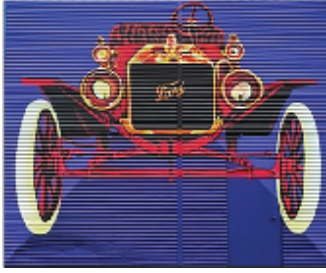


# DOCENT NEWSLETTER



## Docent Corps of the California Automobile Museum

### Notes From the Dashboard...

Volume 25, No 4 July - August 2023

It's Summertime! ...but what busy and terrific Spring it was at CAM!

The CAM Docent Class of 2023 has graduated.

- Welcome aboard to the new docents and thank you for joining the CAM docents.
- Special thanks to John Tennyson for the countless hours spent organizing and overseeing all the moving parts of the Docent Training Program.
- Thanks also to the many docents that were there week after week to set up and make it all run smoothly—from handling the sign-in desk before class to clean up after each class was over, and all the behind-the-scenes functions from copying the handouts to making coffee, recording the sessions...and on and on. It is a really big accomplishment.
- Thanks also for the generous commitment of time and effort of all the presenters who provide the core for program sharing their knowledge and experience. Thank you all.

*There's more....!*

Thank you Denny Albrecht and others who organized the Graduation event, Docent Car Show and lunch.

Thank you Duwayne Brooks and everyone who helped organize and make the **Veterans Memorial Day Car Show** a success again this year.

Special thanks to the Road Crew who is making the **Sunday Drives** a major attraction for CAM—and to those who bring their own cars to share with the public. And, thanks also to the docents responsible for bringing the **pedal cars!** Very cool move.

And last but certainly not least.... accolades and thanks to the **Pit Crew** that keeps the museum cars running to make Sunday Drives possible.

*Mike Whelpley*

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### Upcoming Events

Fall Craft Fair.....Sat & Sun, Sep 2, 3

Cruisefest.....Sat, Oct 7

Board Meeting .....Last Thurs, 5:30 pm

Docent Council.....2<sup>nd</sup> Weds, 1:15 pm

Exhibits.....2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs, 1 pm

Library.....Weds, 10 am

Road Crew.....1<sup>st</sup>& 3<sup>rd</sup> Weds, 1:15 pm



# Exhibits & Education



## FASHION FORD-WARD

**H**ow did midcentury modern design and the changing roles of women in a male-dominated society influence American postwar automotive design? With the expansion of the suburbs after WWII, women suddenly needed cars of their own. By adopting the fashion industry’s yearly model changes, as well as hiring many designers and stylists from the fashion industry, the automobile industry made a direct appeal to the rising sophistication and influence of women. When connected to midcentury modern design and architecture, classic cars become a key visual design element that helps define the period. Fashion, glamour, and styling influenced both midcentury car design and marketing.

Ford tantalized its customers throughout World War II with a forward-looking ad campaign called “There’s a Ford in Your Future,” in which a giant crystal ball foreshadowed peaceful postwar relaxation with the glimpse of a Ford car somewhere in the background. Once production resumed, the campaign became “Ford’s Out Front,” a pedestrian presentation of its new automobiles. It didn’t matter; they were selling everything they could produce. The first ad directly aimed at women was in 1949, when a pair of green-gloved feminine hands grabbed a giant steering wheel, demonstrating how easy it was for “ladies” to drive the Big New Ford.

Ford burst into the world of fashionable motoring in 1952 with the introduction of the Motor-Mates line of car coats, the perfect travel accessory for the smart new Ford Victoria hardtop coupe. The coats were produced of a woven fabric called Kalakina, which was made by the Collins and Aikman company of New York, suppliers of aircraft and automotive fabrics. The two-tone exterior colors of the coat matched the paint colors of the car, and the nylon lining matched the upholstery. This “Dress Like a Ford” promotion continued for the 1953 and 1954 seasons.

“The Style Setter of the ’53 Season” and “The Best Dressed Beauty of the ’54 Season,” referring not only to this year’s car coat but this year’s Ford Victoria, all the while subtly reminding consumers that this year’s gleaming new beauty will be hopelessly out of style in about three years.

