



## James Russell Owen wins Royal Automobile Club Best of British Design Competition



A talented young British car designer has won the Royal Automobile Club's Best of British design award by creating a 'veteran' car of the future.

James Russell Owen, 24 and a student at the world-famous Royal College Of Art (RCA), informally entitled his design 'Wolseley Voyager' and took the 1899 Wolseley Voiturette – a fascinating pioneer British motor car – as part of his inspiration

The Royal Automobile Club laid down the challenge to RCA first-year students on its Vehicle Design course to design an eco-friendly version of a famous car in its British Design Competition.

This coincides with the Club's leading involvement in London Motor Week, and the world-famous Bonhams London to Brighton Veteran Car Run, which takes place on Sunday 2 November. The original Wolseley Voiturette is certainly an eligible vehicle to take part.

The award was made at a ceremony at the Pall Mall clubhouse on Monday evening. The prize was presented by Michael Quinn, whose grandfather Sir William Lyons had a legendarily intuitive design sense.

Adding their congratulations on the night for the students' efforts were working designers from McLaren Automotive, Land Rover, Ford and Jaguar.

The aim was to conceptualise a car that might participate in a Brighton to London return run of 2025.

Students were encouraged to develop their own concepts for a high quality exterior design, drawing from the history of car design, while also identifying potential new design methodologies. The assignment enabled entrants to demonstrate drawing and presentation skills for public display.

'I enjoy studying art and design and have a passion for cars as I used to work as a mechanic when I was 16,' said James, who hails from Cornwall. 'So I fused my love of cars and interest in design and went forward to do a Bachelor's Degree in Automotive Design.

'I am absolutely thrilled my design was selected as the best fulfillment of the Club's brief. This was a fantastic opportunity to be truly creative while maintaining a deep awareness of future demands and a strong element of tradition. It's what British car design should be all about.'

The winning design was chosen by a specially convened panel of Royal Automobile Club and RCA judges. In the judges' opinions, it demonstrated the best combination of visual appeal, design quality, innovation and presentation.

Commendations were also awarded to three other designs that showed impressive qualities from students Charlie Purvis, Ari Nikulin and Sangmin Lee. Winners were drawn from the three contrasting 'pathways' of the Vehicle Design course: Automark, Urban Flow and Inside Out.

Speaking at the presentation, Ben Cussons, Chairman of the Royal Automobile Club Motoring Committee, said: 'The Royal Automobile Club is very keen to support and encourage the talented designers on the RCA's programme. The skills and genius of these students will be essential to achieve the developments in motor vehicle technology necessary for a sustainable future.'

The winning designs will now be displayed in the Hanging Gallery at the Royal Automobile Club's Pall Mall clubhouse throughout the duration of London Motor Week.

## The Royal Automobile Club

The Royal Automobile Club was founded in 1897 and its distinguished history mirrors that of motoring itself. In 1907, the Club was awarded its Royal title by King Edward VII, sealing the Club's status as Britain's oldest and most influential motoring organisation.

The Club's early years were focused on promoting the motor car and its place in society, which developed into motoring events such as the 1000 Mile Trial, first held in 1900. In 1905, the Club held the first Tourist Trophy, which remains the oldest continuously competed for motor sports event. The Club promoted the first pre-war and post-war Grands Prix at Brooklands in 1926 and Silverstone in 1948 respectively, whilst continuing to campaign for the rights of the motorist, including introducing the first driving licences.

Today, the Club continues to develop and support automobilism through representation on the Motor Sport Association (MSA), Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and RAC Foundation, while continuing to promote its own motoring events, such as the free-to-attend Regent Street Motor Show and the Bonhams London to Brighton Veteran Car Run held on Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd November 2014.

The Royal Automobile Club also awards a series of historic trophies and medals celebrating motoring achievements. These include the Segrave Trophy, the Tourist Trophy, the Simms Medal, the Dewar Trophy and the Torrens Trophy.

[www.royalautomobileclub.co.uk/motoring](http://www.royalautomobileclub.co.uk/motoring)



A Royal Automobile Club Event

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