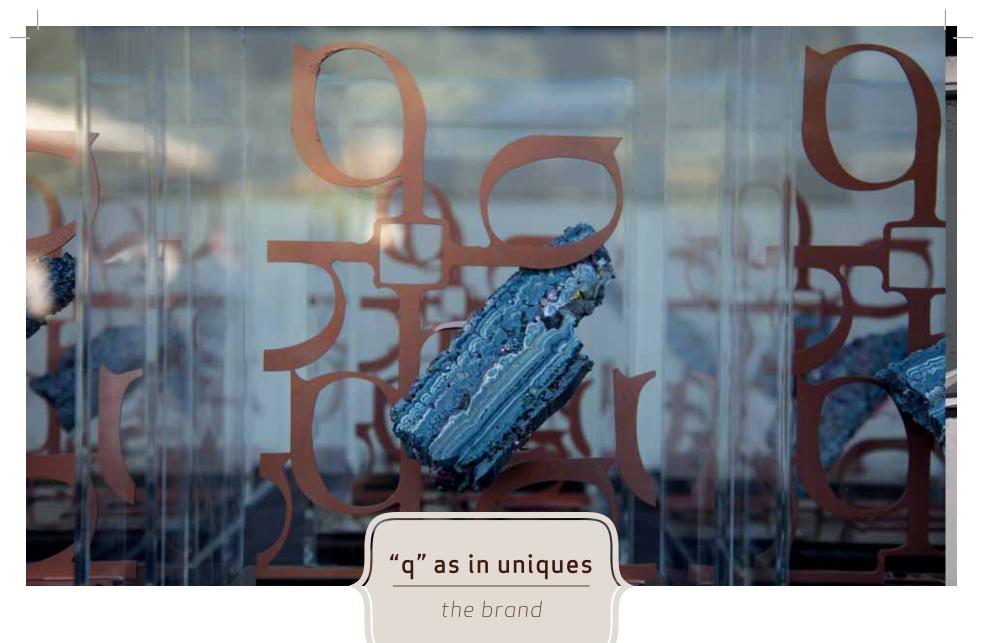
uniques is about more than cars, it includes exceptional unique artifacts as an integral part of the concept. An integral part of the event's concept is its presentation of rare and unique objects: cars, naturally, but also important, unparalleled objects from the high-end world, from jewellery to objects of design and from fashion accessories to works of art. A carefully chosen selection of deluxe brands will put their savoir-faire on display, presenting objects and artistry characterized by the most refined craftsmanship. Companies will not only present their items, but also the processes that lead to the creation of unique models.

The aim for the coming years is to welcome private collectors to contribute proactively to the process of the exhibition. A valuable input has been made by our presenting sponsors. The concept of 'unique' and 'rare' has been carefully developed in detail on many levels, including an Italian distinctive memory, the winery tradition: Palazzo della Gherardesca's vinery will be at hand to better know and understand the unique excellence of wines from the Tenuta Argentiera. And the view of Florence itself provides for a

memorable exhibition and experience: the city's artistic heritage, indeed, is second to none, a glorious testimony to centuries of patronage and creativity as in Palazzo Vecchio and Terrazza degli Uffizi.

International relations format

Last but not least, uniques special ones is also an international relations format. We have conceived the creation of a community in which collectors taking part to the event will be welcome to join our exclusive and elegant club. Throughout the year, members of the 'uniques Club' will be involved in exclusive high-quality events and will have the chance to be included in satellite rendez-vous with the distinctive features of uniques. Various meetings on an international scale has been already successfully organized through all the current year and other ones are planned for the following months and 2012: the 'uniques Club' is planning on gathering its associates at some of the main foreign luxury capitals during major international events.



The uniques brand was conceived to convey the essence of its concept, to reflect the character and values of the event, to express the spirit of a savoir vivre that is exclusive, inimitable and unique in the experiences it brings to life.

The creative project is the result of a process of analysis and research which drew on the expertise of Carmi e Ubertis, Milan, and their staff of specialists in the art of communicating an aesthetics of contemporary luxury that is beyond style, fashion and personal taste. They formed a team of creative specialists in the written word, together with type designers who speak the visual language of letters, modulated through a masterful understanding of colour and shade, as well as the art of printing and binding.

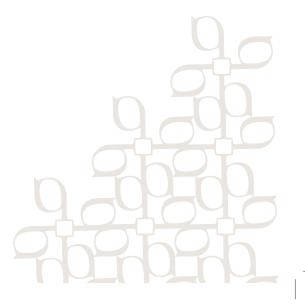
The aim was to create a brand image which allows the works exhibited to speak the essence of their own unique nature, simultaneously conveying uniques' extraordinary power to showcase every creation in a manner that speaks the language of collectors, experts and connoisseurs of beauty.