There was no popularly priced car more glamorous in the 1950s than the Thunderbird. From the first ads in late 1954, the two-seat Thunderbird was shown in smart suburban settings, with a high proportion of women. The launch brochure showed women behind the wheel in two separate illustrations.

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*The car that's all the things you are...  
THE NEW FORD THUNDERBIRD*

**It's you stepping out—**  
Your new Thunderbird might have been specially designed for gala evenings; it has a flair and distinction elegance all its own. And its doors are so wide you can sweep in and out with effortless grace unscuffed—and your pristine interior!

**It's you in your play mood—**  
Smart, original, versatile... your new Thunderbird is in the mood for fun when you are. This car is always fun to drive because, like its heart, it's just your size! It's roomy yet compact, a joy to handle... and so easy to park!

**It's you, the leader—**  
You set the style, you set the pace wherever you go, driving the prestige car every woman would love to own. Yet the 1959 Thunderbird actually costs far less than other luxury cars. See your Ford dealer. Drive this jewel of a car!

*America's most becoming car!*

*Ad for the 1959 Thunderbird emphasized the glamour of ownership.*

*Continued from Page 3*

But, of course, two-seaters had a limited market in the '50s. General Motors displayed fabulous two-seat Corvette dream car at the annual Motorama car shows. But the folks at Ford saw the potential of a car with the glamour of a Thunderbird and the practicality of a back seat and voilà — an instant classic was born. When the restyled four-seat version made its debut in 1958, it made sense to promote it to upscale women. Ads touted the ease of entry and exit, handling, and parking compared to the full-sized car, and the glamour, headlining it as “America’s Most Becoming Car.”



*1953 Corvette Motorama Show Car was unveiled at the 1953 Motorama in New York.*

One 1959 ad showed Ann Cole of Cole of California Swimwear praising the flair of Thunderbird and inviting women to see how they look in a Thunderbird. Another showed the versatility of Thunderbird by showing different outfits, for casual, business, and evening wear — and noting how flawlessly each would look inside a new Thunderbird. No car sold sizzle and style quite like the Thunderbird.



**DRAMATIC EDSSEL STYLING** leads the way  
— worth more now and in the years ahead

Of all of the Ford follies in the '50s, none was as noteworthy or spectacular a fall from grace as the Edsel. The poor car was cursed from the start — ill-timed, disadvantageously priced, dubiously styled, oddly named, and scorned by its own sister divisions, which envied any chance of its success. Thankfully for them, there was little chance of that.

Ford gave its sister Mercury, in a similar price point with 18 years of business on the books, a complete makeover in 1957 — a unique look inside and out with no panels shared with the Ford. And the “Big M” laid a Big Egg. The fully restyled '57 touting “Dream Car Design” sold fewer copies than the Ford-derived '56, and it was going to be the basis of the upper Edsel range. The car just wasn't going to sell in the Eisenhower recession.

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In the late 1950s, Dupont introduced Lucite Acrylic Lacquer and caused an explosion of color. The marketing campaign for the all-new car was decidedly pedestrian. They positioned Edsel as “the car for the young executive on the way up,” which was such a great idea that Pontiac, Buick, Oldsmobile, De Soto, Nash, and Studebaker were already playing in that crowded arena. The campaign consciously didn’t focus on women; it all but ignored their existence with one dramatic exception.

For the press introduction in Dearborn in the summer of 1957, the Edsel Division made a point to invite the wives of the auto writers. This was highly unusual and designed to increase attendance at the event (and possibly decrease the bar bill). They were treated to a lecture called “Style and Adventure” by Miss Gayle Hastings, who was billed as a fashion designer from London and said to be en route to Hollywood to design costumes for an MGM musical. She was not. In fact, the woman speaking about her harrowing travel adventures was actually 52-year-old Martin Hughes of Barrington, Illinois. Hughes, who later released a 1966 comedy album called “Madam Chairman,” was engaged by Edsel PR director C. Gayle Warnock and recounted in his 1980 book *The Edsel Affair*. Warnock noted that after Miss Hastings completed narrating her adventures, she challenged the audience about the difference between perception and reality. She noted that none of the attendees could prove that the story she had just told was true, that her name was really Gayle Hastings, or that she was even really a woman. “As a matter of fact, I’m not” Hughes said as he pulled off his wig. The house was stunned and ultimately applauded loudly.

