

# J. SAOUTCHIK

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ATELIER SPÉCIAL DE RÉPARATIONS

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# ◆ BOOK ONE ◆

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car missed the corner, went sideways into a wall, first mashing the mechanic against it and then according to some accounts barbecuing him as it caught fire. In a third, a 24 year old soldier died shielding a child from an oncoming Brouhot, whereupon the driver M. Tourand lost control of the car, killing his mechanic, another spectator and severely wounding a third. In a fourth accident, the De Dietrich of Yorkshireman Phil Stead touched another car during overtaking. The De Dietrich went into the ditch and somersaulted, pinning Stead under it. In a fifth, Lorraine Barrow's De Dietrich ran over a dog, the pulpy remains of which seized up the steering linkage. Barrow rammed a tree, and both he and his mechanic were thrown from the car. The mechanic died on the spot, while Barrow landed unconscious in a water-filled ditch, dying of pneumonia two weeks later. Georges Richard's homemade 12 CV *voiturette* hit a tree in Angoulême trying to avoid a country bumpkin in the middle of the road. The car flipped and landed on its wheels, so Richard suffered only a few fractures. And on it went, while the only female driver Madame du Gast wearing her novel zinc safety helmet busied herself for three hours giving first aid to the severely injured Phil Stead, who had survived after being pulled out from under his overturned De Dietrich.

### **Death of Marcel Renault**

And then there was the accident involving Marcel Renault, 370 kilometers into the race at Couhé-Vérac, between Poitiers and Angoulême. Marcel Renault had been driving like a soul possessed. Blinded by the dust cloud thrown up by Léon Théry's Decauville, he did not see the signal flag warning him of a dangerous curve ahead. He came much too fast into a left-hand hairpin and made a fatal miscalculation. Unable to correct his slide on the skinny tires, which had lost traction in the loose grit covering the road surface, he spun off the road, hit a tree and the car came to rest facing backward in the ditch in a plume of dust, smoke and exhaust fumes. The car suffered little damage. Both Marcel Renault and his mechanic were thrown from the car, but while Vauthier only suffered minor injuries, Marcel's flight was stopped when he collided with a tree, leaving him in a coma and with a severed spinal cord. Théry stopped to give first aid, as did Maurice Farman on his 70 CV Panhard. Théry procured a doctor and went on with the race. Farman helped carry Marcel Renault's mangled body to a dairy farm nearby. He died 48 hours later, never regaining consciousness. That day, Farman decided never to race again.



The accident of Marcel Renault at Couhé-Vérac. Blinded by the dust cloud thrown up by Léon Théry's Decauville, he did not see the signal flag warning him of a dangerous curve ahead. (Peter Larsen)

## Concours d'Élégance

Another important development was also taking place, which in the long term would become the single most important promotional vehicle for Jacques Saoutchik and his creations. As Pierre Saoutchik wrote, "Large seaside cities such as Deauville, Nice, and Monte Carlo began organizing automotive fashion shows where high society ladies, artists, and famous *cocottes* gathered. In Paris the premiere contest, the *Concours d'Élégance de la Grande Cascade* was established, with gypsy music in the background, while flower-adorned cars paraded by, presented by the most beautiful women of the Parisian world wearing the last creation of Poiret, Paquin, Worth and Doucet." These were the beginnings of the *Concours d'Élégance* for automobiles.

They spawned countless imitators across the globe, which up to World War II and some five years after would be focal points on the social and fashion calendars of the rich, while the great unwashed were free to gawk at their antics in and around their fabulous machines. No one would be a greater star at these gatherings than Jacques Saoutchik.

The 1907 to 1913 period was a euphoric time for the wealthy. The Franco-Prussian War of 1870 - 1871 was a dim memory, heavy industry was in full operation and colonial wars had made the rich a



In Paris the *Concours d'Élégance de la Grande Cascade* was established. It was the beginning of the great *concours* for automobiles which would take place in France for the next five decades. (Peter Larsen)

lot richer. While socialism was on the rise, France was the shimmering queen of a great Europe-wide festivity of opulent luxury, which rested uneasily on the shoulders of the poverty-stricken masses. Rich young Americans made Paris the main stop on their grand tour and spent freely of their brand new dollars. Finding the courts in Moscow and St. Petersburg a bit *gauche*, Russian dukes lived lavishly in Paris and pumped back some of the millions that their Tsar had borrowed from bourgeois French investors. The great restaurants and entertainment halls became more and more exclusive, yet remained filled to the

brim. According to Pierre Saoutchik, "Being known by the *Chasseur de chez Maxim's* was more important than having the *rosette* of the *Légion d'honneur*."

In these circles, the horse was rapidly disappearing, the exquisite *landaus* and *berlines* drawn by a two- or four-span becoming a thing of the past. The president of the Republic still used the *Garde Républicaine* on horseback for public spectacle and six horses to have himself drawn in his open carriage down the Champs-Élysées, but the main purpose was to provide entertainment. In the morning in the Bois de Boulogne, ladies of standing would promenade or ride sidesaddle in their long skirts, but the horses would be stabled in Neuilly,



The earliest known photograph which shows a portion of the *Carosserie*. It is dated 1907, and the only surviving photo taken prior to the expansion in 1911. The car is a 22 CV Berliet. (Laurent Friry)



1910 – the earliest known picture of a Saoutchik stand at the Paris Salon. Jacques is standing between a Panhard and a Hotchkiss. To the right is a Mercedes. Note the mock-up of the patented Saoutchik folding windshield. (*Le Sport Universel Illustré*, Peter Larsen)

Many orders were taken by this personable coachbuilder who has customers around the world. Supplier to the Court of Norway, the Castel, Pellegrini and Stegmann families of Buenos Aires, Général Roccaïn, the former president of the Republic of Argentina, the Marquis Bréviaire d'Alaincourt, the Viscount de Breteuil, etc. etc., the *carrossier* Saoutchik knows no rival for the elegance and finish of his creations and, more importantly, for his modest price."

This marks the first instance of the infamous King of Norway story being trotted out for general consumption by the public. It would not be the last, as it became a staple of Jacques' marketing of himself and the *carrosserie*. Nevertheless, it was an impressive list of customers, even if the Norwegian delivery was slightly spurious; there can be no doubt that when Saoutchik claimed that he was building cars for the *haute société*, he was speaking the truth.

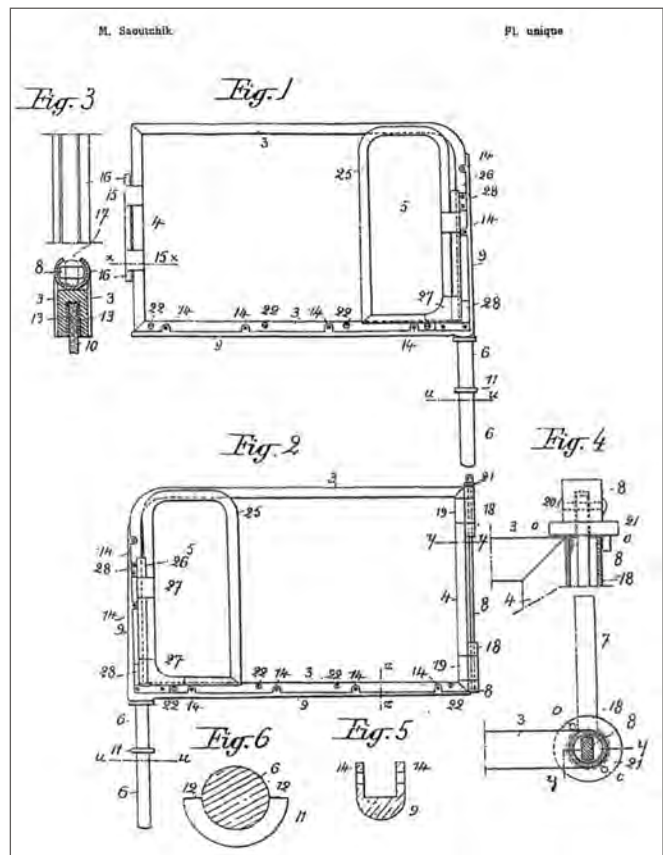
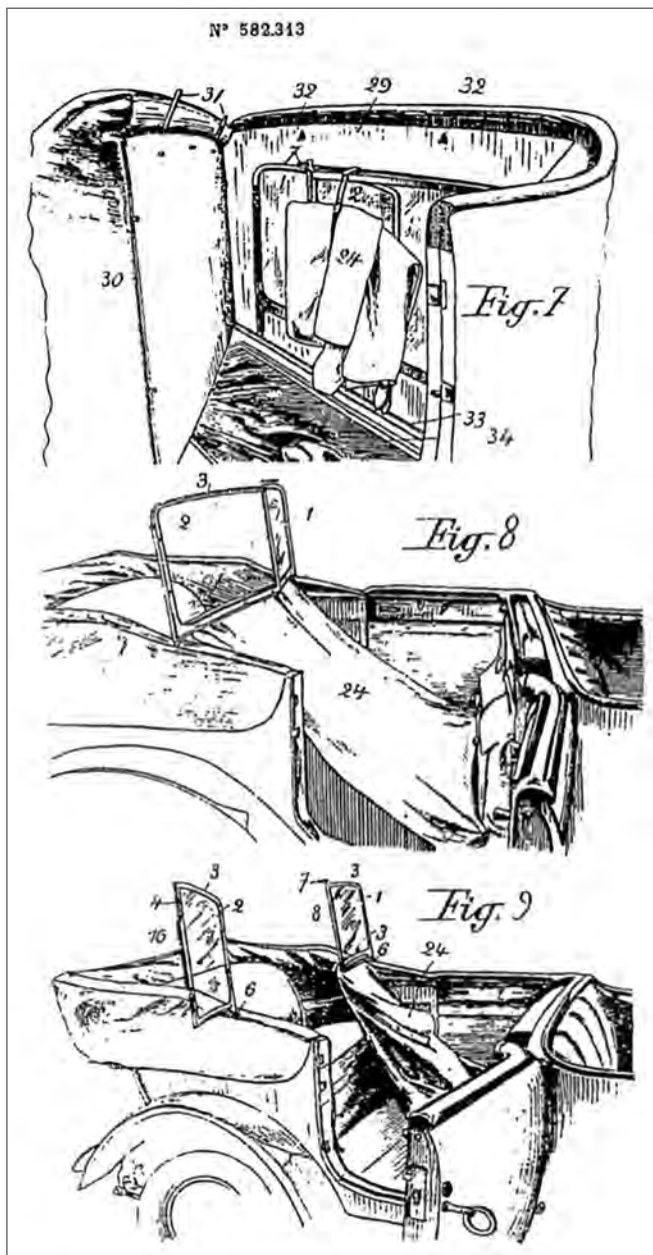
### **A Popemobile and a Sourpuss**

Although the 1910 Salon report Pierre Saoutchik's account are both somewhat hyperbolic, it was obvious that the *Carrosserie de Luxe, J. Saoutchik* was doing well, buoyed as it was by an ever-increasing demand for automotive conveyances of all kinds. A pinnacle of sorts was reached when Saoutchik was commissioned to create a

Popemobile in 1911. This was a singular honor. Historian Laurent Friry has unearthed a clipping from the October 25, 1911 edition of *Le Figaro*, where the newspaper reported on the creation of this remarkable automobile, but unfortunately no photographs have survived:

"Glimpsed the other day in the workshops of master coachbuilder Saoutchik in Neuilly, was a beautiful limousine landaulet, where one could recognize the seal of the Pope on the panels. When asked, Mr. Saoutchik replied: 'Yes, that is the seal of the Holy Father, and it is for Him that I built (and contemplate how carefully) this body. The car in question was commissioned by a rich gentleman whose name I may not reveal, who provided us with precise instructions and all the details, including the color of this car. It really is a marvel of an automobile.' In a few days the car will be shipped to Rome, where the Pope will use it for his wonderful rambles through the avenues of the Vatican gardens."

If one stands back for a second and ignores the picture of St. Pius X being driven aimlessly around the Vatican as if he had nothing better to do, it really is amazing to contemplate how a start-up *carrossier* could be asked to create transportation for the spiritual leader of the



The removable windshield was marketed extensively by the *Carrosserie* and many *transformables* were fitted with it. Several other patents were filed by Jacques and granted in this period. (INPI, Peter Larsen)

LEFT: On June 3, 1924, Saoutchik filed a patent application number 582.313 for a “removable windshield developed for the rear seats of automobiles”. (INPI, Peter Larsen)

et les arrêter à toute hauteur (A mechanism to raise and lower the glass or window frame, to prevent their vibration and stop them at any height). This patent number 585.294 was granted on February 24, 1925. Yet another convertible top patent was filed on December 13, 1924 for a *Disposition mécanique perfectionné applicable aux automobiles permettant leur transformation rapide et aisée de voiture fermée en voiture découverte ou inversement* (A mechanism applicable to automobiles allowing for a quick and easy transformation from a closed car to an open car or vice versa). Patent number 592.251 was granted on July 30, 1925, and this patent was also filed in the United Kingdom. Whether Jacques earned any worthwhile royalties on it is not known. The final Saoutchik patent registered in the archives of the French patents authority was filed on May 18, 1925. It was for a *Dispositif perfectionné de lève-glace à faible encombrement pour*

*automobiles* (A small devise for raising the windows of automobiles). This final patent number 610.508 was granted on September 7, 1926. After this, and for no apparent reason, the inventive creativity of Jacques Saoutchik came to an abrupt halt. He filed no further patents for the rest of his life.

