

"I never had a plan B"

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24/09/2020 André Lotterer is well known for his skills on the race track, but less so for his talent behind the camera. The Formula E driver shares a snapshot of his life – and his newly restored 911 Carrera RS 2.7.

André Lotterer purchased a Porsche 911 Carrera RS 2.7. "The car was in a bad way, it had a lot of races behind it," he explains. He had seen the "ducktail" for the first time in the Artcurial auction house in Paris. He would later take it to the restoration shop RV Classic in Rennes – the capital of the French region of Brittany, and the 11th largest city in the country – 310 km from the Eiffel Tower as the crow flies.

"David Hervé, manager of RV Classic, has been a Porsche specialist for more than 20 years. I felt that I was being very well advised there. David and his team restored my car with remarkable attention to detail and extensive expertise," says the 38-year-old, whose RS bears the early chassis number 0027 (#9113600027).

"There are few things in life better than cornering in an old Porsche," he adds, pulling out his Leica camera to capture the moment in analogue. "Analogue photos have more life in them, they tell more interesting stories, and are more timeless and authentic," he explains.

The Duisburg native with a Belgian-French accent first drove for the Porsche works team in the 919 Hybrid in the 2017 World Endurance Championship (WEC). In 2019, he returned to Porsche after two seasons with Techeetah to drive in the ABB FIA Formula E Championship. Season 6 (2019/2020) was the first for Porsche in Formula E and André Lotterer and Neel Jani formed the duo upon which the hopes of the sports car manufacturer from Stuttgart/Weissach rested. "In the endurance races, we drove with hybrid engines. Now the future is electric. Formula E is the sportiest part of that future," he says. And racing in Formula E has proved the most difficult of his career so far, not least because of the spectacular overtaking manoeuvres on the narrow city circuits.

On the simulator days in Weissach, the three-time Le Mans winner likes to take the opportunity to visit his relatives just around the corner in Renningen. As a child, he enjoyed riding his bike toward Weissach, always in the hope of at least hearing a Porsche, if not catching a glimpse of one. "Everything that Porsche attempts in motorsport, Porsche wins. The brand has an excellent reputation, not just on the racetrack," he says.

For him, a life without motorsport is unimaginable. "My life as a racing driver is great, it fulfils me. I never had a plan B." He has respect for every track, but: "I am very ambitious and prepare meticulously with my team. That means that when I'm in the car, I have a clear head, I'm focused, concentrating and in the flow. I listen to my gut a lot, react very intuitively and feel what the car is doing at what point. But I'm not afraid of losing".

Lotterer keeps himself in shape by cycling. His favourite place to cycle is the Maritime Alps around his adopted homeland of Monaco, where he has lived since 2011. To sharpen his mental agility and coordination, he does juggling and slacklining – balancing on a length of taut webbing. He also constantly strives to visualise his goal, as his father, a native Peruvian, taught him from an early age: the more precisely you can visualise your goal, the likelier you are to achieve it and win.

He is also focused when he is engaged in his favourite hobby – photography. And instead of going for a long drive in his newly restored ducktail from 1973, he goes in search of interesting locations for photos. An industrial site close to the workshop provides the ideal backdrop for the blood orange Porsche. "The combination of technology and precision fascinates me both in photography and in motorsport," says the racing ace as he positions the car next to a puddle, which mirrors it.

In October 1972, the lightweight 960 kg sports car celebrated its world premiere at the Paris Motor Show. One month later, the 500 units required for homologation had sold out. The six-cylinder car made good on all of the promises of a fast sports car, and was soon given the nickname "ducktail" on account of its distinctive rear spoiler. This name has long been synonymous with the sports car with an engine displacement of 2.7 litres and a power-to-weight ratio of 4.5 kg/PS. Porsche ultimately sold 1,525 units.

Photographs by André Lotterer

Lotterer looks through the viewfinder of his Leica and talks about his time in Japan – because “it was too good not to mention”. In 2003, he moved to Tokyo, where he successfully drove in the Super Formula series (previously Formula Nippon) and in the Super GT championship. "The Japanese people welcomed me with open arms. I spent 15 terrific years there, with very straightforward, polite people."

His role models are Ayrton Senna and Jacky Ickx. Senna adorned Lotterer's karting helmet as the comic book character "Senninha" 31 years ago. His living hero is Ickx; the two are friends, with a shared love of motorsport and Belgium. Lotterer's mother, Rosy, still lives in Belgium, and it still feels like home to him, too. An industrial estate now stands on the site of a former Formula 1 track, where he has a small car collection to call his own. It includes a 911 Carrera Cabriolet "Turbo-look" (964 generation), a 911 Carrera RS 3.8 (964 generation) and a 356 Speedster. That will be the location for the next photo shoot – analogue and digital, he promises.

Porsche 911 Carrera RS 2.7: technical specifications

Engine: six-cylinder boxer
Displacement: 2,687 cm^3
Acceleration: 5.8 seconds at 100 km/h
Maximum power output: 210 PS at 6,300 rpm
Kerb weight: 960 kg
Wheelbase: 2,271 mm
Top speed: 245 km/h

Info

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