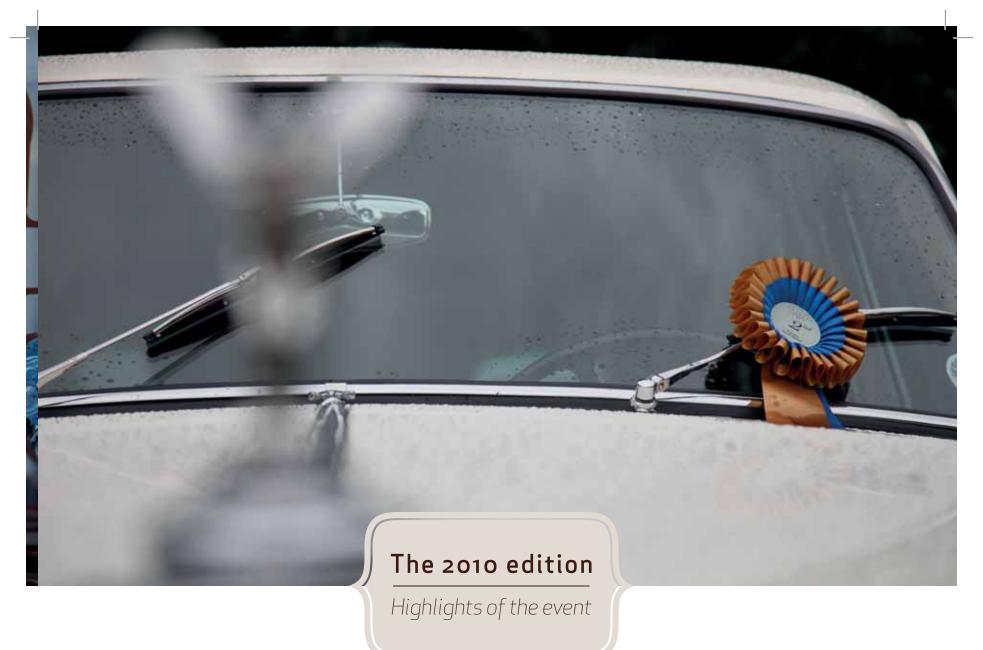
The team's first strategic decision was to take the name "uniques" and ally it with "special ones" to divest it of any association with "alone", transforming it into an evocation of creations that are "exclusive", "peerless", "authentic" and "inesti-

They then developed a typestyle that reflects the creative process behind the works exhibited, being based on an existing typeface with a contemporary design that is elegant without being baroque, and modern without being ephemeral. Manual creative touches accentuate the grace of each individual letter's contours, focusing on "q", "e" and "u" in a secret play on the initials of the words that encapsulate the essence of uniques: Quality, Exceptional and Unique.

Completing the architecture of the graphic design, a modular motif built around the logo allows it to be repeated infinitely in a texture capable of emblazoning areas, installations and communications media with the full character and heritage of the event, even when the logo itself is not present.

The colour palette was likewise chosen to be complementary without being obtrusive, providing an understated foil to the rich diversity of works exhibited, just like uniques itself.





n. 110

n. 62

n. 58

n. 42

€ 100 mln

n. 500

n. 250

n. 400

n. 200

n. 53

n. 10

Cars entered

Cars taking part in the Concours

International Collectors of Classic Cars coming from 12 different countries

Automotive brands involved

Total value of gathered cars, pieces of art, design, jewellery and artifacts

Guests on Saturday, September 25th

Guests on Saturday, Gala dinner

Guests on Sunday, September 26th

Guests on Sunday, Gala dinner

National and International Journalists

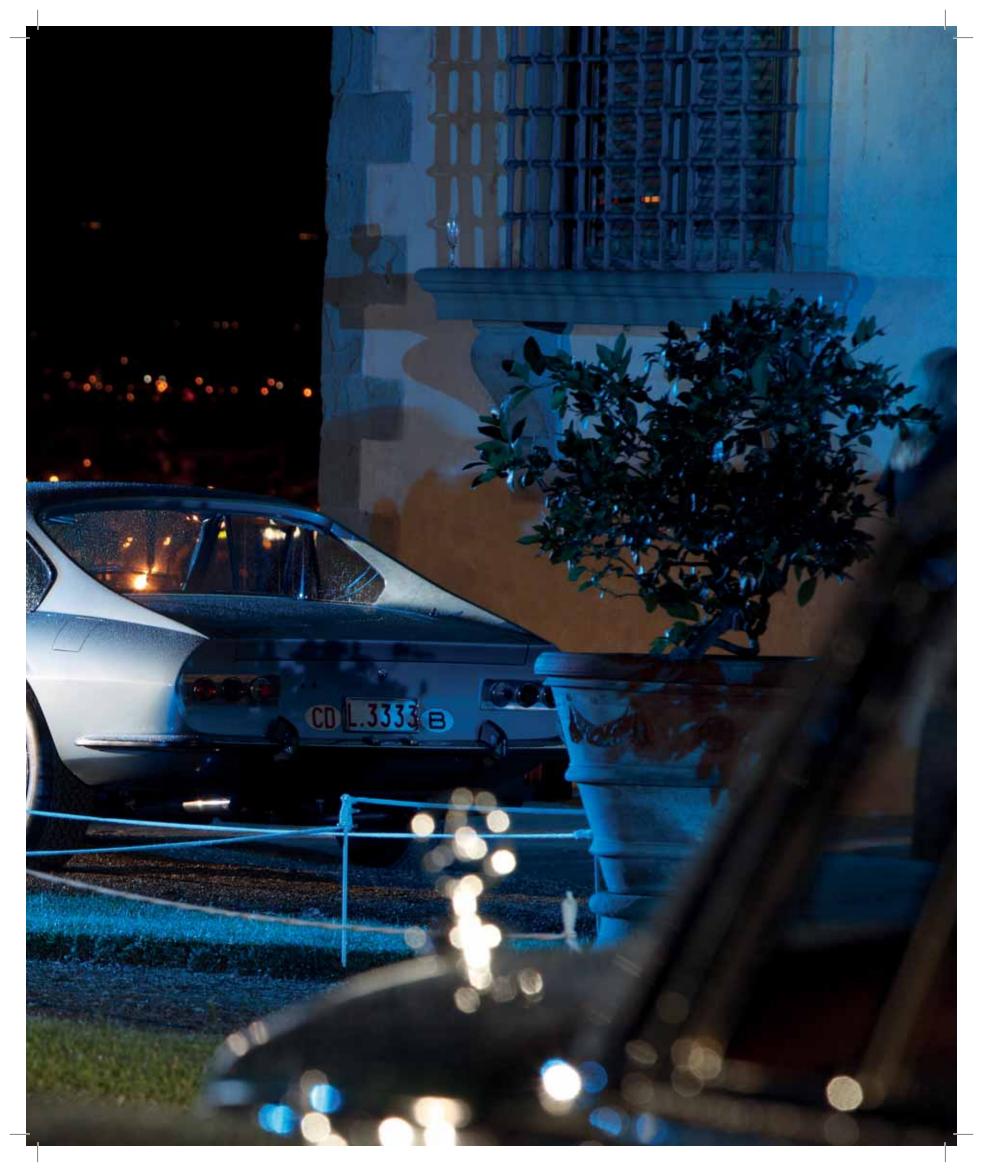
National and International Television Broadcasters



uniques special ones set a first by adopting an innovative method of judging: each car was judged by not one, but two separate teams of judges. The first team was composed of restorers, historians and experts with knowledge of a specific marque, model, or period in history. They assessed the originality and condition of preserved cars, or the quality of the restoration of restored cars. The second team appraised cars purely on their aesthetic merits.

