

Canepa Design - Vintage/Historic Race Car Preparation and Restoration Services

-by Lew Kinst

Canepa Design is so much more than what first meets the eye. Entering through their ground floor display area is more like stepping into a Smithsonian exhibit on the history of auto racing than a dealer's showroom (the real museum is being built on the second floor). Here you will find a mix of exotic street cars like a one of a kind 2006 Mercedes CLK DTM, collectables like the 1981 Ferrari BB 512, racing cars like the 1978 IMSA championship winning Peter Gregg Porsche 935, record-setting Hot Rods, and really trick "Canepa Design" Hummers and Escalades all with one thing in common... SPEED!

Beyond the sales showroom are the restoration, paint and custom shops where cars are brought up to "Canepa" standards before being offered for sale. In addition customers can have normal service performed on their cars as well as performance upgrades and exterior and interior customization.

The in-house paint shop must be seen to be believed. The paint booth is actually two booths in one. Able to accommodate a semi Tractor in height, the two booths can be joined to form one very long booth for special projects.

The race shop is where some of the really exciting projects are found. Canepa offers complete vintage race preparation and restoration services. The shop focus on IMSA era cars from the 1970's and 1980's such as Porsche RSRs and 935s (seven 935s are currently in the shop starting with the last 935 built by the factory to examples by Kremer, Joest, and Akin). It's not only Porsche that is spoken here. Currently in the shop is the only Ford Richard

Petty ever raced, the Riverside winner is undergoing a complete ground-up restoration and will be displayed in the museum when finished.

Bruce Canepa has a long personal history competing at the professional level of the sport. He competed in IMSA events in the 1970's in addition to setting records at Pikes Peak. At the 2006 Monterey Historic Races, Bruce drove his 935 from last place on the grid to the winners circle. His expertise

behind the wheel and first hand knowledge of racing history is a great asset when restoring and setting up the cars that come through the shop.

There are quite a few Porsche's 1988 super car, the 959, in and around the shop. Never imported into the US, spotting one of these great cars is something to talk about, but when faced with 15 under one roof we were left speechless. All these cars are in the process of federalization. The work is very extensive but the end result is a super car with 600hp that out performs the stock version and is easier to drive.

Established over 30 years ago, Canepa Design is probably best known for the design and construction of some of the worlds best motorsports transporters. If you take a close look at transporters



in the paddock, be it at a vintage race or a professional race, you may notice that many come from Canepa. Transporter construction is carried out in a different location; the design process takes place here in Scotts Valley, CA.

In the past Canepa Design was spread out in a number of buildings in down town Santa Cruz. In an effort to make the company more competitive and take it to the next level, Bruce Canepa opened the new state-of-the-art "Works" in early 2006. Their central location in Scotts Valley California between San Jose and Santa Cruz makes it easy for enthusiasts to access their extensive services. It is truly a show place, visitors are welcome and tours can be arranged for clubs and large groups. Call 831-430-9940. (CA)