It is interesting to note that virtually all of the patents filed by Jacques Saoutchik had to do with issues involved with perfecting the opening and closing of an automobile body – be it the top mechanism or raising or lowering the windows. Even his first patent filed in 1907 was for a special windshield construction which allowed the screen and its glass parts to assume a number of positions that were otherwise not normally available to the user. Bodies by Saoutchik have primarily been coveted for their style and elegance, both when they were new

Hollywood. To the right, Mary Pickford posed draped in fur with a slight slouch wearing a small, but inviting smile. Her uniformed chauffeur was behind the wheel, and a second strapping man in full chauffeur's garb was holding the door for her. Perhaps the artist unthinkingly gave Pickford two chauffeurs, or the place she was visiting had strangely dressed doormen. High on a hill in the background was the pile of a medieval castle complete with turrets and spires. This may have been intended as a likeness of Pickfair, the couple's Hollywood mansion which was undergoing construction in Hollywood at the time – although the drawing bore no resemblance to Pickfair as it turned out in reality.

The *Vogue* advertisement was followed by a full-page advertisement eight months later in the September 25, 1922 issue of *La Vie Automobile*. The justifiably proud leader text was: *La Voiture de l'Étoile... The Car of the Star... Le Carrossier des Rois de l'écran...* The *Carrossier* of the Kings of the screen... J. Saoutchik. This was followed by a smaller text which reused the column written by *Le Masque de Fer*: "...*Mary Pickford et Douglas Fairbanks n'ont pas voulu quitter la France sans emporter un souvenir de notre pays; ils ont fixé leur choix sur le superbe coupé 'six cylindres Delage' carrossée par Saoutchik, tant admiré au Salon...*" – Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks did not want to leave France without taking back a souvenir of our country; they selected the beautiful "six-cylinder Delage" coupé with bodywork by Saoutchik, admired at the Salon..."



Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks. (Peter Larsen)

Whether or not Pickford and Fairbanks had commissioned the car before coming to France and agreed to have it shown at the Salon or whether Saoutchik had previously built the car and the happy couple had bought it off his stand in 1921 is not known. However, since the first ad was run in January, and the second in September 1922, the historical dates do not really fit with the advertising text – unless the car was a 1922 model which had been displayed at the Paris Salon back in October 1921

and ordered more than a full year prior to that in 1920 when the Pickfords were in France. And even that is a bit creaky. Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford had been married on March 28, 1920. On June 12 of that year, they left New York on the Red Star cruise liner *Lapland* for a delayed honeymoon in Europe. They arrived in London on June 21, 1920 where they were mobbed by the crowds and a level of mass hysteria erupted, the likes of which the world had never seen.



The half-page advertisement in the January 9, 1922 issue of *Vogue* which showed Mary Pickford in a fantasy Hollywood setting. (Laurent Friry)



Jacques Saoutchik was only five feet five inches tall, with chestnut hair and gray-blue eyes. He was fastidious about his appearance and wore tailor-made suits as well as handmade shoes. (Jacqueline Guilloux)

gourmand". One of his main means of relaxation was visiting a hammam, the Turkish variant of a steam bath, sauna or Russian bath, which is distinguished by a focus on water, as distinct from ambient steam. A person going to the hammam first relaxes in a warm room, which is heated by a continuous flow of hot, dry air, allowing the bather to perspire freely. The bather may then move to an even hotter room before splashing himself with cold water. After performing a full body wash and receiving a massage, the bather then finally retires to the cooling room for a period of relaxation. In his strenuous life, this was Jacques' preferred method of "rejuvenation". The infamous Doctor Voronoff may have been a paying client at the *Carrosserie*, but like any sane person, Jacques had no inclination to undergo any of his monkey gland rejuvenation surgeries!

Music and dancing played an important role in the relationship between Jacques and Jacquemine. Old Russian melodies occupied a special place in the heart of Jacques, and he would often ask that Jacquemine play them for him on the piano, as he would reminisce about the long-lost home country. In her youth, whenever friends of Jacquemine would gather for a party at the house with dancing, Jacques would be a preferred dancing partner. Raymonde, also an excellent dancer, would often recount how she and Jacques had created a sensation as they danced at grand balls, all the more glittering in the mellow glow of past joys well remembered. As a little girl, Jacquemine would sometimes be put to sleep as Jacques told bedtime stories about the escapades of "Ludovic", a little Russian boy whom Jacques invented for the occasion, as he extrapolated on his own childhood in faraway Belarus. These were some of the few precious moments, when Jacquemine felt that she had her father all to herself and was not required to share with the members of a shadow-family of whom she had no real knowledge.

**J. SAOUTCHIK**  
 CARROSSIER  
 WAG. 12.12 46 RUE JACQUES DULUD 46 NEUILLY  
 TOUTE LA GAMME  
 DE  
 TRANSFORMABLES

Catalogue illustré contenant mes dernières créations envoyé sur demande

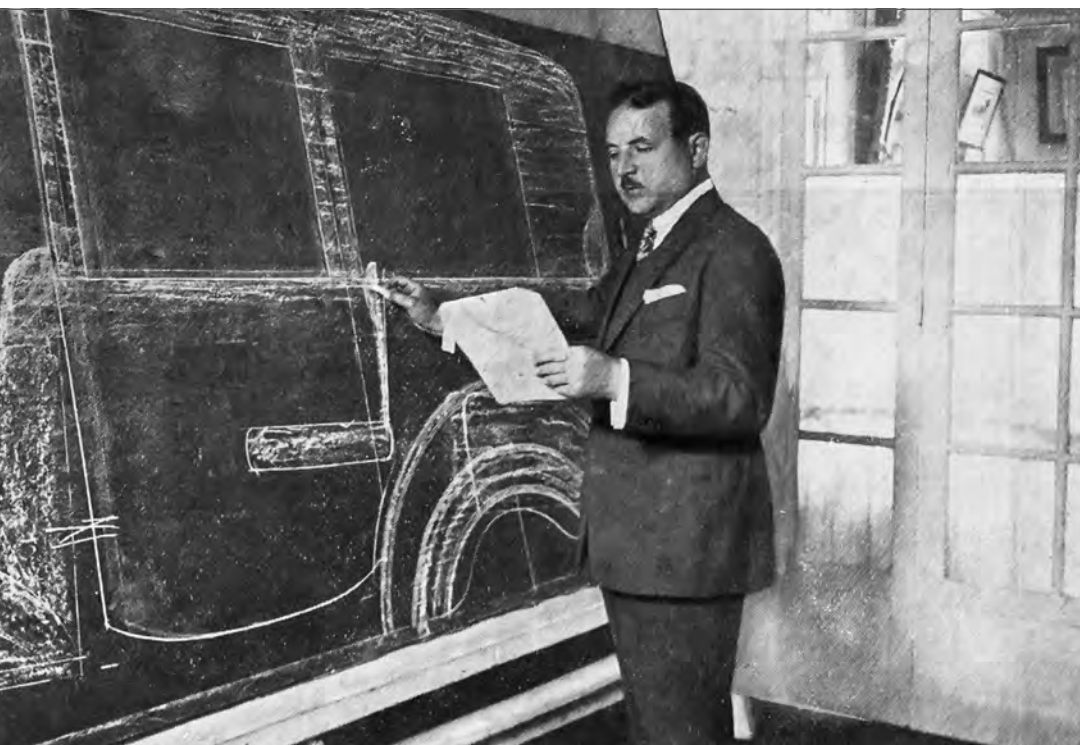
SALON DE L'AUTOMOBILE — GALERIE A — STAND 4.

The advertisement in the October 1924 issue of *Omnia*. It was used as the cover for the 1925 Saoutchik brochure. (*Omnia*, Peter Larsen)





Jacques at his desk in the mid-1920s at 46 rue Jacques Dulud. Note the old-fashioned surroundings with no trace of Bauhaus or Arts Décoratifs furniture or decoration. (Fonds Saoutchik, Nanterre)



A poised Jacques in his atelier next to the large board where he did full-scale renderings for his customers. The car was a six-window *transformable* with jumpseats, obviously intended for a large luxury chassis. Note the wall of Jacques' office facing the rue Jacques Dulud which can be seen through the door. (Omnia, Peter Larsen)

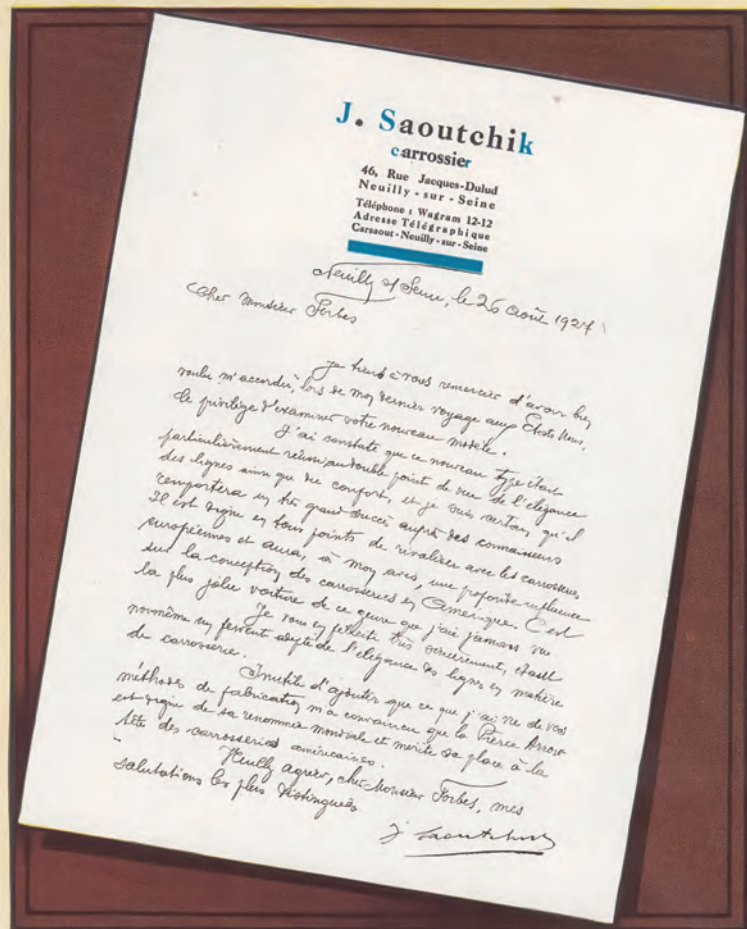
done this on three different chassis, this time only one chassis was used, a long wheelbase Hispano-Suiza H6B, which lent itself exceptionally well to the task.

The lead text was a variation of texts which had been used in previous advertisements and brochures: "*La Transformable*" modèle 1926, brevetée s.g.d.g. qui réunit à elle seule les avantages de 3 voitures – The patented 1926 model of "*The Transformable*", which in itself unites the advantages of three automobiles. The text at the top was flanked on either side by two small renderings taken from the back panel of the 1924 - 1925 brochure: one showing the patented removable windshield and the other a *transformable* interior with the jumpseats folded away. Below this, the Hispano was depicted three times as "*La Transformable*" 6 glaces in its closed six-window configuration, "*La Transformable*" en cabriolet limousine, i.e. *coupé chauffeur*, or town car, and finally "*La Transformable*" en torpédo, or as an open touring car.

The side views incorporated virtually all of the signature styling touches used by Saoutchik in the mid-1920s: the convex door bottoms, the elegant convex sweep of the front fender, the covered sidemount and of course the basic proportioning of the rear compartment of a Saoutchik six-window car, which was two-thirds glass and one-third blind rear quarter, which is discussed at length on comparative design analyses in Book Two. No wheel discs were used, and the tires were shown either with whitewalls or as unpigmented white tires. While not built into the body, the attached trunk followed the curve of the rear of the body, which contributed to the cohesiveness of the side profile.

The windshield, side windows and top had become appreciably lower than the models shown in the 1922 advertisement. For this reason, this 1926 model had a sportier look in spite of it being on such a large chassis.

MONSIEUR  
**SAOUTCHIK**  
*famed Parisian  
 body-builder,*  
 says:



*"I wish to thank you for the privilege of examining your new model . . . it is my opinion that it will have a profound influence on body conceptions in America. It is the most beautiful car of its kind I have ever seen. What I saw of your methods of manufacture convinced me that Pierce-Arrow is worthy of its world renown and merits its place at the head of American body builders."*

**A**BOVE is a letter to the president of The Pierce-Arrow Motor Car Company. The writer, M. Saoutchik, is a Parisian body-builder whose creations are used almost exclusively by Hispano-Suiza, Isotta-Fraschini, Mercedes, and Minerva. He has built special bodies for the Vatican, for the King of Norway, the King of Spain,

and other notables of Europe and America.

The Pierce-Arrow which drew such high praise from this master of automobile design is now on exhibit at Pierce-Arrow showrooms everywhere, in many beautiful models and exquisite combinations of color. The prices are moderate. THE PIERCE-ARROW MOTOR CAR COMPANY, Buffalo, N.Y.

# PIERCE - ARROW

THE • NEW • SERIES • 81



You may purchase a Pierce-Arrow out of income, if you prefer. A simplified financing plan makes this a most practical procedure. Your present car accepted as cash up to the full amount of its appraisal valuation.