For each class, three prizes were awarded: one for restoration/originality, one for style, and the Overall Class winner, combining the two evaluations. In some classes a single car received all three prizes, while in others two or three different cars shared the awards. The public thus understood more clearly how different criteria can be applied in judging classic cars. The Best of Show was chosen from the Overall Class winners, also taking into consideration the uniqueness of the car.





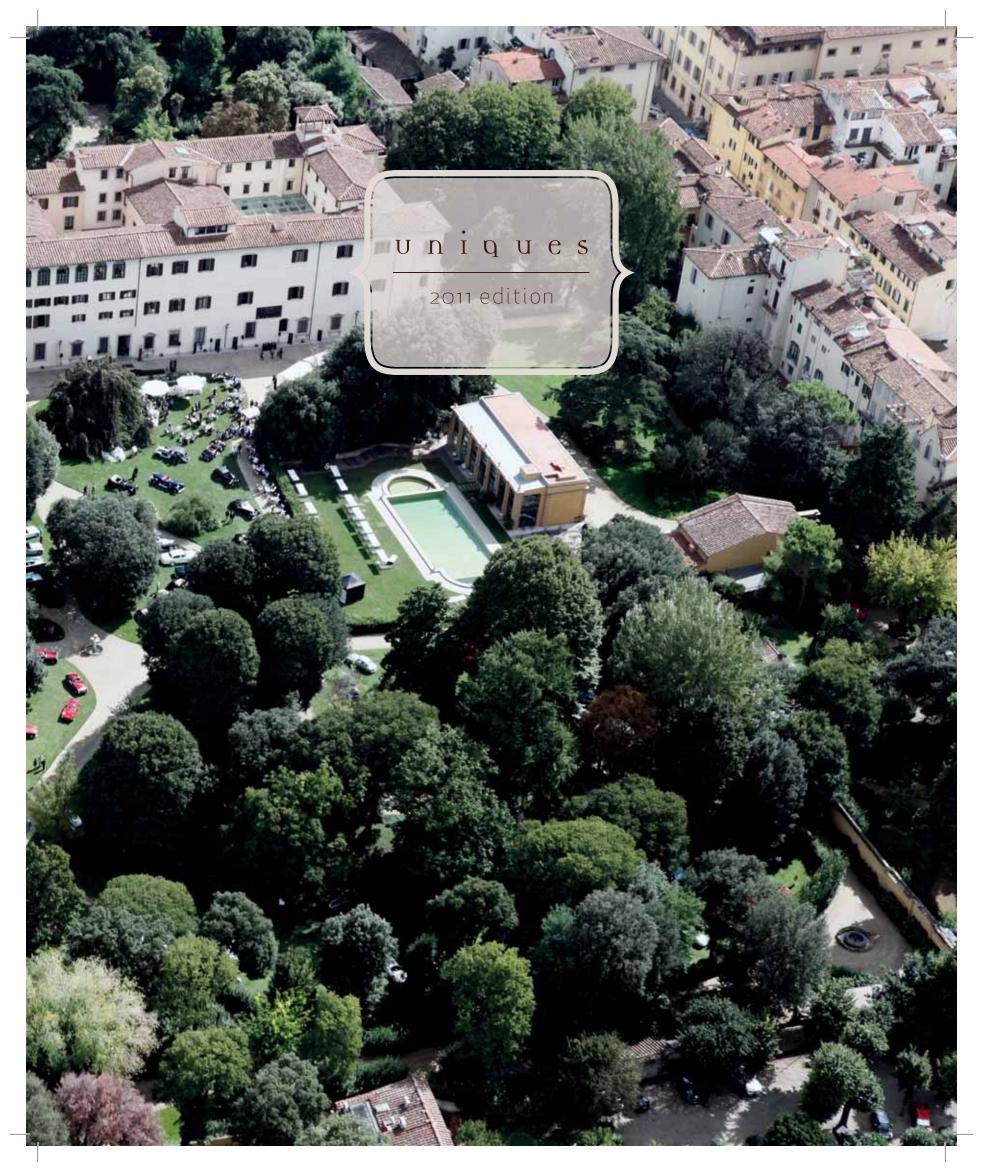
2010 list of prizes

prize	пг.	marque	model	name and lastname	country				
BEST OF SHOW									
Best of Show	73	FERRARI	330 GTC Speciale	Brandon Wang	HONG KONG				
1st Class - PRE WAR ELEGANCE									
3rd 2nd Style Originality and Restoration Overall Class Winner	5 9 3 3	SS S.S.I BENTLEY LANCIA LANCIA LANCIA	Two Door Saloon 4 1/4 Litre Drophead Coupé Astura Torpedo Grand Sport Astura Torpedo Grand Sport Astura Torpedo Grand Sport	Andrea Walliman Gerry Leumann Guido Lamperti Guido Lamperti Guido Lamperti	SWITZERLAND SWITZERLAND ITALY ITALY ITALY				
		2nd Class ·	- PRE-WAR SPORTS CAR						
3rd 2nd Style Originality and Restoration Overall Class Winner	13 14 14 12	OM MG MG ASTON MARTIN ASTON MARTIN	665 S Superba C-Type Midget C-Type Midget 1.5 litre Sports 1.5 litre Sports	Albert Wetz Graham Watts Graham Watts Giampaolo Bonechi Giampaolo Bonechi	LUXEMBOURG UK UK ITALY ITALY				
3rd Class - POST WAR BRITISH ELEGANCE									
3rd 2nd Style Originality and Restoration Overall Class Winner	24 26 24 20 20	ROLLS-ROYCE ROLLS-ROYCE ROLLS-ROYCE ROLLS-ROYCE ROLLS-ROYCE	Silver Cloud III Cabriolet Silver Cloud III Flying Spur Silver Cloud III Cabriolet Silver Wraith Cabriolet Silver Wraith Cabriolet	Marcello Fratini Marcello Fratini Marcello Fratini Frank Ricciardelli Frank Ricciardelli	ITALY ITALY ITALY USA USA				
4th Class - EARLY POST-WAR ITALIAN COACHBUILDERS									
3rd 2nd Style Originality and Restoration Overall Class Winner	31 30 35 30 35	BRISTOL BENTLEY MERCEDES-BENZ BENTLEY MERCEDES-BENZ	400 Cabriolet MK VI Drophead Coupé 300 Coupé Speciale MK VI Drophead Coupé 300 Coupé Speciale	Adrian Berry Arnold Kawlath Fred Kriz Arnold Kawlath Fred Kriz	UK FRANCE P. MONACO FRANCE P. MONACO				
5th Class - BARCHETTAS									
3rd 2nd Style Originality and Restoration Overall Class Winner	43 44 42 43 42	FERRARI PORSCHE FERRARI FERRARI FERRARI	500 Mondial 550 Spyder 500 Mondial 500 Mondial 500 Mondial	Pierre Mellinger Win Van Gierdergom Mauro Lotti Pierre Mellinger Mauro Lotti	FRANCE BELGIUM ITALY FRANCE ITALY				