Perhaps the inclusion of Miss Hastings was prophetic. Many people have claimed over the years that the Edsel was just a Ford in drag. Perhaps Warnock decided to celebrate that fact in a most memorable way. ■

*Palm Springs Life, Staff Report, January 25, 2022*

## NEW ON THE FLOOR

**D**esigned in 40 days by Raymond Loewy in 1961. Production was less than 5,800 cars in 1962-63. With a fiberglass body on a modified Studebaker Lark convertible chassis, it is powered by a modified Studebaker 289 V8 Hawk engine.

Described as “one of the more significant milestones of the postwar industry,” the Raymond Loewy-designed car offered safety features and high-speed performance. Called “the fastest production car in the world” upon its introduction, a modified Avanti reached over 170 mph (270 km/h) with its supercharged 289-cubic-inch (4,740 cm<sup>3</sup>) R3 engine at the Bonneville Salt Flats. In all, it broke 29 world speed records at the Bonneville Salt Flats.

Although it’s best known today for its distinctive styling, back in the fall of 1962 Studebaker advertised its Avanti as “The World’s Fastest Production Car.” They backed up the claim with 29 new American national stock car records from the Bonneville Salt Flats, including the flying mile at 168.15 mph and 10 miles at 163.9 mph—and these were two-way averages. On the return leg of the 20-mile record run, the Avanti reached 178.5 mph.



Hotshoe Andy Granatelli, who knew a thing or two about driving fast—and even more about promoting merchandise—was president of Paxton Products at the time, and one of his superchargers wailed under the Avanti’s hood. In a letter to Studebaker President Sherwood Egbert, Granatelli wrote, “The thing that never ceases to amaze me is the ease in handling the Avanti. I took four people [including the L.A. Times auto editor] for a ride at speeds from 166.6 to 172.5 mph, and in each instance, I let go of the steering wheel for several thousand feet to prove how stable the Avanti really is.”<sup>(1)</sup>

This 1962 Studebaker Avanti Race Car is on temporary loan from owner Bill Wentzel of the Studebaker Club for a display. 🇺🇸

(1) *Studebaker Avanti: The World’s Fastest Production Car*, John Webber, Jan 19, 2023



**T**he ol'Schoolmaster, Bill Millard, may physically be gone, but his legacy lives on through the museum's docent program and through his books, magazines, and model collections. He requested that his collection come to the museum, and that donation is now gradually being processed. His total book collection consists of 973 volumes, with about half of the books being new to the library.

His interest in automobiles covered a wide span of automotive literature, from automobile history and marque histories to company histories, biography, and automobile racing. Of course, there are lots of Corvette books in his collection. While some of the books may be a little older, they are in mint condition. On inventorying his books, I found many little note papers where he had written some notes on something that piqued his interest. In cataloging his books, his donations will be noted in our PastPerfect Library Catalogs.

In addition to books, Bill had hundreds of magazine issues that he had collected, as well as his extensive model vehicle collection. Some of those models are being sold through eBay. 🇺🇸

*Ron Grantz*

# Events



## DOCENT CLASS OF 2023

The 38<sup>th</sup> Docent Class graduation were honored on  
Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Ricardo Contreras | George Potiris      |
| Phil Jackman      | Jonathan Rees       |
| Kimberly Leal     | Bill Sommer         |
| Karen Long        | John Strizek        |
| Cynthia Mills     | Dick Sullivan       |
| Ron Medcalf       | Bella Taylor        |
| Scott Mikkelson   | Helen Whelan-Bashaw |



CALIFORNIA AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM  
SACRAMENTO, CA

# Fall Craft Fair!

Sept.  
2nd - 3rd  
10a.m. - 4p.m.

CALIFORNIA AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM  
12th Annual

All proceeds benefit the California Auto Museum

# CruiseFest

on fulton avenue

## save the date

Saturday, October 7, 2023

3pm-7pm **Hundreds of Cars!**  
Music · Food Trucks · Beer Garden

Cruisers register at [calautomuseum.org](http://calautomuseum.org)  
Museum members \$29 Non-members \$45 Day of \$60

# CAM profiles



## KIMBERLY LEAL

### DOCENT CLASS OF 2023

### AUTOMOTIVE BUSINESS CONSULTANT

Christmas came early to Kimberly's parents when she was born several days before. She was brought home from the hospital in a black 1957 Oldsmobile 98, two door hardtop. The Oldsmobile Super 88 Convertible came into the Leal family in 1983. It was a car that she would grow to love as she did with all forms of horsepower. Kimberly grew up in Petaluma, CA. Her education began at St Vincent Grammar School in Petaluma which offered an introduction to and study of earth, life, and physical sciences.



