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# Nikita Teryoshin

Christopher de Béthune

Franck Bohbot

Michael Friedel

Fulvio Bugani

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# ALFREDO HÄBERLI

LEICA WORLD

At Leica, technology and design are intrinsically connected – so it is unsurprising that many designers have a penchant for Leica cameras. Among them is Alfredo Häberli, who used his Leica to document classic cars from a connoisseur's point of view.

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What catches the eye of an acclaimed Swiss designer travelling through Argentina, the country of his birth? The answer is: cars. Not high-gloss showroom models or extravagant rarities, but well-loved jalopies whose best days are behind them – though some still recognise them as the design icons they are. Three years ago, Alfredo Häberli drove his family across Argentina, accompanied by his Leica X2. The portfolio he compiled during this 6000 kilometre journey is appealing in every way: from the initial concept to its stringent execution and joyful sense of discovery. Time and again, the designer stopped off to photograph yet another car that caught his attention. He was especially fascinated by the broad spectrum of colours – some faded and

ravaged by time, others vivid and well-preserved.

Born in Argentina, Häberli moved to Switzerland with his parents at the age of 14. He graduated from the Zurich School of Design, and quickly established himself as an internationally renowned product and industrial designer. In 2014 he was awarded the prestigious Swiss Grand Prix of Design. His extensive client list ranges from Iittala, Campar and BMW to Luceplan and Vitra; and yet, despite working on such a wide variety of products, he always maintains a unique signature style. Whether he creates tumblers, furniture, luminaires or the interior of an entire hotel: Häberli's designs seem both modern and timeless, defined by a specific blend of tradition and innovation. Every object he

conceptualises is rooted in a masterful interplay of material, colour and form.

His portfolio, titled *Pintura Muerta*, is yet another testament to Häberli's appreciation of history and design – as is his choice of camera, which proved the perfect tool for this task. Here we present some excerpts from this sketchbook of images, and ask the designer about his work, his love of cars, and the role photography plays in his life.

**LFI: How did the images featured here first come about?**

**Alfredo Häberli:** I visit Argentina quite often – I was born there and still feel a deep connection to the country. The trip in 2015 was an 80th birthday present to my mother, suggested by my son. It was an important

journey that also commemorated my father and my uncle. Both were great car enthusiasts, and regularly took us to rallies when we were kids. Later, my parents had a restaurant near a race track, so cars have always played an important role in my life; but this was the first time I made them the subjects of still life photographs.

**LFI: You also had a matchbox collection when you were a little boy...**

**Alfredo Häberli:** Yes, when we moved to Switzerland, my mother told us to pack no more than a shoebox worth of personal belongings, because at that point, we were intending to come back. I was no longer playing with my matchbox cars, but it was my first collection, so I took it with me. →