6th Class - 1950'S FERRARI BERLINETTAS									
3rd 2nd Style Originality and Restoration Overall Class Winner	47 49 47 49 51	FERRARI FERRARI FERRARI FERRARI FERRARI	340 America Coupé 212/225 S Export Coupé 340 America Coupé 212/225 S Export Coupé 250 MM	John B. Croul Marcello Fratini John B. Croul Marcello Fratini Mauro Lotti	USA ITALY USA ITALY ITALY				

2010 list of prizes

prize	nr.	marque	model	name and lastname	country				
7th Class - OPEN SPORTS CAR									
3rd 2nd Style Originality and Restoration Overall Class Winner	58 56 55 60 55	JAGUAR ASTON MARTIN MERCEDES-BENZ LANCIA MERCEDES-BENZ	XK 140 OTS DB 2/4 DHC 300 SLS Roadster Prototype Fulvia Sport 1.3 Trasformabile 300 SLS Roadster Prototype	John Houtkamp Stefano Ricci Alberto Cefis Guido Lamperti Alberto Cefis	NETHERLANDS ITALY ITALY ITALY ITALY				
8th Class - POST WAR COUPES									
3rd 2nd Style Originality and Restoration Overall Class Winner	66 64 64 63 63	MASERATI MERCEDES-BENZ MERCEDES-BENZ FIAT FIAT	A6G/54 Berlinetta 300 SL 300 SL 8V Supersonic 8V Supersonic	Mauro Lotti Pier Angelo Masselli Pier Angelo Masselli Jan De Reu Jan De Reu	ITALY ITALY ITALY BELGIUM BELGIUM				
9th Class - 1960'S GRANTURISMO COUPES									
3rd 2nd Style Originality and Restoration Overall Class Winner	72 74 74 72 73	FERRARI LAMBORGHINI LAMBORGHINI FERRARI FERRARI	275 GTB/4 Miura P 400 SV Miura P 400 SV 275 GTB/4 330 GTC Speciale	Hans Weth Mauro Lotti Mauro Lotti Hans Weth Brandon Wang	GERMANY ITALY ITALY GERMANY HONG KONG				
CATEGORIES									
One-off model The only remaining car Prototypes Concept and show cars Famous Cars Cars from an extremely	1 70 61 69 62	DUESENBERG FERRARI ABARTH ALFA ROMEO ASTON MARTIN	Model X Boat Roadster 250 GTE 204 A 2600 coupé Speciale DB2 Vantage Coupé	Peter Heydon Alberto Cappelli Mark Gessler Roland D' leteren Claudia Tagliaferri	USA ITALY USA BELGIUM ITALY				
limited production run 39 ERMINI 1500 Sport Giuliano Bensi ITALY									
Saturday		PE'	OPLE'S CHOICE						
25th of September Sunday 26th of September	3 23	LANCIA ROLLS-ROYCE	Astura Torpedo Grand Sport Silver Cloud Estate Car	Guido Lamperti Marcello Fratini	ITALY ITALY				
FIVA'S CHOICE									
FIVA's Choice	4	ALFA ROMEO	6C 2300 GT	Luciano Caporali	ITALY				
SPECIAL PRIZES									
Special Prize Special Prize Special Prize Special Prize	87 90 91 108	BENTLEY ALFA ROMEO FIAT DIATTO	Flying Star Touring TZ3 Zagato 500 Tender 2 Ottovù	Touring Superleggera Martin Kapp - Zagato Castagna Milano Giovanni Piero Rotundo	ITALY GERMANY ITALY ITALY				