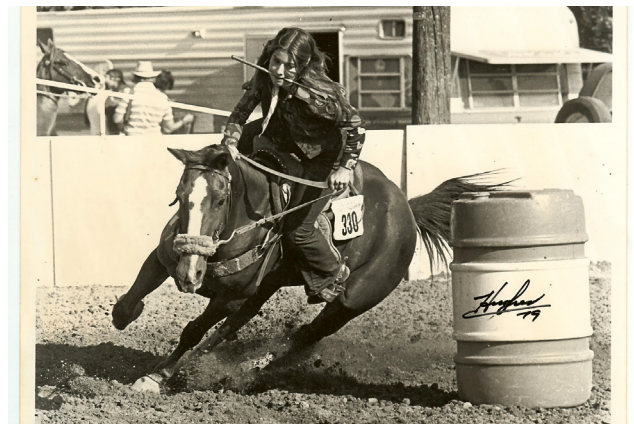
*Kimberly and Sweet Pea  
1st place in the docent graduation car show*

When she was 12, the transmission in the Olds failed, and it sat lifeless in the front of her home. Kimberly told her parents that she would repair the car in a high school auto shop class, and it would be her own. For the next year, she lovingly washed the car, cleaned the chrome and sat in the driver's seat, imagining what it would be like when it was hers.

One fateful day, her mom was driving her home from school and was horrified - the Olds was GONE! Her mom said some of the neighbors had complained about the "eye sore" and that they found a new home for her beloved car. Years later, as an adult, Kimberly found out they junked it for fifteen dollars.

When she turned 16, she told her parents that she wanted to go to a high school that offered auto shop as an elective. Her parents were NOT thrilled with her choice to go to a public school but she was determined to get the education she wanted and it included....cars! Successful in her transition from parochial school to public, in 1979 she became the first girl to graduate from the two year auto shop program at Petaluma High School.

Convinced that her career path was automotive, the next step was to enroll in the College of Marin, taking courses in Welding, High Performance Engines, Transmissions and animal husbandry. Astride one-horsepower ride Poco O' Dean,



Kimberly was a State Champion for the California Horseman's Association and California State Gymkhana Association. She held the state record for skill barrels, and won her first state championship in Poles Table II in 1979 and continued winning through 1981.

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*Docent Newsletter*

*July - August 2023*

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Her dad owned a few Oldsmobiles when he was young. Kimberly convinced him to sell his Porsche and reinvest in the hobby he enjoyed in his youth. He started to buy Olds parts cars and during the 80's through the mid 90's, they were a common sight at swap meets. Dad sold Olds parts and Kimberly sold GM. For several years she parted-out 1967 through 1969 Camaros, earning enough money for the down payment on her first house in Sonoma County.

*Caricature of my Dad and I done by cartoonist John Best*



Kimberly's first car was a 1971 Ford Mustang with a 351 Cleveland, followed a 1967 Chevrolet Camaro - license plate, KIMERO, and it became her nickname. This plate would eventually move to a 1969 RS Z28 Camaro. She still has the plate and the nickname today.

The GM executive who bought the Olds was the Vice President. His daughter married the President of Frigidaire. She didn't care for the vehicle, but the secretary of the GM executive loved it and subsequently purchased the car. She kept it for many years and then sold it to a contractor doing work at her house. He bought it to turn, which is how it came into the family back in 1983.



She has been lucky enough to fly in a P51 Mustang, BT13, a couple T6's and a Lockheed Lodestar. The picture is of her getting into Art Vance's P51 Mustang in the 1980s in Santa Rosa. She also has a quad and three 4x4 truck, and loves to go off-roading.



