



HEVENINGHAM CONCOURS

ENGLAND

MULLIN'S DELAGE D8-120 CABRIOLET FROM HOLLYWOOD'S
'AN AMERICAN IN PARIS' STARRING GENE KELLY TO MAKE
UK DEBUT AT HEVENINGHAM HALL CONCOURS

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Heveningham Hall, Suffolk, UK - Heveningham Hall Concours d'Elegance has announced that Peter & Merle Mullin's 1939 Delage D8-120 Cabriolet, the car that appeared in 1951 Hollywood movie 'An American in Paris' starring the legendary Gene Kelly, will make its UK debut at this year's event on Saturday 30th June & Sunday 1st July.

The Delage, which has recently taken top honours at the 21 Gun Salute Concours in India and will appear at Villa d'Este later this month, makes its way to the glorious Suffolk countryside and the Capability Brown landscape of Heveningham Hall from The Mullin Automotive Museum in California.

Chassis No. 51760 was delivered new to its owner Henri Chapron on 21 June 1939. The second series of the model, it has a lower and lighter chassis than its predecessor. The engine of the Type D8-120 has aluminium pistons with four rings, steel connecting rods and overhead valves. The car possesses a single two-barrel downdraft carburettor and a Cotal electric planetary transmission.

The car was designed by Chapron as a four-seater cabriolet with a three-position top. The instruments on the dashboard are exceptionally well-balanced and surrounded by wood trim. The rear of the car is in the "bustle back" style, with a covered spare tyre and a toploading boot, or trunk.

Chassis No. 51760 has a fascinating history from the very start. Reportedly commandeered by a collaborating French general of the Vichy government during the early stages of the Second World War, in 1946, once war had ended, the general sent the car to California when he was unable to obtain a visa for himself (he fled to Argentina). He subsequently sold the car to RKO Studios, one of the 'Big Five' studios of Hollywood's GoldenAge.

In Hollywood, the car's graceful and conservative styling earned it a role in 1951's MGM classic 'An American in Paris'. For the film, the producers commissioned changes to the car's design, including taillight modifications and a new green paint job. The film showed Gene Kelly being chauffeured around the City of Lights in the Delage with actress Nina Foch.

After the movie, the car was returned to Los Angeles where it was acquired in 1955 by Thol "Si" Simonson, a member of the RKO Studios production team. He took the car in lieu of pension he was owed by RKO after the studios were taken over by Howard Hughes. Si drove the Delage around Arizona before putting it up for auction in 1987, when it was purchased by Peter Mullin, its current owner.

Chassis No. 51760 has since been adventured in major concours d'elegance with great success and, today, the car, with its beautiful proportions and elegant Chapron touch, is an exquisite example of French automotive elegance and excellence.

Commenting on the inclusion of the Delage in this year's concours, Max Hunt, chairman of judges, said: "With its amazing history, elegant lines and stunning condition, this car is sure to be a standout exhibitor at this year's concours."

For more information about the concours, visit: www.heveninghamconcours.com
For further information about the country fair which takes place at the same time as the concours, including ticketing, visit: www.countryfair.co.uk

For press information, please contact Will Kitchener on Email: will.kitchener@heveninghamhall.co.uk or Tel: +44 (0)7969 723207

Notes to editors:

- Other cars recently confirmed include a 1931 Invicta Low Chassis; a 1938 RileySprite; a 1963 Lister Costin Coupe; a 1964 Ferrari 500 Superfast; a 1993 FerrariF40 LM; and a 2003 Pagoni Zonda.
- An entirely new event has also been launched for 2018: Horsepower Hill will provide an opportunity for concours' owners and specially-selected guests to burn rubber in their own cars in a timed burnout in the heart of the CapabilityBrown-designed landscape.
- The Heveningham Tour also returns on Friday 29th June and the route includes a Ferryman's picnic which involves a "river crossing"!!!

- Once again the event is in association with auctioneers Bonhams, Britishwatch manufacturer Bremont and English winemaker Gusbourne.
- The Heveningham Hall Concours Royal College of Art Automotive Design Scholarship will see a student awarded a full scholarship to cover the 15 month MA Automotive Design course under the auspices of Professor J Mays. The event has also funded a dementia unit locally this year.
- Heveningham Hall dates from 1778–80 and incorporates work from an earlier 18th-century building. It was designed by Sir Robert Taylor for Sir Gerald Vanneck, 2nd Baron Huntingfield. The interiors of circa 1781–4 were designed by James Wyatt. The Heveningham Hall Country Fair Trust is a registered charity (number: 1095403). Since its launch, the Heveningham Hall Country Fair Trust has raised over £700,000 for charity. Satellite navigation for the event is IP19 0PN.