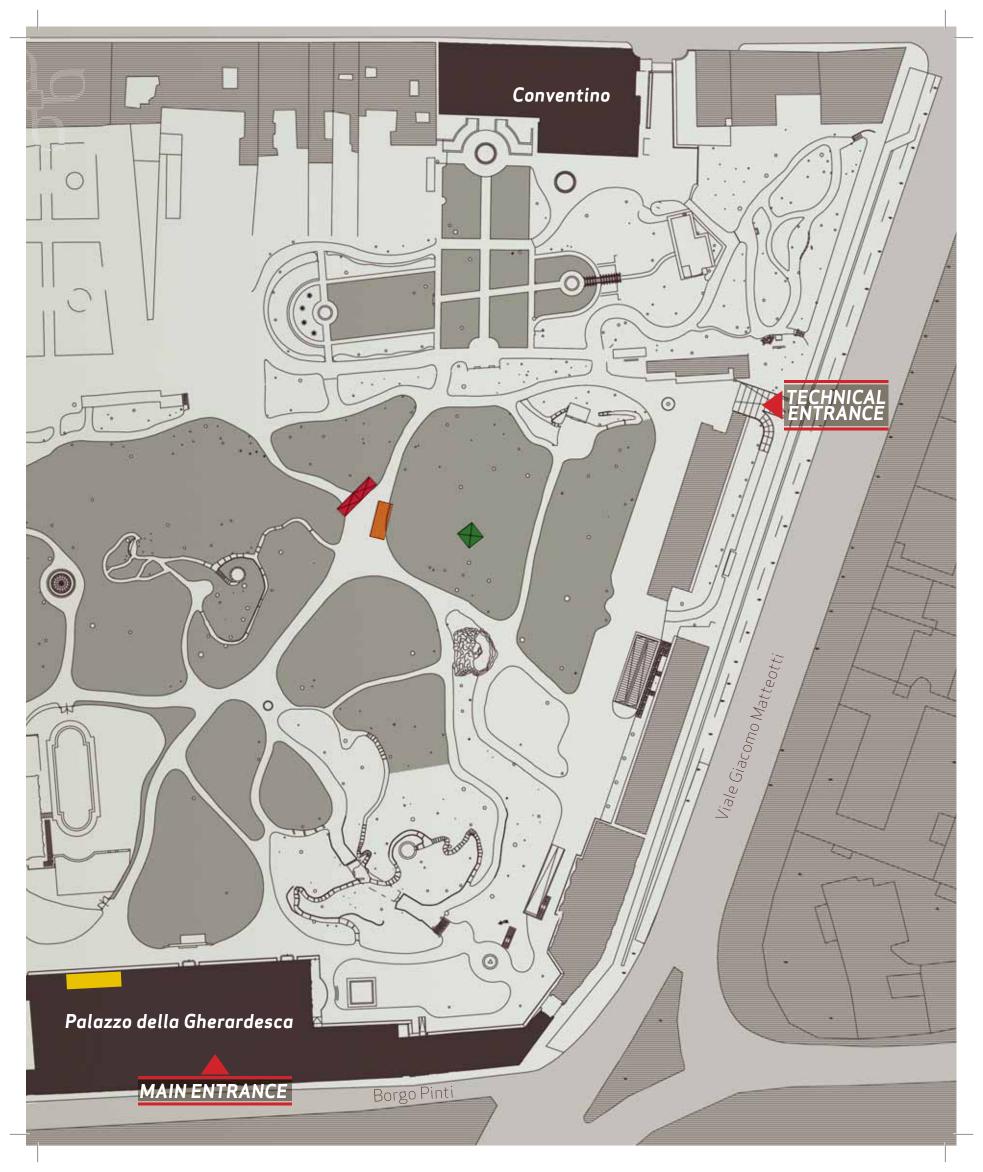


special ones

Infopoint
Accreditation
Cars Presentation Area
Display Area
Judges Area

SEPTEMBER 2nd - 4th, 2011
Giardino, Conventino and Palazzo della Gherardesca
Four Seasons Hotel Firenze







Best of Show

Voted by the judges from amongst the winners of each class.

Announced during the Best of Show Ceremony at the Conventino, Sunday the 4th of September. Trophy provided by Stefano Ricci.

Class awards

Voted by the judges and announced during the parade on Sunday the 4^{th} of September in the Giardino della Gherardesca.

For each class there will be a prize for: Best of Class for originality and restoration, Best of Class for styling, Overall Best of Class. Overall Best of Class winner, second and third in Class will also receive a rosette.

Special awards

Voted by the selection committee and announced during the parade on Saturday the 3rd in the Giardino della Gherardesca.

Special awards for the various Categories

Voted by the selection committee. Dedicated to the eligibility categories of the cars and announced during the parade on Sunday the 4th of September in the Giardino della Gherardesca.

Special awards for cars manufactured in the last twenty years

Announced by the selection committee and awarded during the parade on Saturday the 3rd of September in the Giardino della Gherardesca.

FIVA award

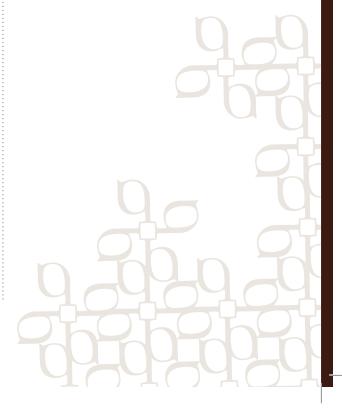
Voted by the FIVA representatives present at the concours and awarded during the parade on Saturday the 3rd of September in the Giardino della Gherardesca.

Press award

Voted by the press present at the concours and awarded during the parade on Sunday the $4^{\rm th}$ of September in the Giardino della Gherardesca.

People's choice award

On Saturday and Sunday everyone present will vote for one of the cars in the Giardino della Gherardesca that was manufactured before the 'qos.



programme for entrants

Friday 2nd September

10.00 am - 6.00 pm

Registration for event

Shuttle to car park for those who booked parking

Cars positioned in the Giardino della Gherardesca

Free time for entrants, coffee break all day, lunch in the Giardino della Gherardesca

Hotel Check in

6.30 pm Shuttle from the Four Seasons Hotel to the Gala dinne

Welcome Drink at the Stefano Ricci Boutique

Dress code: suit and tie.