Like most of us who are passionate about cars, Kimberly soon got involved in racing. She crewed for a Top Alcohol Corvette "Funny Car" team led by Ken Silvestri for the 1988 drag racing season. Sears Point was the home track for the new car. Along with crew members Kim "Kimero" Leal, Frank Guerini and Carl Hagel, Silvestri raced the car in the National Hot Rod Association's Pacific Division 7 at tracks in California, Nevada and Arizona. Later, in the '90s, she worked on a Pro-Stock car.

Kimberly first became ill in 1995 but was misdiagnosed for two and a half years. She then received the diagnosis that she had scleroderma. She started researching the mind-body connection in illness and looked into alternative types of medicine. "I combined eastern medicine, hypnotherapy and naturopathy with the western treatments that I was already receiving." Her symptoms subsided and eventually reversed themselves.

She knew there were other women that could benefit from her knowledge, and she founded Dusty's Place in 2003 to fund research and promote public awareness of the benefits of combining Western with Complementary and Alternative Medicine to heal scleroderma. Our purpose is to empower the public to make informed decisions about their health care by facilitating research along with providing tools and educational programs.

*"Unlimited Opportunity Lies on the Road Less Traveled"*

Starting in 1999, Kimberly was a software consultant to The Reynolds and Reynolds Company whose businesses included management software and professional services to car dealerships. Its software is used to manage sales logistics at dealerships. In 2003, She founded Dusty Roads Unlimited providing business analysis and consulting, forensic accounting services and seminars to automotive businesses.

When I asked Kimberly how she became interested in CAM and becoming a docent, she began by relating her meeting someone at an All About Equine Animal Rescue fundraiser a couple of years ago. That person was chatting with her about their interest in cars and the car museum and suggested that she would make a pretty good docent herself. Suddenly the light went on, and she looked at me and exclaimed "You're that guy!" ■

# Docent Scrapbook



## THE REASON ALL CARS ARE NOW GREY - AND WHY WE NEED TO GET USED TO IT

**M**y father knew what he was doing when he freshened up the family Ford Cortina in 1975. He was a trained painter and decorator and he transformed our car from a silvery blue to a solid azure. It looked fresh, as if it had rolled straight out of the shop. A couple of years later, he swapped it for a Morris Marina, in burgundy. Now that's a colour you rarely see on the road these days – and wherever you stand on burgundy cars, they are more interesting than the grey cars that dominate our roads.

A quarter (25.7 per cent) of the new cars bought in the UK last year were grey, according to figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders. The next most popular colours were equally unexciting: black (20.1 per cent) and white (16.7 per cent). These three colours, along with silver, account for more than 80 per cent of cars sold globally.

Readers of The Telegraph have noticed and have been steadily writing letters since February wondering why – is grey paint cheaper, does it not show dirt, or is it a reflection of our grey moods?

Of course, the raw statistics don't tell the whole story. Yes, they reflect the mass market trend of the past couple of decades for more neutral colours, but scratch the surface (something you should obviously never do with an actual car's paintwork) and there's a lot more going on in the world of automotive colour.

Carmakers now spend a lot of time and resources deciding which colours to offer their cars in. They employ colour specialists in their design departments, whose job it is to think about how consumers feel about colour. According to Ivana Hrudkova, a creative expert for colour, material and finish at Hyundai: "It's not only about the colours: it's also about the psychological approach, what the colour means. It's the deep thinking behind the choice."



But manufacturers also have to be practical. The first cars were painted like carriages, in a few different colours but the paint was expensive and didn't last. The first Ford was made available, in 1908, in red and grey, but Henry Ford quickly realised that black was far cheaper and more durable, which is when he made his famous comment that "you can have it in any colour as long as it is black".

Developments in paint were a game-changer. By the 1950s more was possible, with pastel-coloured cars becoming popular. Black didn't come back until the late 1970s, when Porsche introduced the 930 Turbo in black and dark green. Metallic paint had been expensive as it was made from fish scales but in the 1980s, scientific innovations made it more mainstream. More recently, grey dominated from 2001 until 2009, black had a brief moment at the top from 2010-2013, then it was white and now we have gone back to grey.

And what we see on the roads is at odds with marketing. Next time you see a car advert on TV, take note of the colour: it probably won't be grey.

