

# Supreme Royale

## CMC BUGATTI ROYALE

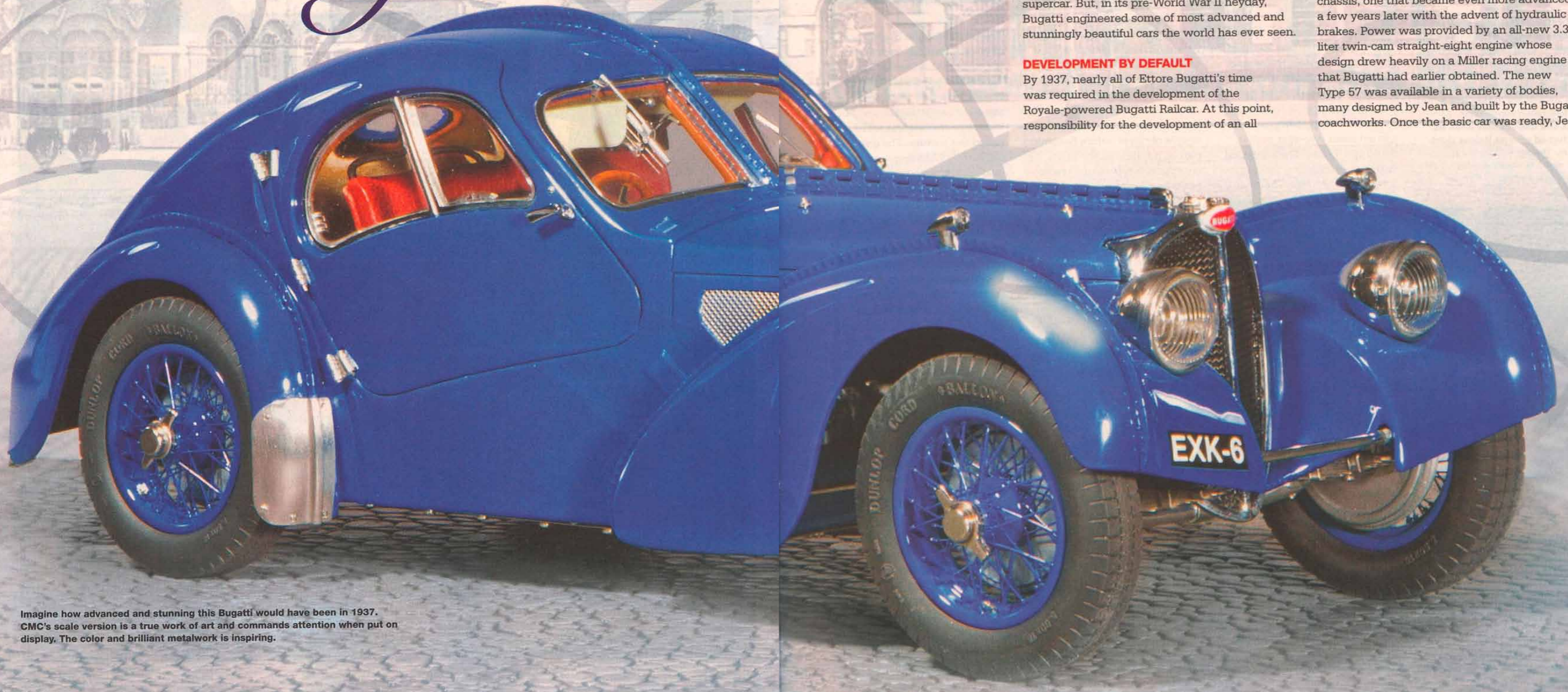
*B*ugatti—just saying the name out loud lends an air of sophistication and poetic structure. It doesn't matter if you're car literate; the name sounds regal and fashionable. Add the fact that in automotive history Bugatti is among the most elite motor car icons, and the gravity of the mark begins to take shape.

Like many automotive monikers, the brand saw its pinnacle and demise in association with world events. It is also one of those names too significant to let rest in history, and thus it has been resurrected in the form of an exotic supercar. But, in its pre-World War II heyday, Bugatti engineered some of the most advanced and stunningly beautiful cars the world has ever seen.