8.30 pm Gala dinner at Terrazza degli Uffizi.

Dress code: suit and tie

after dinner Shuttle to the Four Seasons Hotel and overnight stay

Saturday 3rd September

9.00 am - 6.00 pm

Coffee break and musical moments throughout the day

10.00 am

7.00 pm

The judges begin work

12.00 Noon

Lunch in the Giardino della Gherardesca

from 4.00 pm

All the cars parade. Beginning of presentation by Savina Confaloni and Marco Makaus and special prizes awarded, including the people's choic

from 7.30 pm

Shuttle from the Four Seasons Hotel to the Gala dinner

from 8.30 pm

Cocktail and Gala dinner at Palazzo Vecchio.

Dress code: black tie

after dinner

Shuttle to the Four Seasons Hotel

Sunday 4th September

9.00 am - 6.00 pm

Coffee break and musical moments throughout the day

10.00 am

The judges begin work

11.00 am

Art performance by Christina Oiticica in the Giardino della Gherardesca

12.00 Noon

Lunch in the Giardino della Gherardesca

from 3.00 pm

Parade of 1st, 2nd and 3rd in each class, special prizes and people's choice

Class winners (1stplace) nominated for Best of Show grouped together.

from 7.00 pm

Announcement of Best of Show in front of Conventino

Cocktails and gala dinner at the Four Seasons Hotel with aperitif and

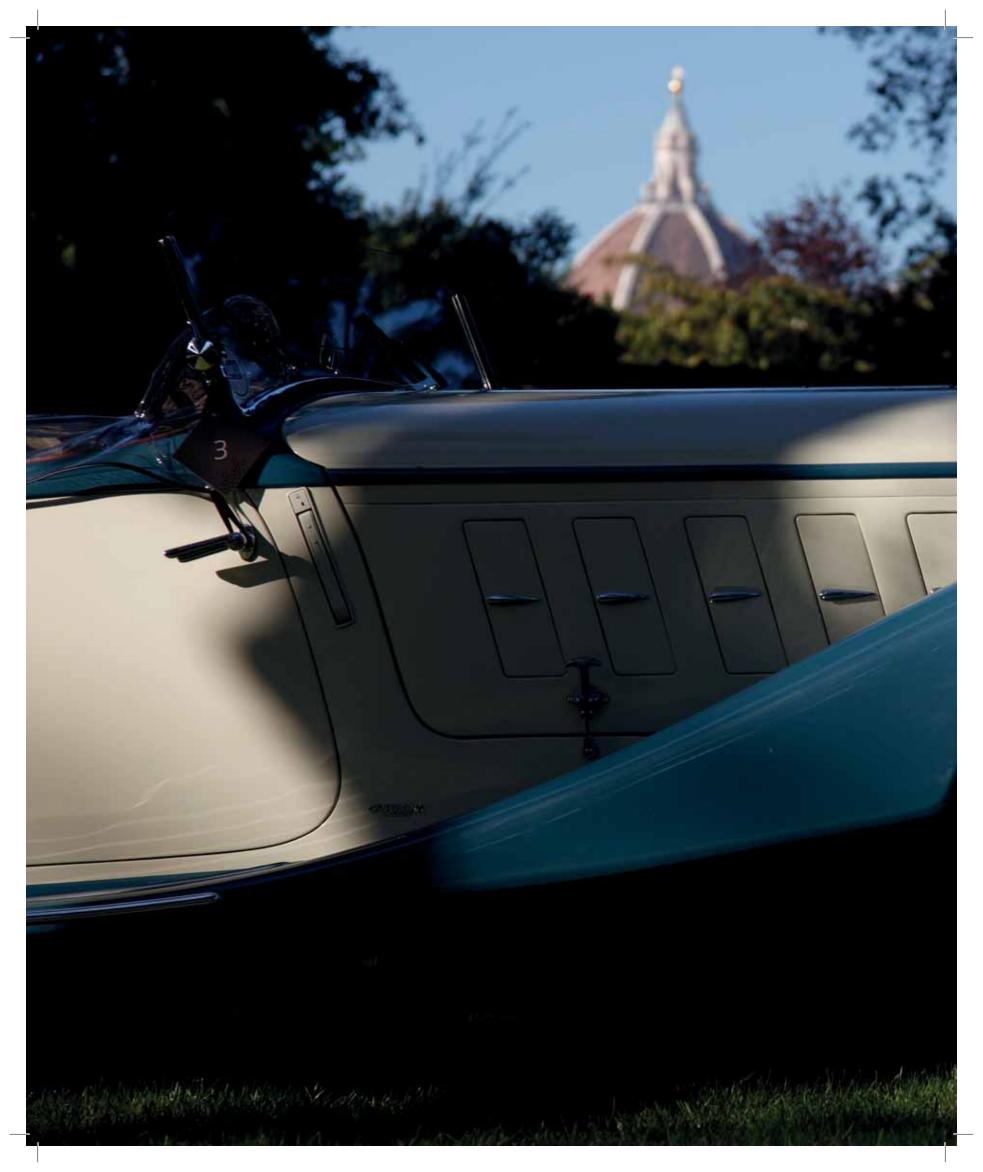
music.