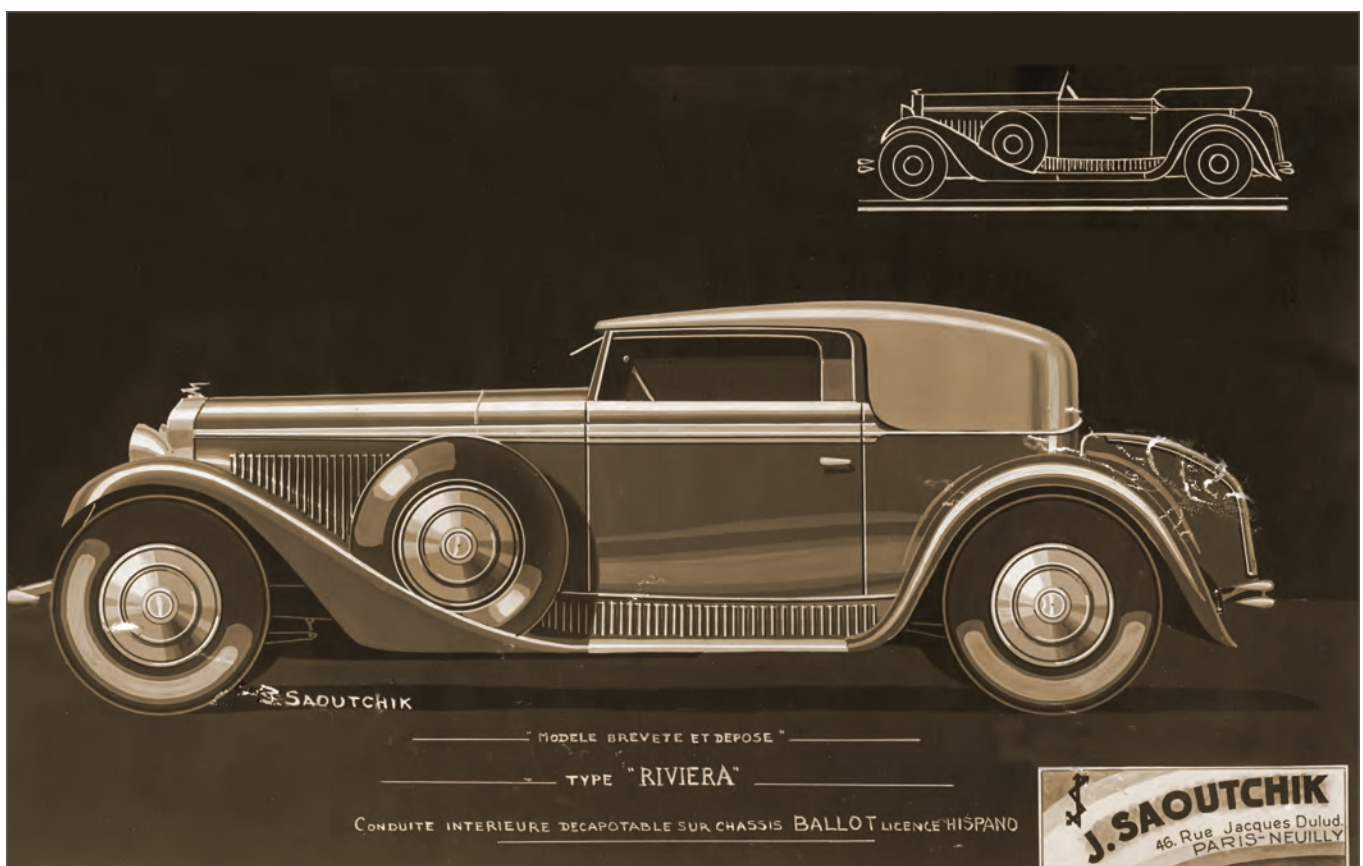
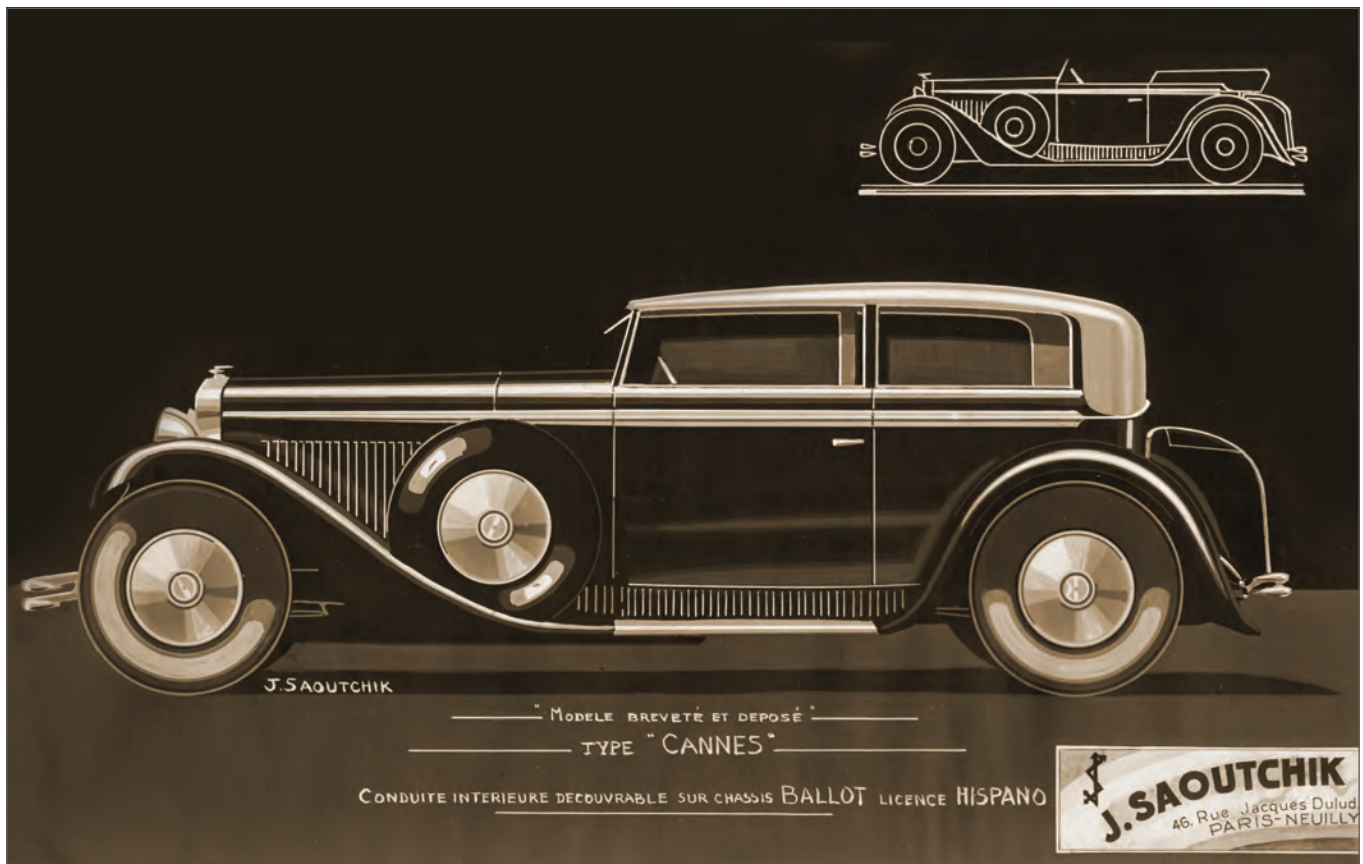


TOP: The Mercedes stand at the 1928 Paris Salon with two Saoutchik bodies. The chassis on the S type Cannes in the background is not identified, but it is not 35949. (*Peter Larsen*)

ABOVE LEFT: Mercedes S chassis 35949 with a type Cannes body. Here, photographed by the Carrosserie in the Bois de Boulogne. (*Jacqueline Saoutchik*)

ABOVE RIGHT: The aesthetics of the new designs and styles incorporated influences from America and were quite different from the earlier transformables. The new look was larger, yet lithe and featured beltlines as well as a novel deconstruction of the classic *fiacre* line. (*Jacqueline Saoutchik*)

LEFT: The stance and elegance was remarkable and did much to cement the position of Jacques Saoutchik. (*Jacqueline Saoutchik*)



Two Saoutchik design renderings of a type *Cannes* and a type *Riviera* were found in the Van Rijswijk archives. The designs share a family resemblance with J12 chassis 13010, and demonstrate how influential the Bucciali designs were for creating usable styles for production chassis. (Hans Veenenbos)



Général Marie-Pierre König at Les Invalides on August 26 1944, in a 1939 Renault Suprastella by Saoutchik with cantilever doors. *(Daniel Cabart)*



Général König in the back seat of the Renault at the Place de l'Opéra on the way to Les Invalides. *(Peter Larsen)*



Shortly after the Liberation of Strasbourg on November 23, 1944, König used the Renault again. *(Peter Larsen)*



Sir John Gaul accepting the Grand Prix d'Honneur in Monte Carlo with 815023. (Charles Bronson)



Concours de la Grande Cascade June 23, 1949. More artistic fender-perching. (Peter Larsen)



While Jacques, Pierre and Auriol are partaking in the general good cheer, Franay is looking directly at the camera, as if to say that the joviality was all a sham, none of it made any difference and everyone would go down anyway. Pierre is at the extreme right of the picture. (*Fonds Saoutchik, Nanterre*)



On the evening of October 14, 1950, a fashion show was staged at the Salon. Here, two chic models in gowns by Worth are pointing elegantly at the Saoutchik coachbuilder's plaque on Delahaye 135 chassis 801424. (*Peter Larsen*)



Jacques leaning against 801424, looking sick of the whole thing. The presidential magic sprinkled by Auriol on the 5th had worn off quickly. (*Peter Larsen*)



Delahaye 235 chassis 818005. Behind the car, Jacques is pensively contemplating one of the last creations of his *Carrosserie*. 1951 was the last Salon he attended. Behind Jacques the blurred profile of Pierre can be seen. (David Cooper)

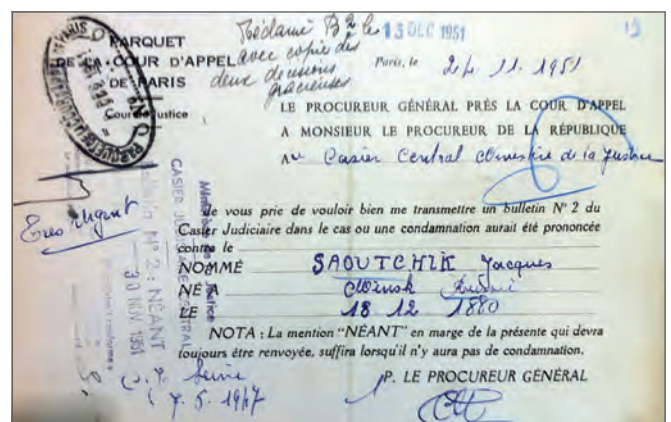
something – either some political assistance to better conditions for the *Carrosserie*, or perhaps the subject was whether or not Jacques would be included in the general amnesty concerning collaborators who had been sentenced to less than fifteen years of prison. The law had been passed in the beginning of the year on January 5, 1951.

After the Salon, on November 30, 1951, Jacques finally paid up the 120,000 franc fine and court costs which were required of him in order for the revocation of both the judgment of confiscation and the *dégradation nationale* to take effect. On May 24, 1950, he had been given a year to do this, so he was six months tardy. The payment was

treated as an urgent matter, and registered by the Court of Appeals on December 13, 1951. Whether Jacques paid up late because he needed assurance first that he would receive amnesty or whether he had trouble scraping up the money is not known. Jacques did in fact receive amnesty by decree on January 15, 1952. Finally, the entire ordeal and aftermath of the Occupation was well and truly gone. Jacques was 71, and it was late to get a clean slate. During the eight years the proceedings had snatched from his life, they had gone hand in hand with his financial woes to grind him down.



Pierre is standing behind the front fender of 818005. Perhaps it was this car and setting that attracted Pegaso to Saoutchik. (Peter Larsen)



On November 30, 1951, Jacques finally paid the costs so that the judgments against him could be revoked. He received amnesty on January 15, 1952. (Archives Nationales de France)





1951 Delahaye 235 chassis 818039 was the last Delahaye bodied by Saoutchik. (Jean-Paul Tissot)



The Pegaso Z-102B prototype convertible was a dramatic car, which received much attention, but for once Saoutchik won no prizes at the Salon. (Peter Larsen)



An aged Jacques presenting the Cadillac with the model and Marcel Burgunder. This is the only existing photo where the features of Marcel Burgunder may be discerned. *(Peter Larsen)*



A perfect illustration of the value of a suicide door for providing elegant egress from an automobile. Note the thickness of the door. Jacques office was directly above on the first floor. The atelier was behind the office. The shops were to the right. *(Peter Larsen)*

## ◊ CHAPTER 19 ◊ THE FINAL CURTAIN 1955 - 1957

According to Enrique Coma-Cros, the entire relationship between Saoutchik and Pegaso had been fraught with problems from the very beginning. Coma-Cros lays the blame at Pierre's door, stating that Saoutchik was in a state of crisis and decline when the agreement between the two companies was entered into, not only in terms of design and fabrication, but also and more especially at the technical, financial and commercial levels: "While Touring evolved the Z-102 model into a vehicle with simple, clean and agile lines,

always stamped with a sporting character, Saoutchik did the reverse, making a vehicle with tortured lines. Baroque at the beginning, he constantly made changes, as if trying to find harmony as well as a practical and commercial line, which he almost never achieved. This constant evolution... was contrary to what usually happens with good and 'classic' bodywork designs. The first prototype is usually the best, and then practical and commercial needs make it evolve in a negative sense. In the case of Saoutchik, the exact opposite happened".