### DEVELOPMENT BY DEFAULT

By 1937, nearly all of Ettore Bugatti's time was required in the development of the Royale-powered Bugatti Railcar. At this point, responsibility for the development of an all

new Bugatti sports car and any and all racing derivation were assigned to Bugatti's young son, Jean. Aside from being a formally trained engineer, Jean was an exceptionally talented stylist. Jean oversaw the development of a new chassis, one that became even more advanced a few years later with the advent of hydraulic brakes. Power was provided by an all-new 3.3 liter twin-cam straight-eight engine whose design drew heavily on a Miller racing engine that Bugatti had earlier obtained. The new Type 57 was available in a variety of bodies, many designed by Jean and built by the Bugatti coachworks. Once the basic car was ready, Jean



Imagine how advanced and stunning this Bugatti would have been in 1937. CMC's scale version is a true work of art and commands attention when put on display. The color and brilliant metalwork is inspiring.



**Above:** The precise operation of the doors is an accomplishment in of itself. The casting of the convex/concave interior/exterior components is amazing and near flawless. **Below center:** The multi-piece spoke wheels are detachable to expose a detailed suspension. **Below:** This is one diecast that looks as good turned over as it does right-side up. The six separate exhaust pipes alone is worth displaying this replica on a mirror.



began work on a sports version. These sports versions featured shorter and "specially lowered" ("Surbaisse") chassis (Type 57S) with a rear axle that ran through holes cut in the frame. Most of the Type 57S chassis carried sleek two-seat bodies. Any Type 57 could be equipped with a supercharger, making it a Type 57C or 57SC. The final and probably best-known Type 57s were the three "Atlantic" coupes. The bodies were made of a special lightweight alloy ("Elektron") obtained from Germany. Elektron couldn't be welded at that time, so Jean designed the bodies and fenders to be split lengthwise and riveted together along the centerlines. This is what gave the Atlantic its unique

central spine. The third and last Atlantic was delivered in 1938 to Englishman R. B. Pope. He had a supercharger added in 1939. Pope kept the remarkable Atlantic for 29 years, and since then the car was "restored" a couple of times before becoming part of the Ralph Lauren collection, where it underwent a multi-year restoration.

**HISTORY IN THE MAKING**

The "Pope Atlantic" is the latest 1:18-scale museum-quality masterpiece from CMC. Of the handful of Bugatti models created over years, including scratch-built versions, this one may prove to be the best yet.

Right from the start, this is an exceptional replication of a truly historic exercise in styling.

**SPECIFICATIONS**

|           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| Scale     | 1:18      |
| Length    | 9.875 in. |
| Wheelbase | 6.56 in.  |
| Width     | 3.56 in.  |
| Height    | 3.218 in. |
| Price     | \$350     |

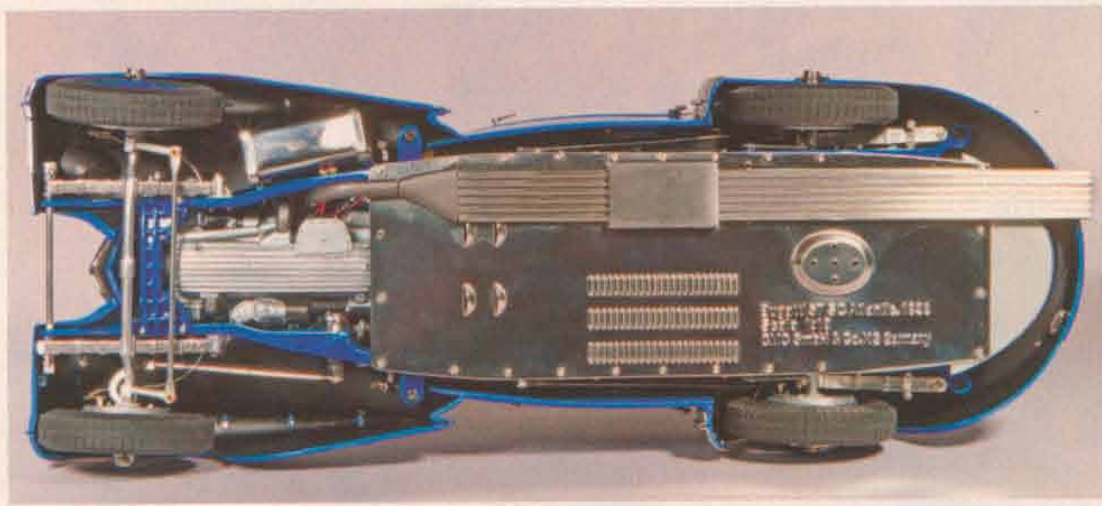
- FEATURES**
- » Opening hood covers
  - » Opening doors
  - » Removable tire lid
  - » Removable spare tire
  - » Removable fuel filler cap
  - » Removable tires/wheels
  - » Working steering