Dress code: cocktail dress - lounge suit

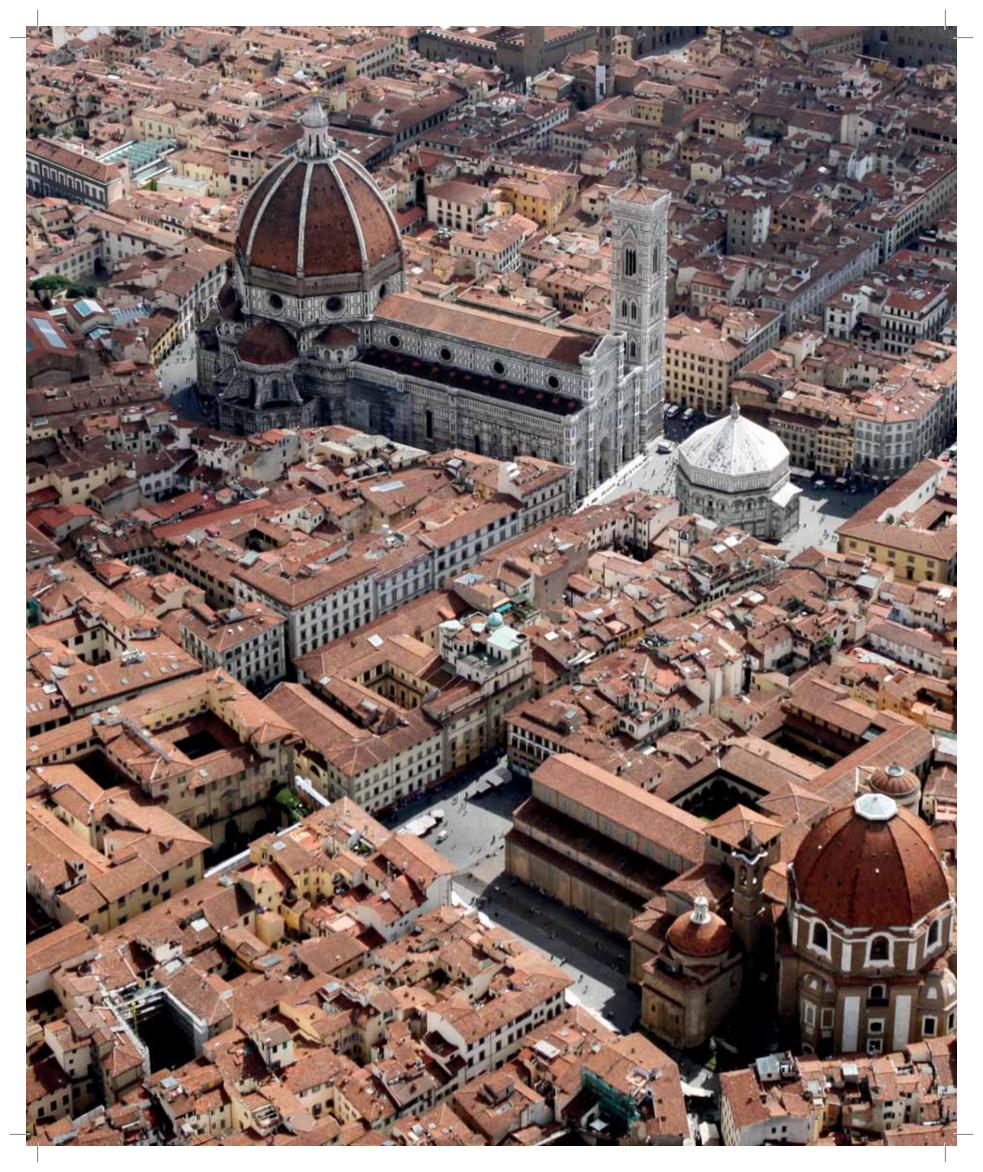
Monday 5th September

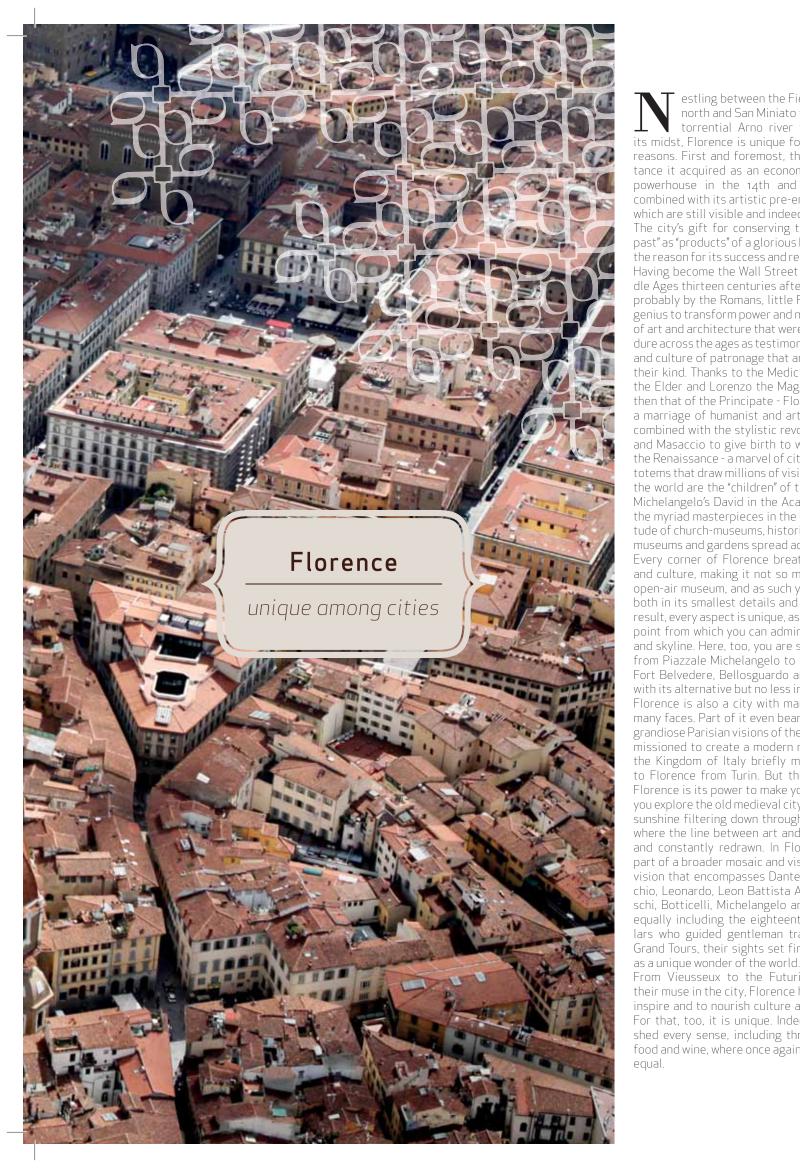
8.00 am - 12.00 Noon

Entrants and guests check out and cars leave the event









estling between the Fiesole hills to the north and San Miniato to the south, the torrential Arno river flowing through its midst, Florence is unique for a multitude of reasons. First and foremost, there's the importance it acquired as an economic and political powerhouse in the 14th and 15th centuries, combined with its artistic pre-eminence, both of which are still visible and indeed tangible today. The city's gift for conserving the "signs of the past" as "products" of a glorious history is largely the reason for its success and renown worldwide. Having become the Wall Street of the late Middle Ages thirteen centuries after its foundation, probably by the Romans, little Fiorenza had the genius to transform power and money into works of art and architecture that were destined to endure across the ages as testimony to a sensibility and culture of patronage that are unique among their kind. Thanks to the Medicis - first Cosimo the Elder and Lorenzo the Magnifico's line, and then that of the Principate - Florence witnessed a marriage of humanist and artistic ideals that combined with the stylistic revolution of Giotto and Masaccio to give birth to what we still call the Renaissance - a marvel of city marketing. The totems that draw millions of visitors from across the world are the "children" of that period, from Michelangelo's David in the Academy Gallery to the myriad masterpieces in the Uffizi and multitude of church-museums, historic palaces, minor museums and gardens spread across the city. Every corner of Florence breathes art, history and culture, making it not so much a city as an open-air museum, and as such you can admire it both in its smallest details and as a whole. As a result, every aspect is unique, as is every vantage point from which you can admire its panoramas and skyline. Here, too, you are spoilt for choice, from Piazzale Michelangelo to Pian de' Giullari, Fort Belvedere, Bellosguardo and even Fiesole, with its alternative but no less inspiring views. Florence is also a city with many histories and many faces. Part of it even bears witness to the grandiose Parisian visions of the architects commissioned to create a modern metropolis when the Kingdom of Italy briefly moved its capital to Florence from Turin. But the true magic of Florence is its power to make your spirit soar as you explore the old medieval city, the fine Tuscan sunshine filtering down through narrow streets where the line between art and craft is blurred and constantly redrawn. In Florence, both are part of a broader mosaic and vision of culture. A vision that encompasses Dante, Giotto, Verrocchio, Leonardo, Leon Battista Alberti, Brunelleschi, Botticelli, Michelangelo and Galileo, while equally including the eighteenth century scholars who guided gentleman travelers on their Grand Tours, their sights set firmly on Florence