Jacques in a Series III Pegaso in the Bois de Boulogne in the summer of 1954. He could no longer drive and was sitting stiffly behind the wheel. (Illustration, Peter Larsen)

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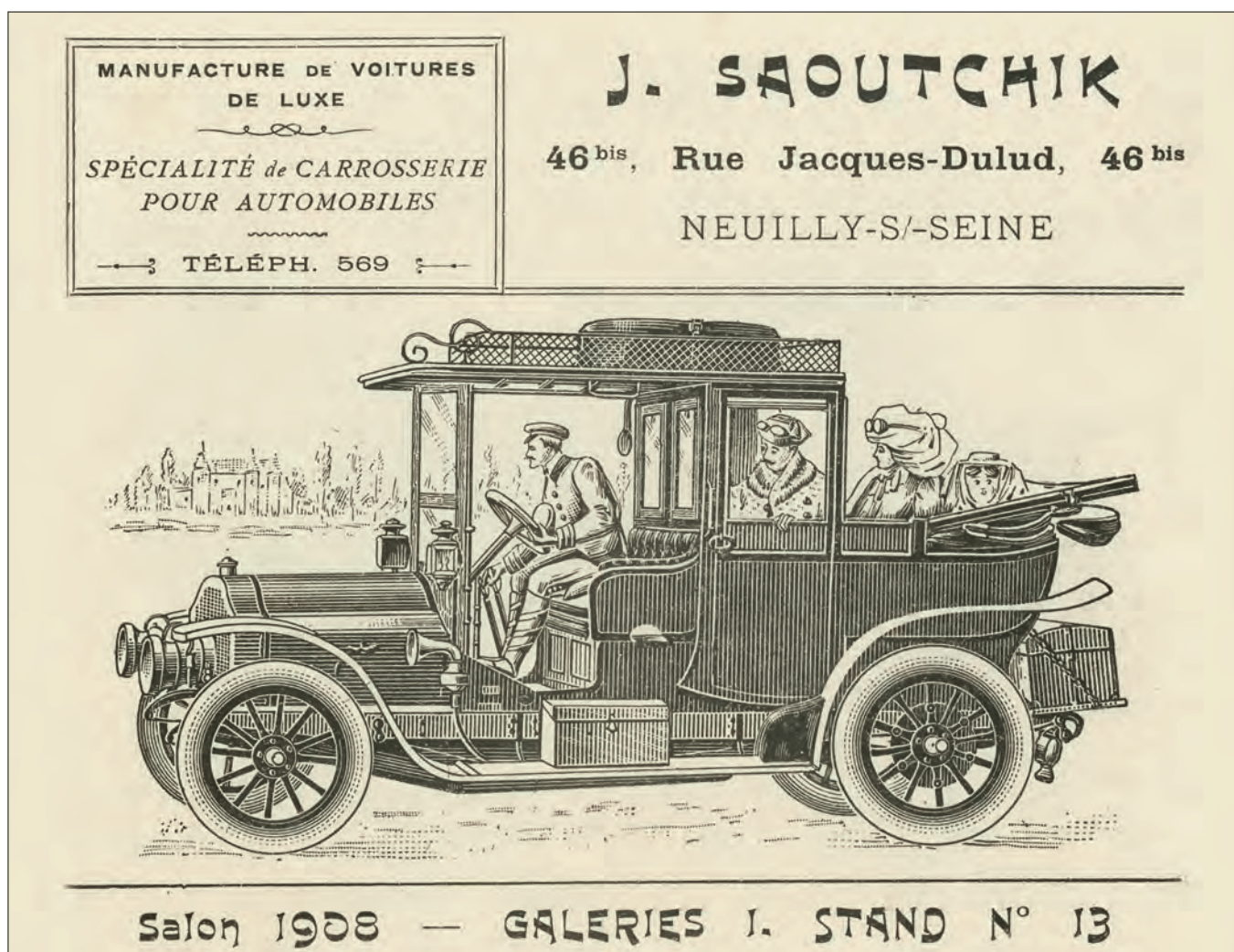
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◊ 1908 BROCHURE ◊

In 1908, only two years after the official incorporation of the *Carrosserie*, Saoutchik put out a small monochrome publication. Somewhere between a brochure and a pamphlet, it displayed five copperplate engravings of four different chassis bodied by *J. Saoutchik*. This brochure is the earliest known printed matter relating to Saoutchik and is reproduced here from scans made at the Thomas T. Solley collection at the Lilly Library under Indiana University Bloomington in Bloomington, Indiana. The copy in the Solley collection may well

be the only one which has survived. Solley, who died in 2004, was a wealthy and avid lifelong collector of coachbuilding brochures. Thanks to his perseverance, it has been possible to reproduce many Saoutchik coachbuilding drawings in the following pages, which would otherwise have been lost. In 2008, a book cataloging Solley's collection, titled *Prestige, Status and Works of Art*, was published posthumously. In this book, every entry is described objectively with regards to paper quality, printing technique, colors and so forth.



1908 Lorraine-Dietrich Landaulet. (Lilly Library, Bloomington, Indiana)



**1923 Delage CO Cabriolet limousine, 4 glaces.**

Cabriolet limousine, 4 glaces on a Delage chassis. Note that the main picture was flanked by smaller drawings of transformables on different chassis with the top in various positions: a Panhard and a 40 CV Renault. Saoutchik would use this type of stylesheet layout extensively in the 1927 - 1929 period. As in the 1921 brochure, the cars were shod with white non-pigmented or light gray tires. (Lilly Library, Bloomington, Indiana)

**1923 Hispano-Suiza Conduite Intérieure, 6 glaces.**

Conduite Intérieure, 6 glaces on an Hispano-Suiza H6 chassis. All the 1923 - 1925 body styles had sidemounts, as Saoutchik was apparently still not in favor of the continental manner of mounting the spares at the rear. Here the sidemount was shown with a smooth close-fitting cover, which only disclosed the small knob covering the wheel mounting at the center hub. This smooth spare tire cover would become a Saoutchik design hallmark, used throughout the latter half of the 1920s and into the mid-1930s.

(Lilly Library, Bloomington, Indiana)



the side on the 1925 design, it was now via a small opening at the top. The second design on the plate was a more conventional yellow-beige two-door *conduite intérieure transformable* (convertible coupe) on an Hispano H6 chassis, with a skiff-like rear end, not unlike the purple Delage. On the second plate, a pale blue *transformable 4 glaces* (four-window convertible), was depicted on a Minerva chassis, followed by a pale orange *transformable 6 glaces* (six-window convertible), on a Delage, both of which by 1926 had become quintessential Saoutchik styles. The third plate showed a pastel green *cabriolet limousine 4 glaces* on the newly introduced Rolls-Royce Phantom I chassis and a beige Hispano-Suiza H6B *cabriolet limousine 2 glaces*.

With their concave door bottoms, lack of beltlines, enclosed sidemounts and either wheel discs or wires, these designs were the final evolution of the styles that Saoutchik had been presenting and developing since 1919. The greenhouses had become lower when compared to the 1923 - 1925 brochure material and were similar in proportion to the Hispano-Suiza shown in the *Omnia* advertisement from October 1925. The fenders had acquired a longer and elegant flowing sweep. The flange surrounding the doors was all but gone, and the bodies had an amount of tumblehome along the chassis rail – both of which contributed to a cleaner side treatment. The insides of the fenders, the chassis aprons as well as the trunks and the tops were

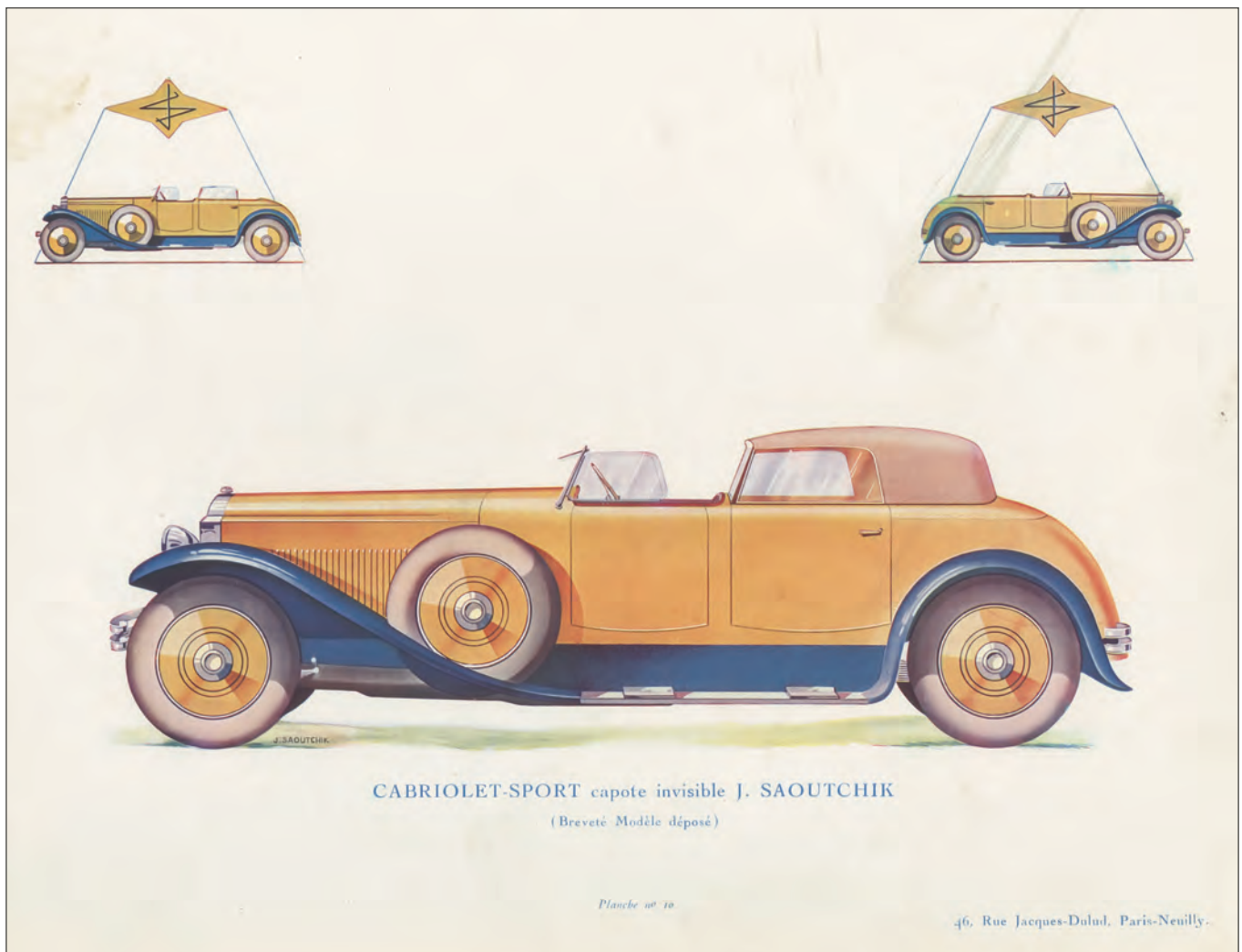


The very stylized Arts Décoratifs cover for the beautiful 1926 brochure. (Peter Larsen)



**Packard Cabriolet Sport, Capote Invisible (Plate 10).** Sports convertible with disappearing top on a Packard chassis. Light orange body with beige top and blue contrasting color under the fenders and on the chassis apron. Set against a white background. Shown as a *cabriolet de ville* in the main rendering, and in two *torpédo* configurations in the small renderings with the rear side window up or down respectively. There were wind deflectors for the front compartment as on plates 2 and 3. The rear side window had attractive rounded edges, which accentuated the sporty nature of the design. The design featured the horizontal line first seen in the 1927 *Omnia* advertisement running

from the door along the top of the rear deck, which indicated that this section was rear-hinged, folded back to open the cavity that was to accept the folded top, and then folded back down to hide it. This elegant and sporty model could well have been the inspiration for the Brunn Torpedo Phaeton. As with the other 1928 - 1929 transformable designs, this model showed convex door bottoms, slim pillars, and non-encased sidemounts, with wheel discs in body color and blue pinstriping. No trunk was fitted, and there was no beltline or the new *fiacre* line. In 1927, an Hispano-Suiza H6B was built to this design.

