

Interview with Gautam Sen

Book: "Lamborghini - At the Cutting Edge of Design"

A. Interview

1. What is your relationship with Lamborghini?

For me, growing up in India as a teenager, Lamborghini was the incredible dream car that you never got to see – that you were completely fascinated by. Lamborghini was the most innovative car manufacturer in the 1960s and 1970s, leading the way in both design and engineering, producing some of the most extraordinary cars the world had ever seen.

2. How did you get the idea to publish another book about the Lamborghini brand?

Several books about Lamborghini have been published recently, but none of them had anything really new to say or reveal. And the tendency has been to repeat the same myths, mistakes and misinformation. Moreover, all the books described the history of the brand or model, but none really addressed design, the one element of Lamborghini that made the brand more famous and desirable than others. So we saw a gap in that.

3. How would you describe the conceptual structure of the book?

It is mainly chronological in terms of the brand's models and when they were presented or launched - supplemented by details of the designers and/or design houses involved in the various models.

4. In this book there are very detailed indexes in the appendix – could you not do without them, is that still in demand among readers today?

Yes, we think so. When you make a book, it pays to be comprehensive and cover all aspects related to the topic.

5. Why did you decide to publish the book now?

Because we thought the timing was right, with Lamborghini launching the Countach LP800-4, which will mark the 50th anniversary of the original Countach LP500 concept in 2021.

6. What was the time frame for this complex project?

Less than a year.

7. Why are there two volumes in one slipcase – would not one volume have sufficed?

If the page count is over 500, it makes sense to have more than one volume.

8. How did you meet the two co-authors of this comprehensive project?

I have known Branko for a while, as we have shared the same passions for a long time. Branko suggested Kaare as the other person who also has an exceptional collection of Lamborghini material and he introduced us both.

9. How was the cooperation in this international team of three persons, was there any kind of division of tasks?

Yes, the writing was mostly up to me, as were the interviews with all five Lamborghini designers and a few other personalities. Both Branko and Kaare were responsible for the pictures and fact checking. The captions came from both of them, and a few from me.

10. Is it easier to write a book with three authors or alone?

It depends on who you work with, and Branko and Kaare were two of the most straightforward and pleasant people to work with. We exchanged ideas regularly and it was a real pleasure to work with both of them.

11. How did you communicate effectively across national borders?

With WhatsApp, phones, Zoom and emails, it was very easy and very efficient.

12. Can you tell us about the Indian photographer who contributed some very nice pictures to the book?

Makarand Baokar is, in my opinion, one of the best car photographers in the world today and Lamborghini India was more than cooperative in organizing the cars he photographed. He had also photographed some Lamborghinis from the Bertone collection, which is now with ASI, and those images were also used.

13. How was the collaboration with all Lamborghini designers and key people related to this book?

Excellent! Everyone got to speak about their role and their memories of developing the many different models.

14. Is there a special event in connection with the numerous interviews that you would like to tell us about?
Talking to Lamborghini's technical director in the late 1980s and 1990s, Luigi Marmiroli, was a revelation, as through him we got some amazing inside information about how Lamborghini operated in those years.

15. What were the considerations regarding the general design of the book, what was the focus?
We left the design to Jodi Ellis, and she did a remarkable job of visually convincing the mood and time period the book spans.

16. Can you tell us something about the design of the slipcase and dust jacket?
Branko, Kaare and I were also involved here, and although many ideas were discussed, it was a consensus solution in the end. And we are very happy with the result.

17. What was taken into account in the selection of the images?
On whether it fits the theme and whether it has been used before – we tried to have as many unpublished images as possible.

18. Why was the book printed in Europe and not in China, where many books are printed?
To achieve the best possible quality.

19. When you compare this book with the other books you have written, how is the Lamborghini book different?
The speed with which it finished thanks to the great support of Branko and Kaare.

20. If you could write the book again, what would you do differently?
Nothing...

21: What did you notice after this intensive phase of dealing with the Lamborghini topic that you might not have been aware of before?
Quite a lot... but you should read the book for that... because you might discover a lot of new information....

B. Curricula vitae

Gautam Sen

Paris-based automotive consultant Gautam Sen founded India's first car magazine Indian Auto in 1986, followed by Auto India, BBC TopGear and auto motor & sport. Sen has been involved in the design development of several cars, including India's first sports car, the San Storm, and has worked with some of the world's greatest designers: Gerard Godfroy, Tom Tjaarda and Marcello Gandini. Sen has also been a judge at several Concours d'Elegance and has been a Vice President of FIVA since 2015. He has also authored several award-winning books: The Maharajas & Their Magnificent Motor Cars, The Car Design Book, A Million Cars for a Billion People, The Automobile: An India Love Affair, The 101 Automotive Jewels of India, Marcello Gandini: Maestro of Design, The Bertone Collection, Ballot, and Tom Tjaarda: Master of Proportions.

Branko Radovic

Born in Melbourne, Australia, in 1966, Branko Radovic came across a Panini card at the age of nine featuring a blue Lamborghini Countach that looked like nothing else and had a magical attraction for him. This was the beginning of a lifelong fascination with automotive design in general and Lamborghini in particular. Through photography, meetings with important people and collecting original cars, he has built up an extensive Lamborghini archive. He also writes for the Lamborghini club magazines in Germany and the USA, as well as for various European car magazines. Branko's desire has always been to share his passion for Lamborghini through emotions that flow from the eye directly into the heart.

Kaare Byberg

Born in 1979 in Stavanger, Norway, Kaare (Kåre) Byberg has been fascinated by Lamborghini ever since he stumbled upon a Countach model at the local gas station at the age of ten. Since then, he has always had a desire to be involved with all things Lamborghini. As a result, Kaare has collected every single one of the official brochures, as well as countless other Lamborghini-related automobilia and materials. Unsurprisingly, the Countach still reigns supreme in his automotive heart and mind.