

news +++ Automechanika Frankfurt
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Tight contest to determine winner of the car painter contest at Automechanika Frankfurt 2022

Frankfurt am Main, 21 September 2022. Thanks to their impressive ideas, amazing technical expertise, and wealth of passion, the five participants in the Automechanika Body & Paint competition made things extremely difficult for the nine-member international awards panel this year. In the end, one of the car painters ended up winning twice over. The panel awarded first prize to Sebastian Schunder from Eckental (Bavaria), sponsored by SATA.

Five body and paintwork professionals entered the competition this year. The theme: 'Mobility in transition'. This year's panel was expanded to nine members with the addition of Alexander Hagemann, winner of last year's international competition, Simon Wait, Editor-in-Chief of Bodyshop Magazine in England, and the influencer Mike Püllen. The panel met for two and a half hours at the trade fair to judge the painted car hoods according to technical perfection, creative design, and skilled craftsmanship.

Panel member Michael Rehm, Editor-in-Chief of Lackiererblatt, depicted the situation while on stage at the awards ceremony: "This year's competition featured true design professionals, some of whom even specialise in this particular facet of the painting profession. The clever and versatile realisations of the theme should therefore come as no surprise. And this made it very difficult for us to choose a winner." Alexander Hagemann added that: "One has to see these artworks live and in person to experience their full power. As a member of the awards panel I had been sent various documents and pictures before the trade fair, and I had a clear favourite from these pictures. This quickly changed, however, once I was able to view these works of art in person."

Wolfgang Auer, initiator of the competition and Editor-in-Chief of the trade journal fml, reiterated that: "With this competition, we want to give painters a well-deserved stage on which to showcase their craft. Automechanika is the perfect platform for all the automotive professions – including car painters." We were once again able to gain a number of leading paint manufacturers as sponsors this year. They approached the painters' firms and supported the candidates in the creation of their entries."

Jens Gersmeier, Marketing Specialist at BASF Coatings GmbH, was particularly struck by the amazing team spirit: "We're delighted to be here with two entrants, René Werl and Holger Schmidt, as Team Glasurit. They really helped each other with their car hoods, and that was a great experience." In the end, René Werl from ALJO in Harrislee won two awards with his 'Deep Candy' design, taking both the people's choice award and second place in the overall competition.

René Werl has been working in paint and design for 20 years now. His biggest challenge? “Trying to depict the theme in a way that is both clear and easily understood by the viewer, using the right techniques to create striking motifs, and making sure that the result does justice to the theme.” Werl created the first design on his smartphone and continued to refine his concept as the competition approached.

Panel of judges awards first prize to Sebastian Schunder

Here is how the panel explained their selection of Schunder: “The concept behind Sebastian Schunder’s car hood is powerful, and it has been crafted to perfection. The colours chosen are both discreet and ideally suited to the theme. In short, the whole thing is extremely well done. Sometimes less really is more.”

The ecological aspect was at the forefront right from the start for Schunder (33). He devoted a week to developing the concept, and strove to be as careful as possible with the resources he used. “To ensure that my creation was also sustainable, I made a conscious decision to employ a used car hood.” The hood was taken from an Audi A6 Avant and had been slightly damaged before he was able to use it for his project. Schunder also reused masking paper when painting the hood in order to further reduce the volume of materials required. The professional painter even let the clear coat dry overnight “because it saves heat and energy.”

He found out about the competition by chance, while flipping through a trade journal, and broached the topic the next time event sponsor SATA’s field staff got together. Schunder, who received his master craftsman title in 2020, spent five weeks creating his car hood.

Holger Schmidt, who took third place, was competing in Body & Paint for the second time. He also supports the federal association’s efforts to bringing new talent to the industry by focusing on pupils. “Unfortunately, the car painting profession does not have the best reputation. That is why we decided to do more to reach out to young people. More than 500 young people came to the stand during the five-day trade fair for the chance to use airbrush guns to paint miniature cars. There were pupils here who had received their tenth-year school certificate, as well as vocational school students.”

The car hoods created by Guido Folco and Peter Litger (awarded fourth and fifth prize by the panel) also told sweeping stories and demonstrated artistic expertise coupled with a great deal of passion. SATA spontaneously rewarded their efforts with two paint guns from its latest series.

Guido Folco was relieved when the submission deadline was postponed. “Every day after I finished with my job, I worked from 4 to 8 p.m. on the car hood – for four entire weeks.” Folco used ‘electric paints’, something that made time management considerably more difficult. He had little time for his girlfriend as a result. As the young painter put it: “The residual solvent has to evaporate from the paints.” Folco: “I loved being free to develop my own concept.”



(from left) Michael Rehm, Editor-in-Chief of Lackiererblatt and jury member; Wolfgang Auer, Editor-in-Chief of fml and initiator of the competition; Michael Johannes, Brand Manager of Automechanika and Vice President of Messe Frankfurt; Holger Schmidt, winner of 3rd prize; Sebastian Schunder, winner of 1st prize; René Werl, winner of 2nd prize and People's Choice Award; Stefan Suchanek, presenter of the awards ceremony; Guido Folco, fourth place winner; Peter Litger, fifth place winner, Sebastian Scholz, Sales Manager SATA.

The next Automechanika Frankfurt will be taking place from 10 to 14 September 2024 on the Frankfurt exhibition grounds.

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Background information on Messe Frankfurt

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