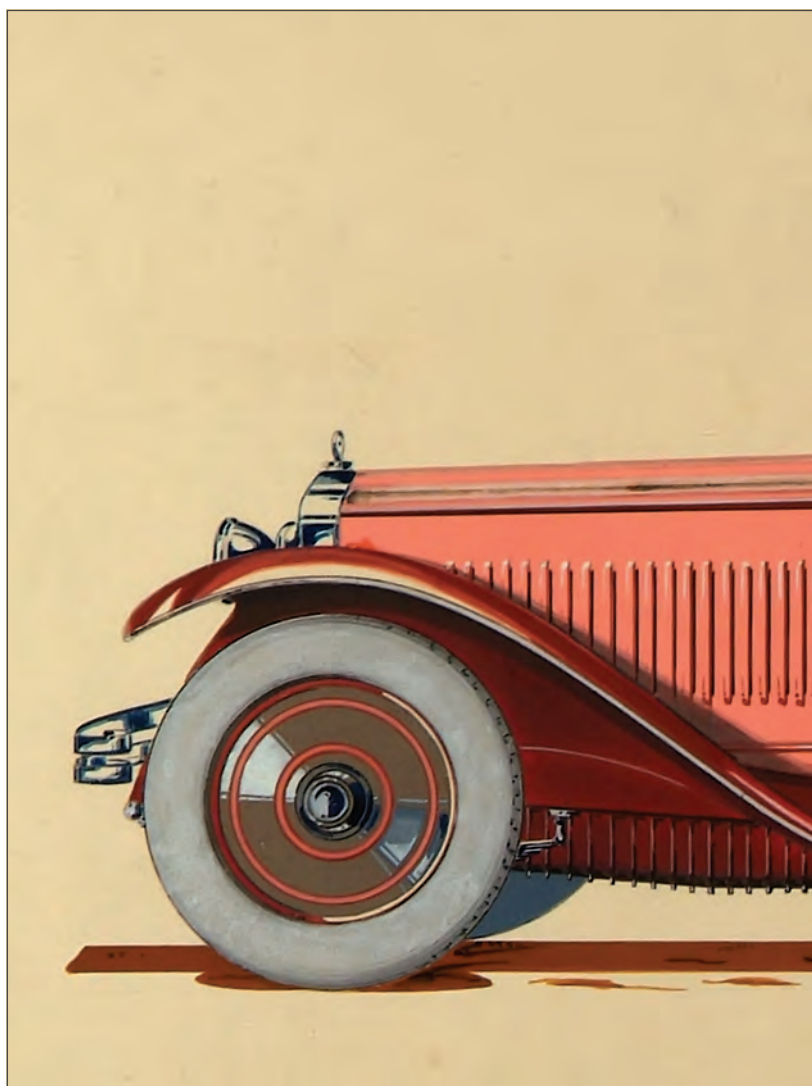


(Lilly Library, Bloomington, Indiana)

## ◊ 1929-1930 DELAGE GL ◊ RENDERING BY MARCEL BURGUNDER

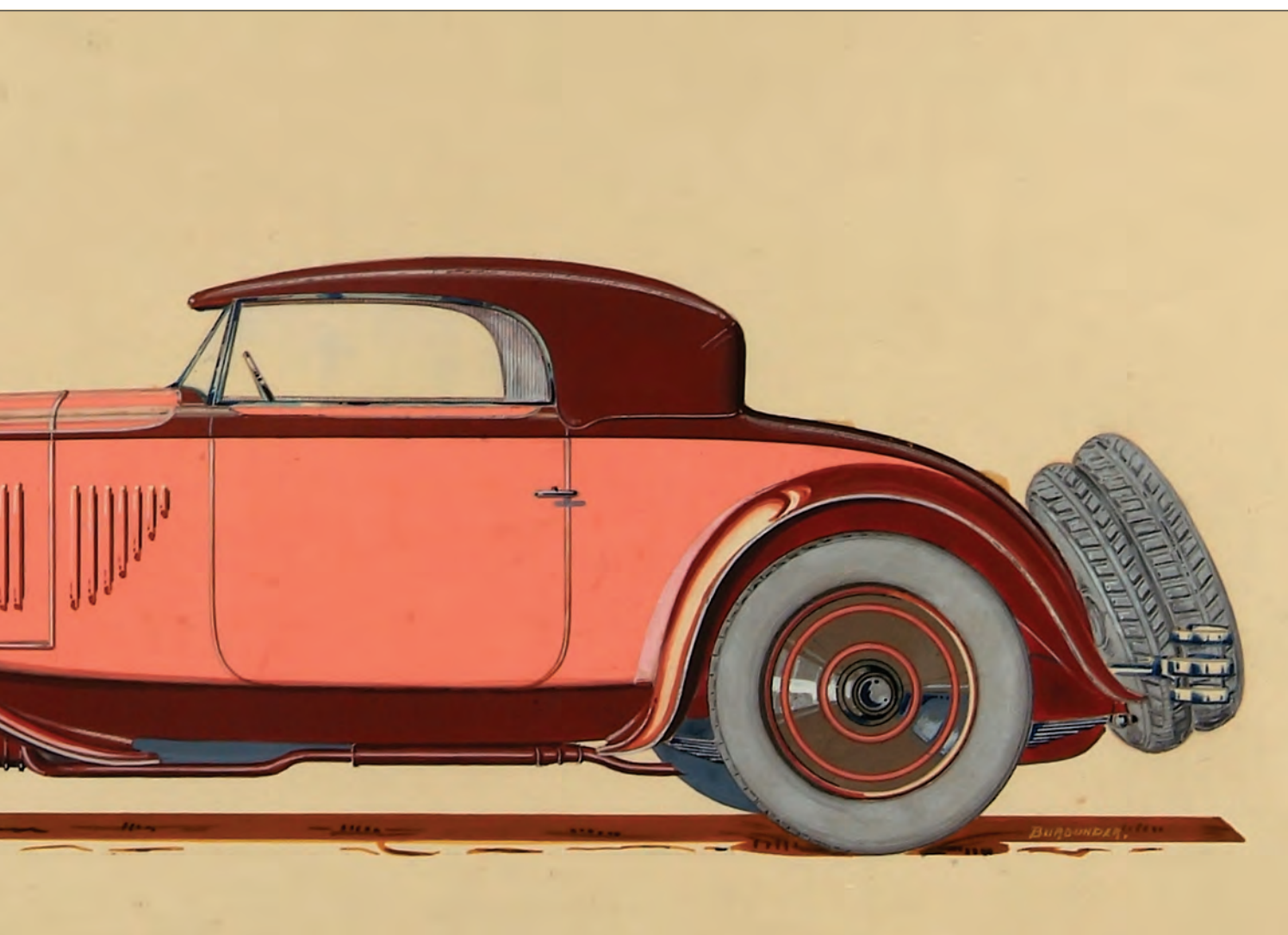
This is an unusual Saoutchik design rendering on a Delage GL chassis, as it was signed by Marcel Burgunder and did not carry a Saoutchik logo. Only a few Saoutchik renderings carry Burgunder's signature. Burgunder had been hired by Saoutchik as a designer and *chef d'atelier* at the end of 1927, where his main job was to finish off and do detail work on designs from the hand of Jacques. Nevertheless, it is likely that Marcel Burgunder provided ideas and creative input during the development of the new stylistic direction that Saoutchik took with the models introduced in late 1928. Unfortunately, it is no longer possible to determine the level nor extent of Burgunder's influence during the early years of his tenure. He stayed with Saoutchik until the company was shut down by the receivers in November 1954, and there are indications that his importance and stature grew in later years, especially after World War II.

The colors on the Delage were an audacious combination of a coral body with contrasting burgundy top, fenders, chassis apron and beltline. Overall, the design was similar to the *Conduite Intérieure Cabriolet Sport* – a convertible *coupé* on an Hispano-Suiza chassis depicted on mixed makes, plate 9 in the 1927 brochure for the 1928 model year. Both shared wheel discs, rear-mounted spares, a sloping bobtail rear and presumably a rumble seat as there was no externally attached trunk. The hood line, trunk line and the convertible top of the Burgunder design were somewhat lower than the 1927 Hispano-Suiza design, which makes it likely that it was created a few years later in 1929 or 1930. The top had a lip that functioned as a visor as it protruded over the windshield, and the top rear edge of the cutout for the side window was curved on the Delage, whereas it had been angular on the Hispano-Suiza. The most important stylistic difference was the beltline, which started at the radiator on the Burgunder design, wrapped itself across the body at the windshield and continued along the side for the length of the car with a cheeky little dip where the top met the door, before it sloped down at the rear as it followed the line of the bobtail. The detail of the beltline going across the body was an American stylistic influence and can perhaps be regarded as a precursor for the beltline treatment first seen on the Delage D8 for the Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie in 1930.



There was no *fiacre* line, which is not unusual, as Saoutchik was phasing it out by this time. Nevertheless, the rear side curvature of the louvers on the body give the subliminal impression of a *fiacre*, so one can say that it had not completely ceased to exist in the design language of the *Carrosserie*. Whereas the door on the Hispano-Suiza had been squared off, the lower corners of the door on the Delage were curved, while the bottom remained horizontal. Coupled with a slight convex curve to the lower edge of the body where it met the down-sweep of the front fender below the cutout for the hood, the combined result was lithe and sporting. Front and rear fenders were separate, and there was no running board, although it seems as if the front fender terminated in a small step plate of sorts. The fenders were edged in German silver.

Unusually, there were no small renderings elsewhere on this plate that showed the body in an open configuration – as was customary on other official Saoutchik designs. It is unlikely that Saoutchik would have let a prewar design drawing that was printed up for general distribution carry Burgunder's signature. It is more likely that this is one of a set of renderings which were presented directly to a concrete customer for his consideration. Jacques would have created the basic designs. It then became Burgunder's time-consuming job to flesh them out and draw up finished proposals, perhaps being allowed to add a twist or two of his own in the process. There is no documentation that this design was built.

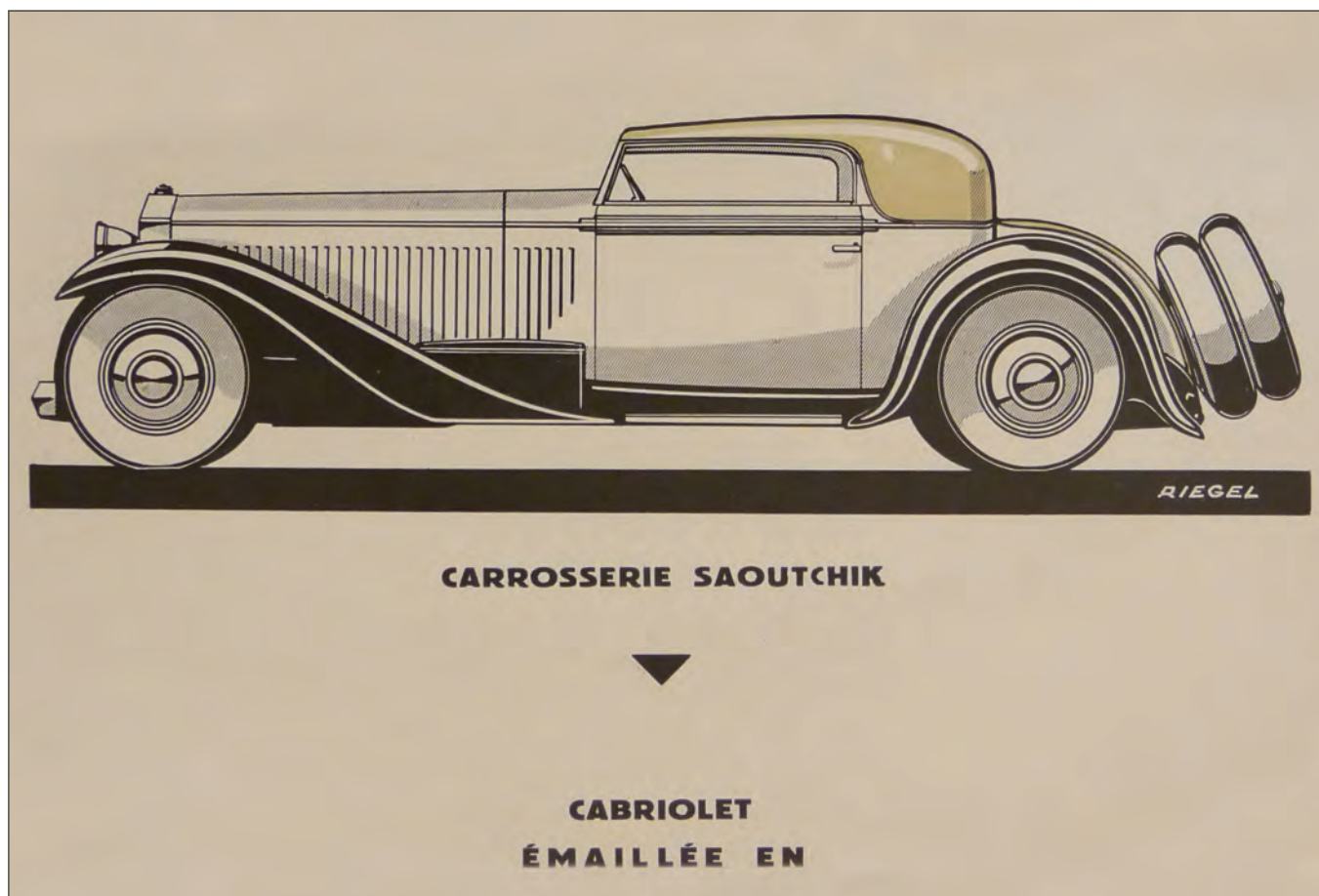


One of the very few Saoutchik design renderings signed by Marcel Burgunder. (Richard Adatto)

## ◊ 1933 ROLLS-ROYCE ◊ PHANTOM II CONTINENTAL CABRIOLET, NITROLAC

In the May 1933 issue of *l'Équipement Automobile*, a Nitrolac rendering was printed which in its overall proportions and stance was virtually a carbon copy of the Cadillac V-16 *cabriolet* style from 1932. At the same time, it demonstrated how minor changes to a few lines and styling elements as well as the rearrangement of some accessories could fundamentally modernize and change the perception of a design. The 1933 style was for a two-door, four-seat *cabriolet* without landau irons on a Rolls-Royce 40/50 Phantom II Continental chassis.

