



**Book of the month**

## Marcello Gandini, Maestro Of Design

GAUTAM SEN, Dalton Watson, £230 (£270 signed and numbered edition), ISBN 978 1 85443 279 7



Very few books have been published about car designer Marcello Gandini. And that's incredible when you think about the proliferation of his output, from Lamborghini Countach and Lancia Stratos to VW Polo and Citroën BX via all manner of concept cars, production cars, big hits and near-misses in-between. Yet that's mainly because Gandini – famously – is a very private man. The publication of this book arose only when Gandini's wife and daughter persuaded him to agree to it, following the release of a couple of inaccurate and unsanctioned articles in 2012 and 2013. The condition was that the book must not be about the man himself but rather about the cars he designed. And so here it is, in its full 800-page, two-volume slipcased glory, complete with 924 photographs, several of which have never been published before. There is little in the way of design sketchery, as Gandini has never been one to save his work, but the pictures are engrossing. The text reveals that for author Sen, whose credentials include the highly praised *The Maharajas & Their Magnificent Motor Cars*, this is a very personal and deeply felt book. The presentation is straightforward: two volumes in which all of Gandini's cars are presented one after the other in chronological order. There are three sections, concerning his formative years at Bertone, time at Renault and the closing stages of his career as an independent designer.

Gandini himself is quoted sparingly yet appositely throughout, naturally beginning with the Miura: 'It is a body with lots of muscles, but they are the muscles of a beautiful woman, not a male body builder. It is wicked, but with some gentle touches. It has lots of edges but all the curves in the right places. The stare is aggressive, but tempting, the car is intimidating, but attractive.' Who could have put that better than the man himself? At £230, this is clearly an expensive work, but the material quality of the tome stands up to scrutiny. I'd defy anybody to open it at any page and not find themselves engrossed in the minutiae of why the Citroën Camargue had such a pronounced front overhang, or how the E12-generation BMW 5 Series made it from concept to production with so little alteration. Collectors can pay £1350 for one of ten signed and leather-bound versions. Fine and dandy. Just remember that Gandini, away from his drawing board, is a man who prefers understatement. **GW**



### Factory-Original Ford RS Cosworths

DAN WILLIAMSON  
Herridge & Sons, £40  
ISBN 978 1 906133 58 0

Did you know that the terracotta-colour turbo hose on the RS500 Cosworth has blue silicone internals, and is fixed with Ford-branded clips? You'd know that if you'd read this book by car journalist and Ford expert Dan Williamson; there's even a picture of a hose removed, to show the colours. That's the level of detail this well-written, high-quality book goes into across the Sierra and Escort Cosworth range. It's not a light read but for anyone restoring one of these fast Fords, it's a must-buy. **DL**



### A Darracq Called Genevieve

RODNEY LAREDO  
Veloce, £30  
ISBN 978 1 787 11 007 6

If you are a fan of the 1953 film *Genevieve* – and which of us doesn't secretly still carry a torch for Kay Kendall? – then you'll love this hardback about the real star of the film, a 1904 Darracq. The author reveals how the car was reconstructed from two wrecks found in a London builder's yard in 1945, and wasn't the film maker's first or even second choice... *Genevieve's* post-movie career, and the impact she had on the old car world generally, is also covered in depth. **MD**



### Street Muses Of London

DAVIDE BASSOLI  
Nubes Argentea, €150  
ISBN 978 88 909571 5 4

'But is it art?' That's the question you'll be left pondering about this collection of Rolls-Royce and Bentley photos, nearly all taken in London during the 1950s-80s by a certain Mr Crump. They are essentially snapshots but there is undeniably a certain fascination in seeing these iconic British cars in the changing street scenes of the Capital, tawdry as they so often are – remember The Golden Egg chain of restaurants? The book is quite expensive, but that's art for you. **MD**



### Lancia A Winning History

LUCA GASTALDI  
www.lanciaracingbook.com, €29  
ISBN 979 12 200 0997 3

Buried in the parallel Italian and English text of this photo-filled book are many dry facts but no detectable quotes or anecdotes to bring it alive. The chapters aren't identified, nor is there anything like a proper introduction. Editorially, it's disastrous: you'd be asleep by page 32. However, there are lots of great archive motor sport photographs covering 1903 to 1993, some of them captioned, plus Delta S4 concept sketches and the odd technical drawing. But it could have been so much better. **JS**



### Aston Martin DB4, DB5 & DB6

JONATHAN WOOD  
Crowood Press, 1992, value today £55-65

**Collector's book**

The appearance of these books in the early '90s was a reflection on the way the classic car market was maturing. Before Crowood's *Complete Story* series, marque histories tended to be more generic and were dominated by MRP's *Collector's Guide* range. In contrast, each *Complete Story* book focused more tightly on a specific model of car, and they are still extremely good introductions to their subjects. Some of them remain in print, in softback form, but collectors prefer the original hardbacks, which display better. Each book offers a selection of period shots, a precis of the

model's history and its development, and some more recent colour photos, so they are perfect appetite-whetters. Softbacks are worth £20-25 but hardbacks start at £40-45 for the Lotus Elan, Esprit or Lamborghini Countach volumes, rising to £55-65 for this Aston or the Ferrari Dino book. They still sell very well, which is a tribute to their inherent value. **Ben Horton**



### Carrera RS

Dr THOMAS GRUBER & Dr GEORG KONRADSHHEIM, TAG Verlag, €438, ISBN 978 3 9504911 1 1



The arrival of this book on the *Octane* review desk caused a bit of confusion. Hadn't we already reviewed it back in *Octane* 154? Checking back, our reaction was understandable. This book – a 434-page slipcased hardback – is dedicated to the 1973

Porsche 911 RS. The book reviewed in *Octane* 154 – a 406-page slipcased hardback – covers the 1974-76 impact-bumper models. It's identical in size and format, right down to the texture of the cover, the embossed silver Carrera lettering and the slipcase, yet it's by a different publisher. We'd guess that *Carrera RS* can claim bragging rights here, since it was first released in 1992. This new edition adds 178 pages and a large quantity of historical photos. Two versions are available, in German and English, and it is without doubt the definitive work on the 911 RS. Why? The text is authoritative and immaculately researched, the production quality is superb and the archive pictures fascinating. Of course, there are plenty of factory and period press photos – Porsche has always been exceptionally good at maintaining its archive – but also some intriguing oddballs, such

as the picture, below, of Professor Ernst Fuhrmann's development car helping to retrieve a bogged-down Audi 100 coupé in the Sahara; the Audi is actually a widened 'mule' testing a 928 drivetrain... The first 80 pages are given over to the Carrera story pre-911 RS, but it's done so beautifully, and with such stunning images, that no one will feel short-changed. Besides an in-depth account of how the 911 RS was conceived and created, there are chapters on racing and rallying, how the RS was marketed, every nuance of specification... and a wealth of appendices that include homologation papers, owners' manuals and a full chassis list. At €434, this book represents a major investment, but we think it's worth every cent. **MD**