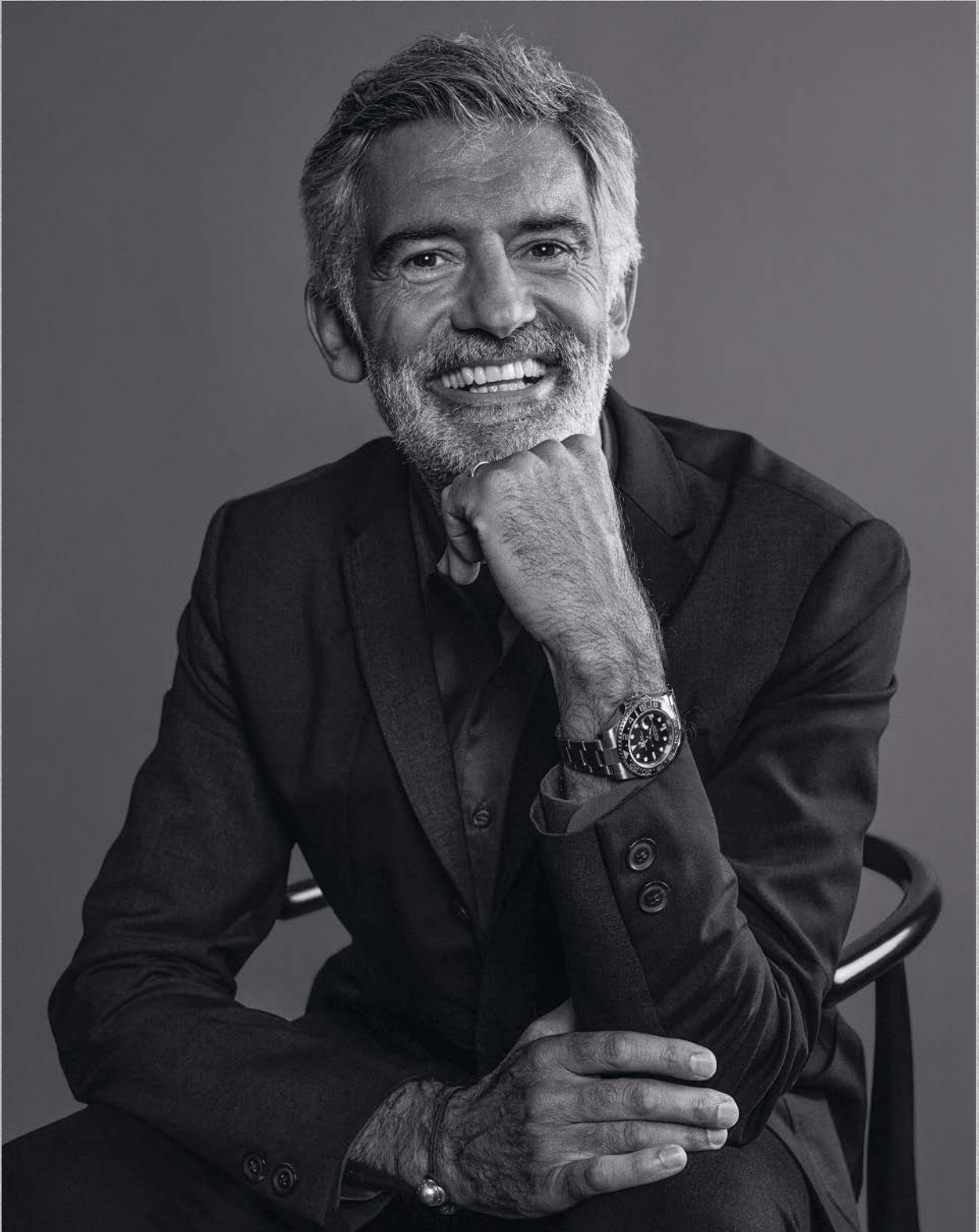


Photo: Andreas Houmann/Georg Jensen (DK)

Born 1964 in Buenos Aires, Alfredo Häberli ranks among the world's most renowned product and industrial designers. In 1991 he founded his Design Development Studio in Zurich



Top: a Fiat 128; bottom left: a Peugeot 404, manufactured in Argentina until 1982. Bottom right: a Jeep IKA Renault, ca. 1971, made in Argentina (IKA = Industries Kaiser Argentina)





Top: a Jeep Estanciera IKA Renault Tricolore, manufactured from 1957–1965, and an IKA Renault 4L (4 latas = four tins); below: a Chevrolet Chevy Coupé Series 2 from 1978





Roadside find: an object becomes an icon when its distinctive character is recognised – even if its glory days are over, like with this Fiat 850 Sport Coupé from 1968





**“THE PINTURA MUERTA SERIES IS ALMOST DEVOID OF PEOPLE, BECAUSE THE CONCEPT WAS TO PLACE CARS AT THE CENTRE OF A DOCUMENTARY STUDY.”**

**LFI:** The images shown here seem very well thought out – was the concept for this series in place from the beginning?

**Alfredo Häberli:** When I travel, I tend to photograph in a documentary as well as conceptual style. I often explore structures and colours – which also form the basis for the series. Most of the cars I captured are still roadworthy, though they look rather dilapidated. What fascinates me is the colour, the original paintwork that has been reconditioned or repaired time and again. This creates a very specific aesthetic. For me, this wasn't just about taking pleasing pictures – I also wanted to document these colours. But it was only after I got home that I compiled a cohesive series.

**LFI:** Is there a nostalgic element to this project? Older car designs seemed to be much more individual than they are today?

**Alfredo Häberli:** Yes, definitely. These cars are brimming with character. Their form, silhouette and pro-

portions are very distinctive. They represent iconic moments in time. I miss the emotion that went into these designs. The evolution of the automobile today is too fast-paced for my liking.

**LFI:** What would you suggest contemporary car manufacturers should do?

**Alfredo Häberli:** Follow their hearts. Everything these days is very market oriented; but I believe that people are looking for something different. I'm convinced that there would be a clientele for cars with more character.

**LFI:** How would you describe your style?

**Alfredo Häberli:** I've always thought of style as a signature that is instantly recognisable. More than anything, however, I see it as a way of thinking. I'm interested in beauty and aesthetics, as well as artists and architects whose work is free of repetition. I keep an eye on new developments regarding colours and structures, but not for the purpose of following a trend. Many of my designs have continued to be in production for decades. They are contemporary without being limited to fashion. If that's my style, then I'm content.

**LFI:** Does your tendency to blend innovation and tradition also shape your interest in Leica? →



A journey of discovery through the car designs of the last century: with its gold paint and vinyl roof, this Ford Falcon Futura, built in 1973, found a place in Häberli's series

**Alfredo Häberli:** Yes, I'm fascinated by the purposeful nature of the cameras, which are designed to be working tools. I also admire Leica's autonomy. Any company that manages to maintain its core identity throughout so many eras, including digitisation, and still continues to exert a sense of fascination, deserves a great deal of respect.

**LFI:** You shot this series with your Leica X2.

**Alfredo Häberli:** It's a Paul Smith Edition model. I bought it because it looks like something I might have designed myself if approached with the same task. I think this colour combination really works on the camera.

## LFI ON THE WAY

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# NATHANAËL FOURNIER

## MY PICTURE

A kiss, a pastry box and a hungry dog:  
Nathanaël Fournier captured this intimate yet light-  
hearted scene in down town Toulouse.



Toulouse, France 2009

I have always enjoyed photographing lovers, as well as people who kiss and hold each other. It may sound like that's an easy thing to do, but the challenge is to achieve a good photograph. Sometimes there is luck involved. When I noticed this couple on a small street in the city centre, I also noticed the pastry box the woman was holding in her right hand. A dog that was passing by also noticed it – just at the right moment, when I pressed the shutter. I took this photograph in the autumn of 2009 in Toulouse, France, a few months after having moved there from my home town. That was not a good year for me. The only good thing was that I had a job for a couple of hours a day; I had to distribute flyers for a fitness club to passers-by. That meant I had a lot of time for wandering the streets with my Leica M6 and some Ilford films.

Born in northern France in 1982, Nathanaël Fournier got into photography in 2003. In 2008 he saved up money to buy his first Leica: an M6 with a 50mm Summicron lens. Since then he has been photographing with whatever film he can afford (or steal).

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