Like the V-16 Cadillac, the Rolls-Royce design was a paragon of classic style and proportion with a perfect distribution of volumes; half of the car's length was given over to the hood, while the short four-passenger body ended in a vertical line just before the rear axle. The blind rear quarter dipped down at the end of the side window in the manner of an American victoria and the windshield was low and narrow, as was the single elongated side window. These elements were all similar to the Cadillac, but there was an overall rounding of contours and



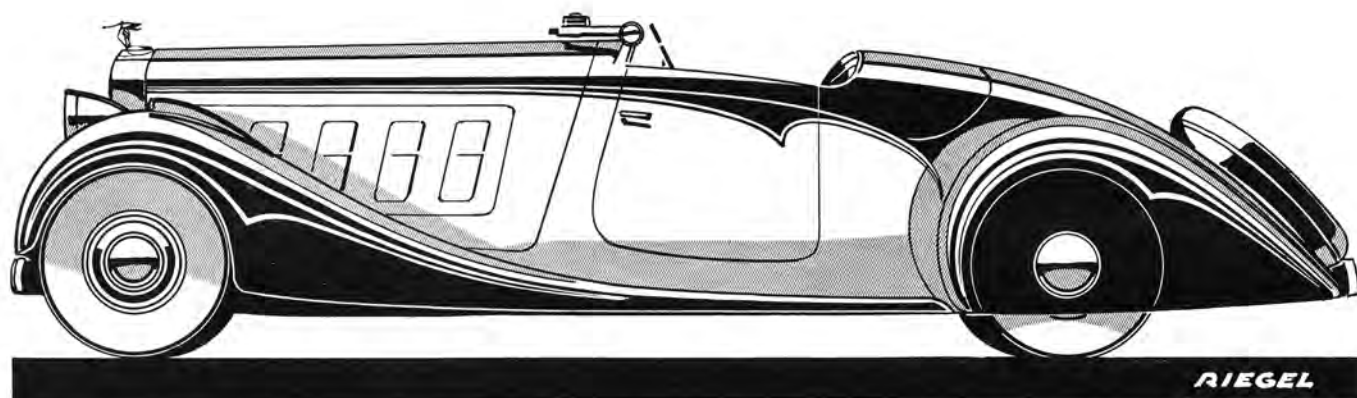
(*l'Équipement Automobile*, Laurent Friry)

## ◆ 1935 HISPANO-SUIZA J12 ◆ TORPÉDO-CABRIOLET, NITROLAC

In the August 1935 edition of *l'Équipement Automobile*, an updated version of the *torpédo aérodynamique* design from December 1934 was printed on an inserted Nitrolac plate. Although the basic proportions remained the same, the style was presented this time as a *torpédo cabriolet*. The rendering itself was less sketchy than that of the *torpédo aérodynamique* and displayed more detail. The factory Hispano-Suiza hood cutout was replicated, although it still had only five louvers instead of the seven on Hispanos as built. The rear-hinged suicide door was larger with a less perfunctory shape. Other differences included an exposed spare carried in a casing on the lower portion of the long sloping rear deck. A line on the body behind the passenger compartment indicated a hinged panel and provision for stowing the disappearing top. Overall, it was a lovely and exquisite car, although one could say that it pulled the *torpédo aérodynamique* concept in a slightly conservative direction, as it focused on ornamentation and decoration at the expense of developing the aerodynamic properties of the *carrosserie* itself.

The folding windshield was carried over from the *torpédo aérodynamique*, as was the cut-down door which curved down to reveal the top of the seat that was integrated into the body. The flange on the front fender was deep and concealed the undercarriage and chassis rail completely. The fender skirt had a horizontal bottom line and was decorated with a large, round chromed dish replicating the hub cap. As was now customary, small diameter wheels were fitted with balloon tires. The front fender swept in a continuous curve all the way back to the rear fender, although there was a small separation where the running board ended – a carry-over from the 1932 Hispano-Suiza *Transformable Grand Luxe 4 portes* and the 1934 Hispano-Suiza *conduite intérieure 2 portes*. The flat and classic Hispano-Suiza radiator, complemented by freestanding headlamps, was retained and not modified by Saoutchik. The lower body was light in color, while the contrasting fenders, beltline and rear deck were in a black or dark color.

### **Torpedo-Cabriolet de la Carrosserie Saoutchik, sur châssis Hispano-Suiza**



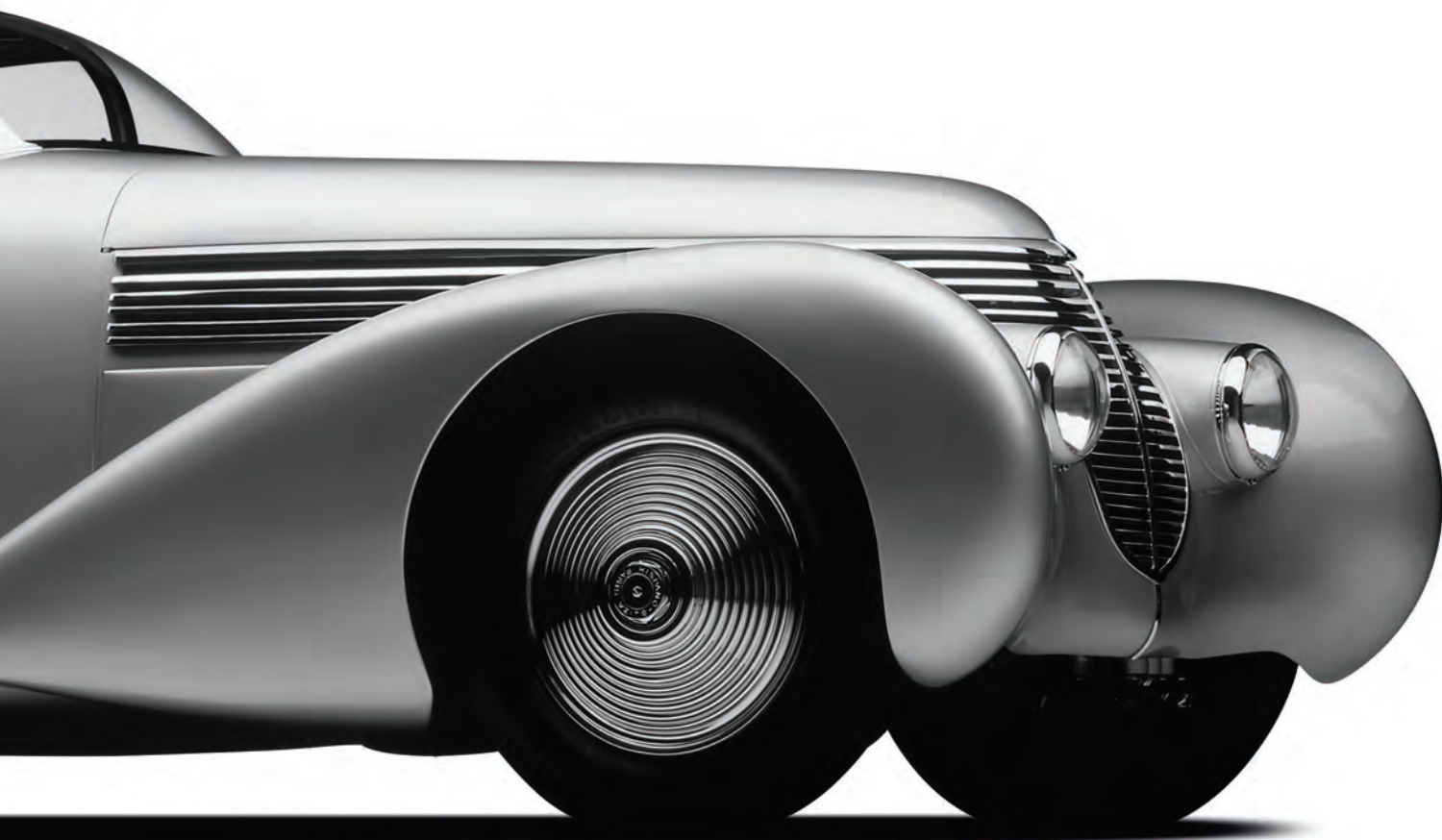
(*l'Équipement Automobile*, Daniel Cabart)



*(Photographs by Michael Furman, © 2013)*

1938 HISPANO-SUIZA XENIA II

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# **Le Grand Prix du Salon 1950**

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## **LA TALBOT-LAGO-RECORD**



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# **SAOUTCHIK**

*maître carrossier à Paris depuis 1906*

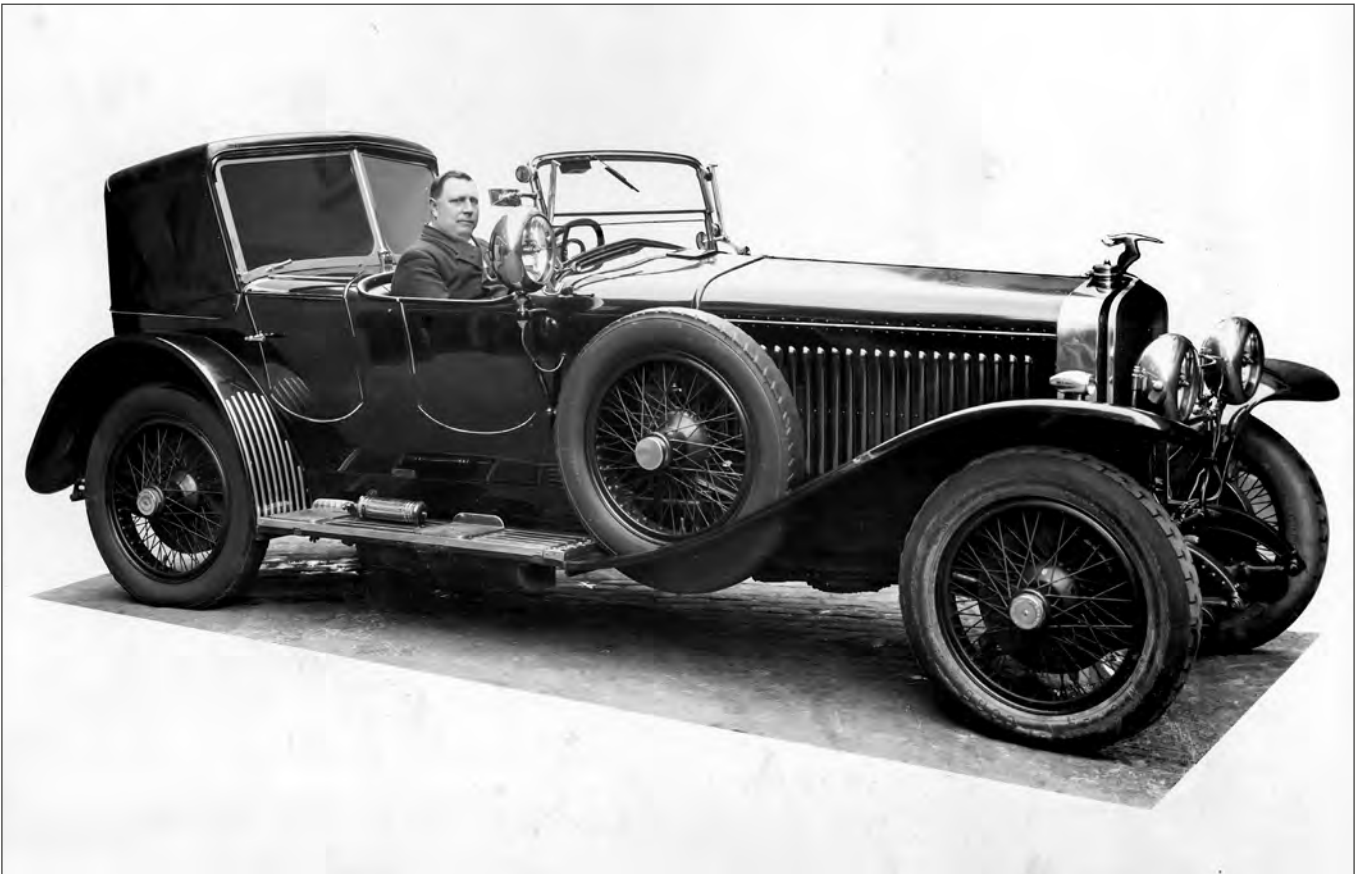
*et naturellement émaillée par*

# **NITROLAC**



◊ BOOK THREE ◊  
 HEAVENLY BODIES  
*The Music of the Spheres in Steel*

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A superbly proportioned *scaphandrier* convertible on a 1919 Hispano-Suiza H6 chassis (number unknown). The *scaphandrier* style took its name from the resemblance of the rear compartment to the shape of a diving helmet before scuba equipment was invented. The style enjoyed a vogue in France until the early 1930s. (Nelson V. Thorpe)