As Tanja Renkes, mobility technology manager at Axalta, which supplies paint to car makers, says: "Every car manufacturer wants a specific, special colour. Most customers won't go for it, but it demonstrates that there is a modern colour in the palette. It won't be the best-selling colour, but it will be used for marketing, showing that they understand trends." The one that comes to mind from my career in automotive journalism is the Mk6 Ford Fiesta from 2008, launched with a dark magenta (not quite a 1970s Morris Marina burgundy, but close). Never saw one on the road in that colour.

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It comes down to cash. The colour of your car is a commitment. We all regularly make colour choices for other purchases, from clothing to kitchen utensils. But a new jumper, might only be worn for 10 to 15 weeks. A new car can be on the road for 10 to 15 years, which is reflected in the fact that car makers always offer the neutral colours in a model's colour palette.

This explains the rise of grey. Risk-averse consumers, in straitened times, worry about a bright colour driving down the resale value of their car, which means higher monthly leasing payments (lease payments pay off the car's depreciation in the first few years: the lower the resale value, the more customers have to pay). Another is that it's a great contrast with the black wheels and trim details that are now offered by car makers. It's also a shift away from black and white, while still remaining a safer, more conservative 'achromatic' colour.

So when a car in a standout colour such as yellow goes on the used market, it usually commands a price that is 6-8 per cent less than a black, white or grey. That difference is paid by the person who originally leased the car (and chose the colour), with higher monthly fees. In short, colour costs.

The people who decide what colour your car is, all cited nature as a big influence in their decision. Komal Singh, senior designer, colour and material at Volvo's EV sister brand, Polestar, says our visual tastes are being "influenced by an awareness of the climate". That means stone and granite colours are popular.

Francesca Sangalli, head of colour and trim at Spanish brand Cupra, says: "We try to take the beauty of what we see around us, for example, by using a lot of matte colour to make the body's surface look stony, giving it more character."

When deciding on a colour palette for a new model, size matters, too. More premium or luxury models on the roads are more likely to be conservative, neutral colours. Renkes says: "These colours are seen as exquisite and long-lasting. For example, when you have a piano at home, it's black because it exudes a certain kind of exquisite luxury. That's why we still see black and white considered luxurious, which is why you also see larger limousines and SUVs more in those colours.

"But trends differ depending on the kind of car you have. You will see different colours on a small car than on a limousine or SUV. We're also seeing that customers are looking for certain colours with EVs now." Blue reflects the colour most of us have in mind when we think of electricity, so car makers have seized on that for many of the EVs being launched.

The cars we drive in 2023 come from all over the world (which is why British Racing Green is no longer a thing), so we also see colours influenced by the culture that the car brands emerge from. Hyundai's design team, for example, looks to its Korean roots for influence. "Korean culture and its heritage has a really rich history. You can see a lot of softness and the uniqueness of its craft heritage, Buddhism and the spirit of resilience combined with creative innovation," Hrudkova explains. When you consider the traditional Korean five-colour spectrum – called Obangsaek, consisting of black and white, plus blue, red and yellow – it's not a surprise to see lots of Hyundais in reds and blues, while yellow also frequently features in sister brand Kia's colour palette.

It's a similar story with Polestar and its Swedish roots. Singh says: "As a brand, we are very minimalist and rooted in our Scandinavian origins. It's a very minimalist design aesthetic that holds true to all aspects of the product." This is clear from the golden-grey Jupiter colour it offers, which is like tasteful, toned-down bling. Very Scandi.

Despite Telegraph readers tiring of grey, there is one silver lining to having a car in a non-neutral colour: it's less likely to be stolen. The most commonly reported stolen cars are in colours that blend in with the crowd, such as white, grey, black and silver. Criminals tend to avoid brightly coloured cars because they're easier to identify and harder to offload.

Grey cars are going nowhere, so we can expect to see them clogging up the roads for years to come. However, the good news for those of us bored with monochrome monotony is that blue is consistently the fourth most popular colour (with red in fifth). Axalta's global automotive colour of 2023 is a shade of blue called Techno Blue, which it describes as "a pulsating colour that is right on beat with the rhythm of today's lively energy".

Which goes to show that my dad was way ahead of the trends, even in 1975. 

*Craig Thomas, The Telegraph March 7, 2023*