



KEYSTONE



## The first Keystone Virtual Concours!

BY SAMIK MUKHERJEE  
DIRECTOR, KEYSTONE CAPITAL

A warm sunny Easter weekend confined to being at home was always going to be a big ask, particularly so for the many motoring enthusiasts who would normally have brought their pride and joy out of winter hibernation and ready to hit the roads. Many would have planned to attend local UK events such as the Goodwood Members Meeting or the Bicester Sunday Scramble through to longer drives across the channel to the Tour Auto, Monaco Historiques, Mille Miglia and the Concorso d'Eleganza, usually taking place over the months of April and May. I certainly did. Unfortunately, all those events are cancelled this year, with some talks of possibly rescheduling a few of them in Autumn.

To keep fellow motoring enthusiasts from despair and to uplift the mood over the Easter Break the idea of a Virtual Concours was conceived. It was open to all enthusiasts and did not require that they own the car to enter the event. They simply had to pick their favorite car up to a value of £1m, find a photograph that showed it off in the best light and enter it into what may well have been the first Virtual Concours.

A panel of judges was formed comprising of some real motoring enthusiasts, including a multiple concours winner, a regular judge on some of the world's top concours events, high end motoring finance professional and a restorer of prewar cars. They were tasked to judge the cars in the picture rather than the picture itself as this was not a photography contest. This was all meant to be a bit of fun and welcome distraction from the doom and gloom of current times.





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The response was absolutely fantastic and beyond any expectations. There were over 65 entries all very worthy of being in a real life concours event. We were shocked to find entries from as far away as Asia and South America and even one from a six-year-old girl that came very close to winning the event! The popularity of this harmless distraction simply demonstrated how the love of motoring transcends borders, languages and ages. It also achieved the purpose of offering people a welcome distraction whilst encouraging them to follow the advice to stay home and save lives.

The winner of the Keystone Virtual Concours was picked unanimously by the judges to be the 1950 Abarth 204A Berlinetta bodied by Vignale (pictured here). The photographs have been taken by the entrant, James Wheeler, at the 2009 Concorso d'Eleganza at Villa d'Este on the shores of Lake Como. Not only did we think this delicate yet purposeful coach built car from the 50s was a truly worthy winner, James turned out to be a real gentleman and suggested that the prize (a pair of tickets to the Goodwood Member's Meeting or something of equivalent value) be given to a frontline NHS worker. We were of course delighted by his kind gesture and are very happy to report that the prize is being awarded to a NHS Nurse at the Royal Surrey Hospital in Guildford on the frontline of the fight against the Coronavirus and who the judges collectively felt was a deserving beneficiary.

Perhaps there is case here for something like this to become a permanent fixture annually, but we certainly hope never to have to repeat it as a distraction under any form of lockdown!

We hope you are all keeping safe and well and this update provided you too with a few minutes of distraction from the constant stream of news on the virus and dealing with it.