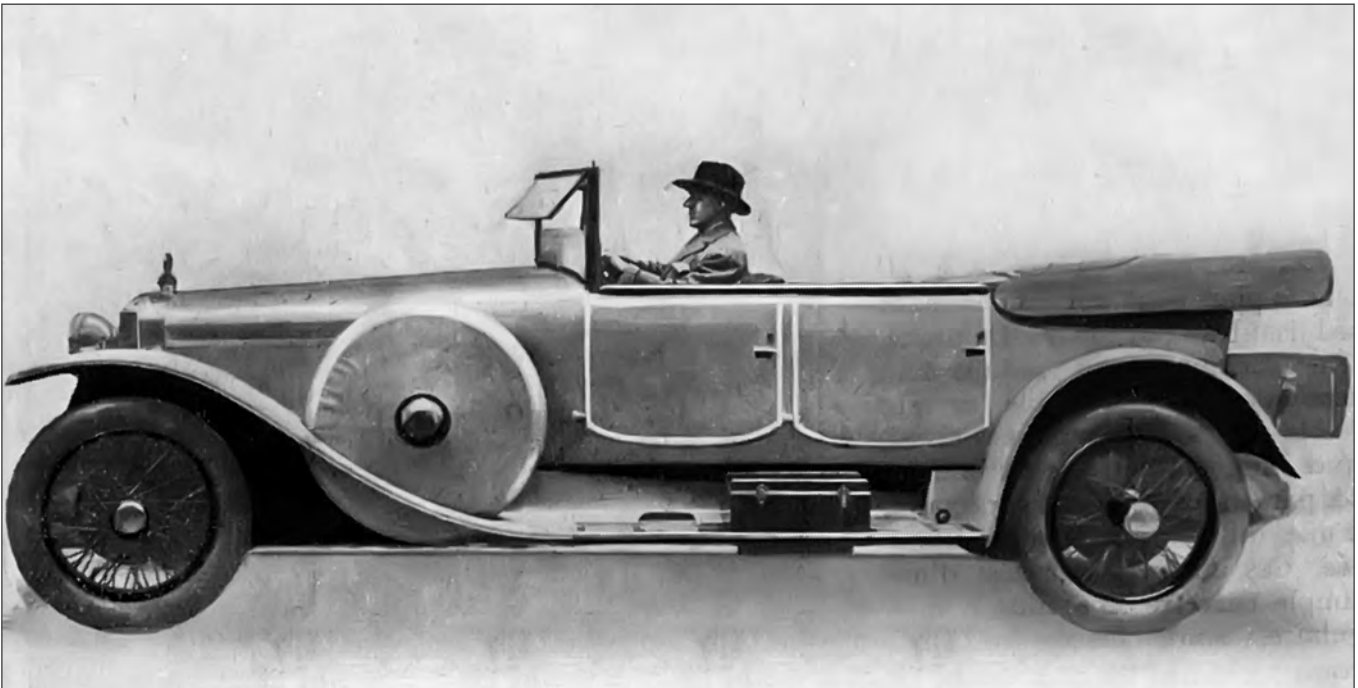
A Saoutchik body was almost always multi-functional. A cover could be stretched between the *scaphandrier* and the windshield. Note the elegant fender line and the convex door bottoms. Unusually, the sidemounts were not covered. (Nelson V. Thorpe)



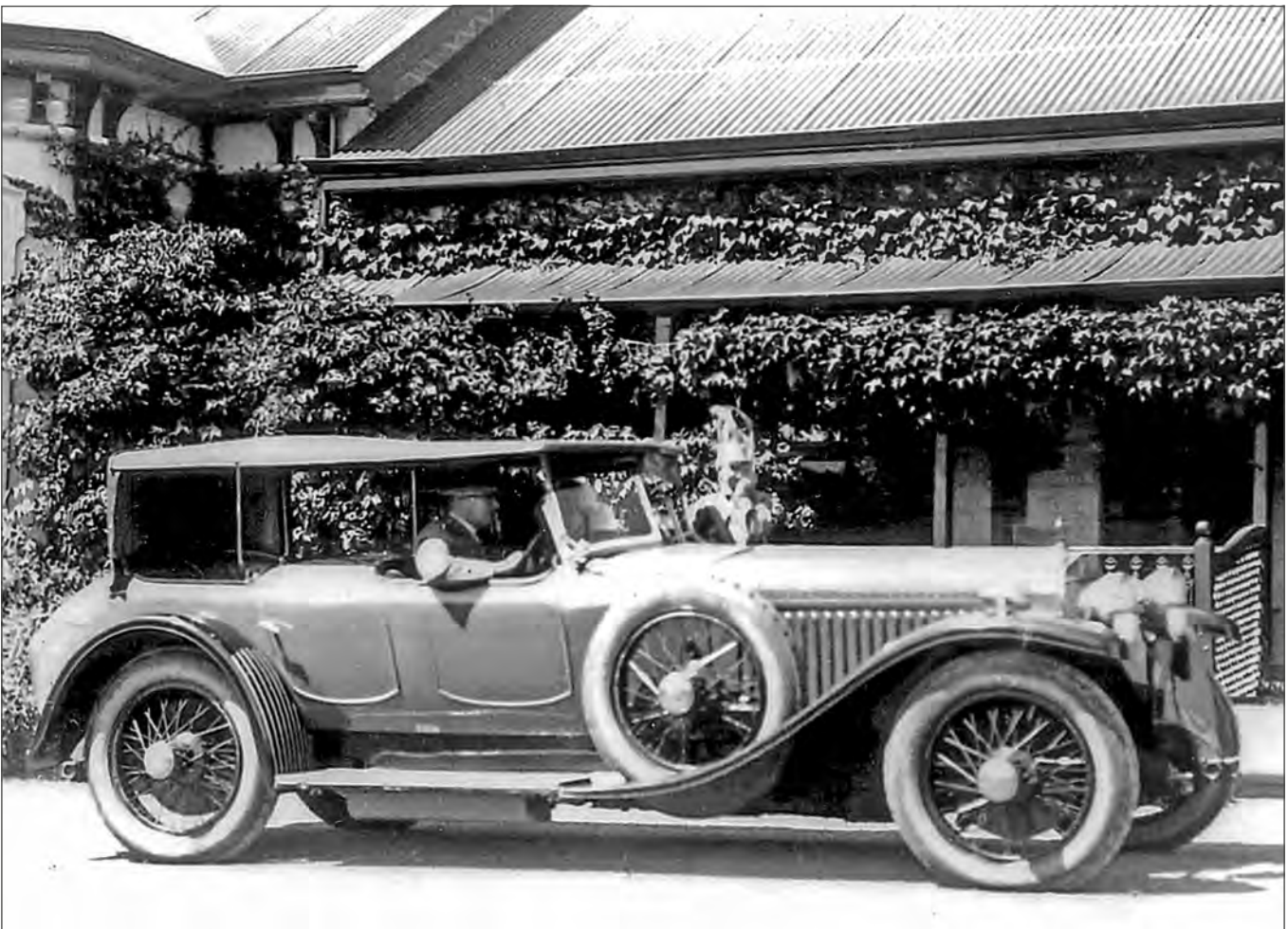
[3/4] The modifications may have been instigated by Charles Weymann of fabric body fame, who was the third owner. It was a successful modernization, which, if anything, enhanced the already pleasing lines of 10433 and gave it a sporty flair. (Nelson V. Thorpe)



[4/4] 10433 was restored by the Nethercutt Museum and shown at the 1993 Pebble Beach Concours. The car was brought back to its original configuration, although the chromed door surrounds were allowed to remain. Note the landau irons which are not original. (Gary Goering, Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance)



Saoutchik was continuously perfecting the folding mechanism of the top. By 1924, it folded almost completely flat and did not detract from the lines of the *carrosserie*. (*Omnia*, Peter Larsen)



A few orders for sporting bodies continued to be placed with Saoutchik. Here, a four-door *torpédo* on a 1924 Delage GL chassis with a 362 cm wheelbase propelled by a powerful 108 hp 30 CV 5,954 cc six-cylinder engine. (*Daniel Cabart*)



[13/13] Irrespective of precisely when 10960 received its current body, the car remains one of the most imposing and desirable formal automobiles ever built. (Darin Schnabel © RM Auctions)



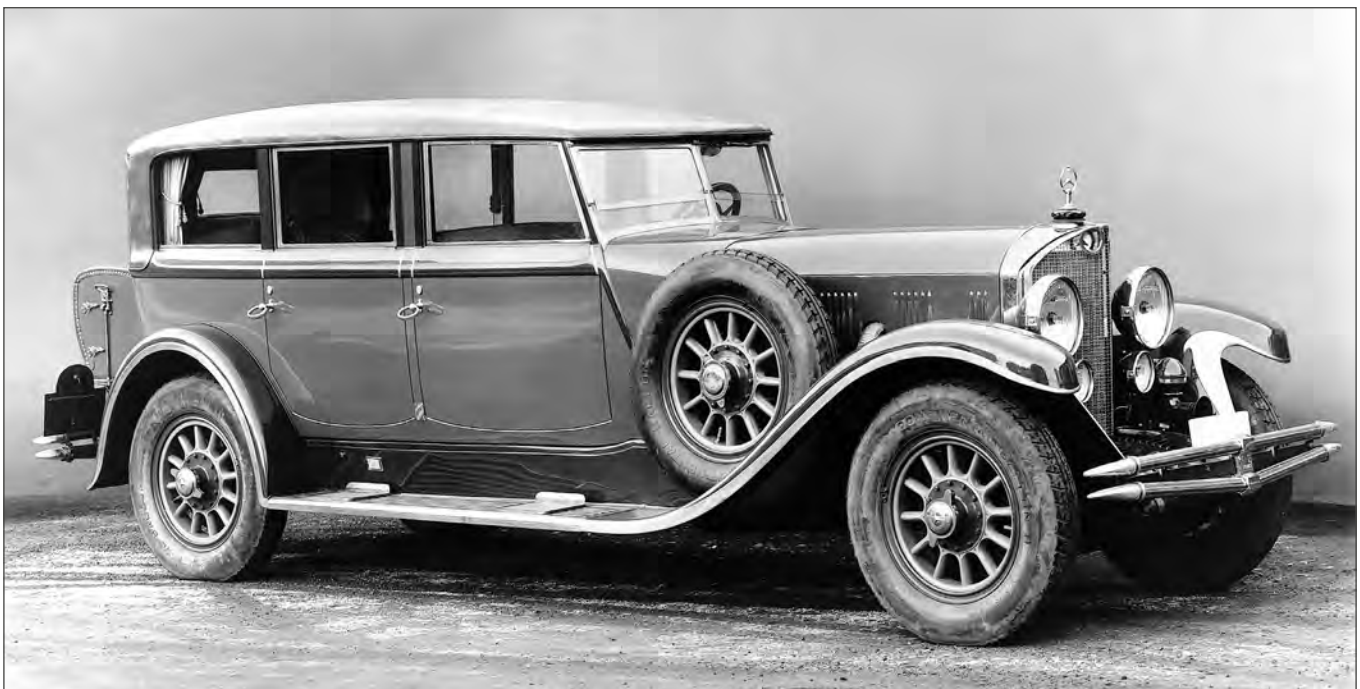
**[12/13]** The price was astronomical, and only those unaffected by the Wall Street Crash could afford such a car. Legend has it that Wallis Clinton Bird was one of those fortunate few. (*Anonymous European Collection*)



**[13/13]** The equilibrium and harmony of line on the *type Cannes* was absolute. On the one hand a sports car, and on the other a conveyance which would be at home at any formal function. (*Anonymous European Collection*)



[3/3] A single dark color with no contrast color for the beltline and *fiacre* suited the *La Baule* well – and helped minimize the rather massive rump of the car. (© Daimler AG, Mercedes-Benz Classic Archives)



**1927 MERCEDES 24/100/140 PS 630K CONDUITE INTÉRIEURE TYPE ROYAL, CHASSIS NUMBER UNKNOWN**

[1/5] The chassis and *Kommissionsnummer* are unknown for this 1928 fixed head *conduite intérieure* type *Royal* 24/100/140 PS model 630K. The body style was identical to chassis 35858 above, including the beltline and *fiacre*, but differed in several details. (© Daimler AG, Mercedes-Benz Classic Archives)





[4/5] The upholstery consisted of a modern *Arts Décoratifs* patterned cloth which complemented the decoration on the doors. The wood was likely Cuban mahogany, a favored rare wood of Jacques. This Mercedes was a very expensive car. (© Daimler AG, Mercedes-Benz Classic Archives)



[5/5] When discussing *Arts Décoratifs* interiors of the late 1920s or early 1930s, talk often centers unfairly on Voisin. This interior demonstrates that Saoutchik could create the most advanced and modern Art Deco designs at the drop of a hat. (Daniel Cabart)