From Vieusseux to the Futurists, who found their muse in the city, Florence has continued to inspire and to nourish culture across the world. For that, too, it is unique. Indeed, it has nourished every sense, including through the art of food and wine, where once again Florence has no



he Florence Commune commissioned the architect Arnolfo di Cambio, who already had the achievements of Santa Croce and the Duomo to his name, to undertake the building of the Palazzo Vecchio in 1299. The project was allocated the area between the church of San Piero Scheraggio and the Palazzo degli Uberti, on the ruins of the Palazzo dei Fanti and the Palazzo dell'Esecutore di Giustizia, previously the site of the Ancient Roman theatre. Originally built for the "Priors" representing the city's Major Guilds, the building came to be known as the Palazzo della Signoria from the 16th century. Together with Brunelleschi's dome it has always been the most recognizable symbol of the city's power.

Enlarged and altered many times over the centuries, the Palazzo Vecchio we see today is defined by the interior building and decoration works commissioned by Cosimo I de' Medici in around the mid-16th century, which transformed it into the ducal palace he desired. When the court of the Medicis moved to the Palazzo Pitti, it continued to house the Wardrobe and a number of government offices until 1871, when it became the seat of the City Council.

In the eyes of the world, however, the Palazzo

Vecchio is above all a treasure house of artistic and architectural masterpieces, from the courtyard designed by Michelozzo and embellished with stuccos and frescoes to the Sala di Clemente VII and Salone dei Cinquecento on the floor above. Here, a masterful cycle of paintings by Giorgio Vasari celebrates the glory of Cosimo de' Medici and the city of Florence, while an equally glorious host of statues lead to Michelangelo's famous Genius of Victory.

The second floor of the museum section of the Palazzo Vecchio takes you in into the private quarters of the Medici Court, all sumptuously decorated and furnished, including their exquisite chapel, the Capella di Eleonora, with its Agnolo Bronzino paintings. More masterpieces await in the Hall of Justice (Sala dell'Udienza) and Room of the Lilies (Sala dei Gigli), where you can find the original of Donatello's Judith and Holofernes. Splendors of another kind adorn the Hall of Geographical Maps, where you'll find an extraordinary giant globe and over fifty-three remarkable painted maps that offer an unparalleled vision of the world through 16th century eyes. Then there's the Mezzanine floor with its priceless collection of medieval and renaissance paintings and sculptures, bequeathed to Florence City Council by Charles Loeser. Last but not least, there's the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio, which includes the "albergaccio" chamber where Cosimo the Elder was imprisoned in 1433, and Girolamo Savonarola in 1498. Completed in around 1308, it is crowned with the Marzocco, a heraldic lion bearing the lily crest of Florence, a unique symbol of a city that is truly unique in the world.