



The history of Design by Dante is both varied and interesting, as the proprietor, Dante Rubli, has sought to express his artistic talents in a number of different ways. The result is a company with a reputation for unrivalled expertise, which offers outstanding service to its customers.

In 1984, having completed his apprenticeship as a panel-beater and sheet-metal worker, specialising in plate-metal, Dante entered the Swiss Master Craftsman Championship in Bern. The competition involved constructing an object in sheetmetal from a plan, and Dante was voted the award winner. Subsequently, he was invited to represent Switzerland at the World Championship in Osaka, Japan, where he finished a highly credible fifth. The participation in the two competitions proved to be a defining moment in his career, and thereafter, he determined to pursue his talent for engineering and construction.

Following a year in Switzerland restoring cars, Dante travelled to America, where he worked for the company Westside Coachworks in Los Angeles. Here he was involved in the rebuilding and renovation of luxury cars, such as Ferrari and Lamborghini. During this period, Dante developed a greater understanding of all aspects of design and production, as well as the desires and aspirations of the client. He also acquired skills which have unfortunately been lost by many of the larger motor companies, due to the automation of the car industry.

Design by Dante was formed in 1991; an industrial unit was secured in Frauenkapelen, amidst the beautiful countryside to the west of Bern - where the company remains to this day. The 800m<sup>2</sup> facility offered extensive workspace, a design studio and offices, all of which were necessary, as Dante developed his natural talent for interior design and the manufacture of bespoke furniture. Between 1992 and 1997 the company was engaged in a variety of projects. Exhibition stands with complete display areas were built for several events, notably for the 1992 furniture show in Bern for the department store Loeb, and in 1994 for Zemp at Europe's largest sports exhibition in Munich. Bars, restaurants, shops and offices were also designed and fitted, including the record and clothes store Absolute Joy, and the hairstylists Crime Edge. Design by Dante also produced trophies and works of art. In 1996 the company was commissioned to design and manufacture the prestigious trophy for the Swiss



Master Chef Championship; while in 1997 it produced a work of art for the artist Markus Rätz. Innovative domestic products were featured on a regular basis in the various German and Swiss interior design magazines, and a reputation for outstanding craftsmanship was established.

Naturally, part of the company's remit was the complete restoration of classic cars with planning and construction, although initially Dante specialised in producing high-end, custom-made components for performance cars, such as Porsche. However, in 1996 Dante was asked to design and build the world's fastest 'hatchback'. The result was the creation of the Aston Martin V8 Vantage Shooting Brake on exhibition at the Lucerne Museum of Transport. This led to a flood of enquiries for Dante's services, and the renovation of a number of classic and limited edition cars. In 2003 one of the acclaimed Porsche 914/6 GT racing cars was rebuilt, and in 2004 one of the original thirty Alfa Romeo Giulietta SZ Coda Tronca sports cars was completely restored.

By 2007 Dante was focused on the recreation of the legendary Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Gullwing. Having reproduced the various parts of the elegant body from the original plan, Dante developed an exclusive worldwide apprenticeship; so as to offer the knowledge and expertise he had gained on the subject to others. The restoration of the beautiful aluminium bodywork followed, and by 2008 the first completely restored car was finished. As an artist of some considerable repute, Dante appreciated the sleek design of the vehicle as a work of art, and consequently, he decided to produce limited edition sculptures of the body in two forms: the first being reproductions of the original 1954 plan; the second being smaller, half scale versions. These are handcrafted using the techniques Dante has acquired during his career, and the results are stunning. Moreover, the desirability of each sculpture has been guaranteed, as the manufacture has been set to a maximum of five of each version worldwide.

The sculptures were premiered at the Top Marques Monaco 2009 exhibition, where they were received with critical acclaim. Indeed, H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco congratulated Dante on the quality of his work. Indeed, such has been the interest in the sculptures that Dante has subsequently announced the creation of a series of works with the iconic sportscar as the central theme. Thus, the fusion of art and outstanding automotive design, aligned with Dante's extraordinary skills, continues to produce elegance and emotion.