**1929 MERCEDES 27/170/225 PS TYPE SS CANNES, CHASSIS 36224 AND KOMMISSIONSNUMMER 43757 [1/3]**

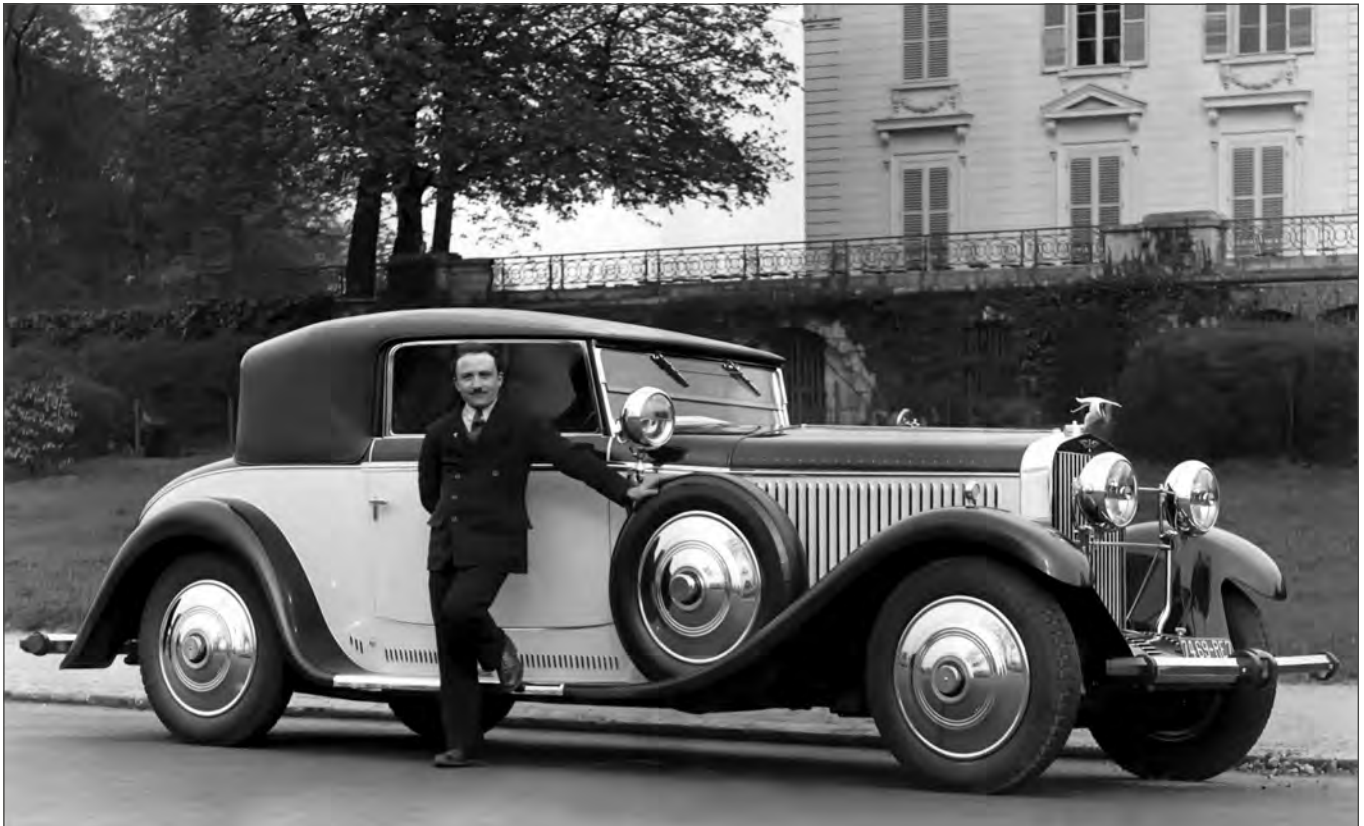
Chassis 36224, Kommissionsnummer 43757, a medium-height-windshield type Cannes No. 2, 27/170/225 PS model SS, shipped to Saoutchik on July 1, 1929. It sold less than a year later on March 15, 1930 from the Mercedes dealership in Amsterdam to an unknown customer. The car is lost. (© Daimler AG, Mercedes-Benz Classic Archives)



**[2/3]** With its strange backwards slant, the type Cannes No. 2 on chassis 36224 was an acquired taste. The shape was necessary in order to cram four seats into a body on the short SS wheelbase. It cannot have been a particularly comfortable means of travel. (© Daimler AG, Mercedes-Benz Classic Archives)



**[3/3]** Chassis 36224 is the only documented instance of a type Cannes No. 2 having been built. Note the German silver back sweep of the fiacre, which was unique to the style. (© Daimler AG, Mercedes-Benz Classic Archives)



**1931 HISPANO-SUIZA H6C CABRIOLET SPORT, CHASSIS I2422 [1/2]** Hispano-Suiza chassis continued to be a mainstay for the Carrosserie. This extraordinary *cabriolet sport* on chassis H6C I2422 was delivered in 1931 to Paul Derval, director of the Folies Bergère, who is standing proudly by his new acquisition. (Nethercutt Museum, Jules Heumann Archive)



**[2/2]** The car was shown at the *Concours d'Élégance Féminine* in August 1931. The sheer size of the car was daunting compared to the petite Madame Derval. Her ensemble with a dark top and light skirt matched the colors of her Hispano. Note the slim beltline on both car and human being. There was no edging on the fenders. (Hervé Pannier)



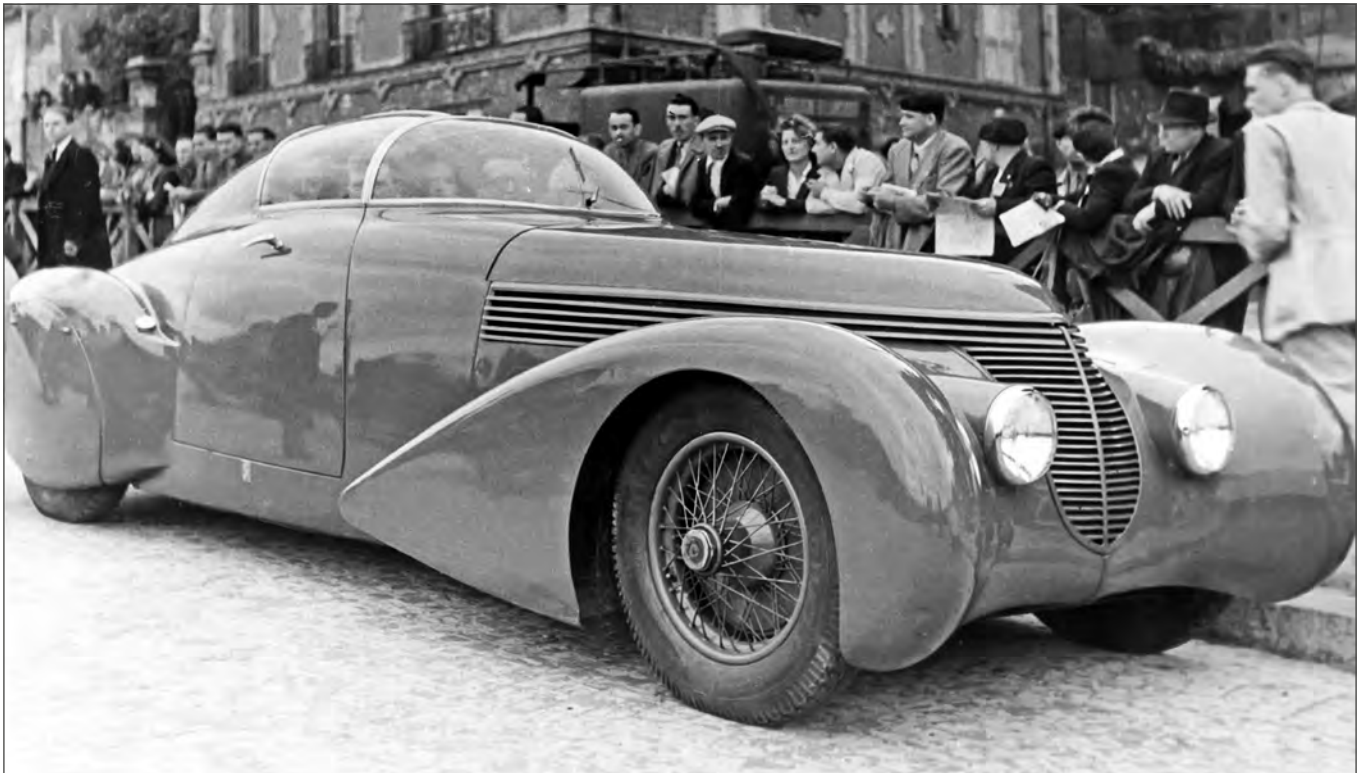
**1935 HISPANO-SUIZA K6 CABRIOLET SPORT 2 PLACES, CHASSIS 15049 [1/5]** Hispano-Suiza K6 cabriolet sport 2 places or torpédo cabriolet, chassis 15049, photographed with its top up in the late summer of 1935 in front of the Fernandez & Darrin premises in the rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré. *(Daniel Cabart)*











**1938 DUBONNET XENIA II COUPÉ CHASSIS 103 [1/12]** The Dubonnet Xenia II at the opening of the tunnel at Saint-Cloud on June 9, 1946. It was the first time anyone saw the car, which had been built by Saoutchik in 1938. Note the dark color and the lack of a bumper and chrome. (Nelson V. Thorpe)



**[2/12]** At Saint-Cloud, 1946. The body was commissioned by André Dubonnet. It was built on a heavily modified Hispano-Suiza H6C chassis, dating from 1932, which had originally been built to showcase the novel IFS system developed by Dubonnet. The chassis was renumbered 103. (Hervé Pannier)



**[3/12]** The Xenia II sometime in the 1970s, still in its original color but now sporting a bumper. Nothing is known of its history from 1946 and the following two decades. (Hervé Pannier)



**1948 – 1949 CADILLAC SERIES 62 CONDUITE INTÉRIEURE TRANSFORMABLE, CHASSIS 486234577/ 486237307 [1/12]** The first Cadillac Series 62 *conduite intérieure transformable* 5 places, chassis 486234577, was designed in late 1948 and shown at the 1949 Paris Salon. Its outlandish design caused a sensation. The largest scallops in history? (David Cooper)



**[2/12]** The rear end was equally over the top with an immense scallop which completely encased the rear fender. Front and rear bumpers were to a double blade design held together by curved horns. The design was used on Delahaye 175 chassis 815023 and 815044, see following pages. (Zwischengas.com/Automobil Revue)



**[6/7]** Even a gray drizzle at the *Concorso d'Eleganza* at Villa d'Este cannot mask the great beauty of this design. It is not known whether the "T" hood ornament is original. It is not mounted on any other Saoutchik Talbot. (Peter Madle)



**[11/14]** Saying that there is nothing like 815023 on the road is the understatement of the year. Note that the bumpers have been remounted. ([Wouter Melissen/Ultimatecarpage.com](#))





**[12/14]** 815023 has survived harsh treatment. In Colorado in the early 1970s, the front end of the chassis, including the engine, was chopped off and substituted with a V-8 Oldsmobile Toronado FWD unit. Reunited with its original parts and restored, the car made its debut at the 2006 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance. (*Wouter Melissen/Ultimatecarpage.com*)



**1952 PEGASO Z-102B PROTOTYPE COUPÉ CHASSIS 0117 [1/5]** Pegaso Z-102B chassis 0117 was given a prototype coupé body in early 1952. Pierre went for a swoopy non-pontoon design which sat uneasily on the very short 234 cm Pegaso wheelbase. The small kick-up on the rear fender may have been copied from the Pininfarina-designed Series II Nash-Healey coupé and roadster. (*Enrique Coma-Cros*)



**[2/5]** Pierre incorporated the factory ENASA grille, which made the frontal aspect look inordinately heavy. Note the height of the pointed fenders. Here, 0117 is photographed in Barcelona during the evaluation performed by ENASA in the first quarter of 1952. (*Enrique Coma-Cros*)





[2/5] An extraordinary matching ensemble. Pegaso 0126 was truly extravagant with gold plated interior fittings and knobs and switches in ivory. It won the prize as the best French *carrosserie*. (Enrique Coma-Cros)



[3/5] This dark colored Pegaso Series I *coupé* was shown at the *concours* in Cannes on April 22, 1954 by a young lady who went under the name of Chiquita although she was no banana. The car has variously been identified as chassis 0122 or 0126. (Jean-Pierre Cornu)





# J A C Q U E S S A O U T C H I K

## M A Î T R E C A R R O S S I E R

BY PETER M. LARSEN *with* BEN ERICKSON

### ◆ THREE-VOLUME MASTER WORK ◆

#### Volume I: The Life of a Jeweler in Steel

Volume I contains the story of the life of Jacques Saoutchik from 1880 to 1957. His flight from Russia, how he built and rebuilt his enterprise, as well as the vicissitudes of his life are described in detail, all set against a kaleidoscopic backdrop of the wars, anti-Semitism and strife of the 20th century. There are more than 800 images in this volume alone. These include many personal and private photographs from the two Saoutchik families which have never been published before.

#### Volume II: The Language of Design

This volume deals with the rare design drawings of Saoutchik, more than 250 of which are reproduced in high quality, and includes detailed analyses of the designs from 1908 to 1954. Each description can be read on its own. However, taken as a whole, the design discussions form a progressive analysis of the entire body of work that was designed by the *Carrosserie de Luxe, J. Saoutchik* across five decades. Also included is an essay by the American restorer David Cooper concerning the restoration of a 1947 Saoutchik Delahaye 135M.

#### Volume III: Heavenly Bodies

Volume III is a large photographic record of cars built by Saoutchik from 1907 to 1954. There are more than 800 old and new images, many of which have never been published before. In total, they provide a dazzling pictorial history of the varied work of Jacques Saoutchik and his son, Pierre. The images provide visual proof as to why so many hold Saoutchik as one of the greatest coachbuilders of all time. Also included is a spreadsheet of known cars with chassis numbers.

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