|                                  | 1              | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------------------------|----------------|---|---|---|---|
| BODY, PAINT                      | [Progress bar] |   |   |   |   |
| WHEELS, TIRES                    | [Progress bar] |   |   |   |   |
| ENGINE                           | [Progress bar] |   |   |   |   |
| CHASSIS & SUSPENSION             | [Progress bar] |   |   |   |   |
| INTERIOR                         | [Progress bar] |   |   |   |   |
| PRESENTATION, PROPORTION, STANCE | [Progress bar] |   |   |   |   |
| COLLECTIBILITY                   | [Progress bar] |   |   |   |   |

The bright chrome Bugatti grille offers see-through mesh above the classic Bugatti axle. The Pope Atlantic's chrome-plated headlight bullets were unlike the other two Atlantics and not faired into the fenders. CMC nailed this feature. The gas cap can be unscrewed, and the spare cover can be unlatched and the spare removed. The rear end brings up the only question; all photos researched show the rear of this car before it went to Lauren. These have two taillights; however, all were taken postwar. Was this Atlantic originally built with four small lights like the other two and updated by Mr. Pope? Lauren had it restored with four small lights as CMC has modeled the car; did he find something to suggest it had been modified earlier? An automotive mystery to be solved.

**A REVOLUTION OF POWER**

Opening the hinged radiator cap provides the opportunity to disengage the spring-loaded latches and open the exceptionally thin butterfly-hinged hood. A feast for the eyes follows in the form of a DOHC straight-eight engine. The detail is over the top. To say CMC fully detailed the engine would not be a justified statement. This one is beyond



CMC did a great job creating an exterior that is as beautiful as the original.

**Top right:** The rear tire cover is removable to expose a spare tire that can also be removed.



**Above:** CMC handcrafted the interior with an amazing level of detail. The dash is burl wood as is the large steering wheel. The gauges and instrumentation look completely operational. **Below:** The seats are leather skinned as are the door panels.



such accolades. The engine is fully wired and plumbed right down to the wire-wrapped spark plug wires. Every detail is in perfect scale. Hose clamps and wire retainers are separate thin metal pieces. The cam covers have 18 studs holding them in place that appear to be individual pieces.

#### THE LAP OF LUXURY

The correctly triple-hinged doors open easily as well as snap shut to show real leather upholstery and soft, perfectly fitted floor covers. Door panels feature functional map pockets. Of course, all the hardware, including the spring-loaded sliding door support and vent window latches, are brightly plated metal. Functional sun visors lower, and the authentic dash is real wood with legible instrument faces behind clear lenses and bright chrome bezels.

#### ROLLING INNOVATION

Chassis details are as near-perfect as the rest of CMC's masterpiece. Each tire and wheel combo can be unscrewed via the real knock-off caps. This is a mission of discovery to check out the hardware and lines for the cable-operated brakes; the

Atlantics were built before Jean finally got permission to switch to hydraulics. The De Ram friction shocks are there, to scale of course, along with Ettore's multi-leaf reversed quarter-elliptic springs. If you dare mess with perfection, the 24 miniature screws holding the louvered belly-pan are also removable. Doing so allows for viewing of chassis details that include separate brake cables and fuel lines.

"Bugatti- Yesterday and Today" is by far the best single reference on the Atlantic. Upon examination of the photos, it backs up that CMC has accurately reproduced every detail. It's not just the 1,700 plus parts, flawless paint in the correct darker shade of Pope's Atlantic, or equally flawless craftsmanship of this model that will impress even the most demanding collector, it's the scale fidelity. Every part looks right. Nothing is out of place, and nothing has been omitted. Dimensions are as precise as the shape and details. CMC's Bugatti Type 57SC Atlantic requires an investment. But, it delivers in all aspects of accuracy, detail and craftsmanship.