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« Self-styled “urban outlaw” and unlikely looking Porsche enthusiast Magnus Walker, whose 911 obsession began at the age of 10 when he visited the Earl’s Court Motor Show in London.

of their selves, rather than a consumer product. The American Porsche club has over 100,000 members—a world record that it shares with the Harley Davidson club. For a nation like the United States with its love of mobility and freedom, Harley Davidsons, like Porsches, are cult objects. Looked at soberly, the fact that of all cars it should be a German car, a rolling, roaring, statue of liberty that inflames the passions of the Americans, appears to be an irony of history. For the Americans the 911 is a very German car. In the countless interviews with Porsche club members the attribution “something German” recurs like a magic formula for precision and athleticism. For many Americans the Porsche reminds them of their European roots—allowing them to dream a different American dream to that told by the large displacement Corvettes, Mustangs, or Dodge Chargers.

There is no such thing as a typical 911 driver. They are united in their eccentricity. “It is simply wonderful when one finds something that one loves,” explained Jerry Seinfeld, although he was unable to say which of his Porsches he loved the most. “Actually my favorite Porsche is the one I happen to be sitting in at the time.” This is why all of Seinfeld’s artifacts are ready to drive at any time, including his archetypal Porsche built in Gmünd in 1949. The traditionalism of the followers of the 911 also lends itself to a romantic interpretation. Everything that one loves should remain as it was at that moment when one fell in love with it. Fidelity to the object of veneration corresponds to the object’s permanence. Love that is to endure requires an object that endures.

What kind of car is it that keeps even the most levelheaded person awake at night in anticipation of that moment next morning when they unlock it, pulling the door to with its unmistakable clack and reverberation, before finally turning the key in the ignition to the left of the steering wheel to be greeted by the roaring of the six cylinders in the rear—and drive away?

Why does it never cease to be so stunning? —

a sophisticated reading of the car as a cultural object. In addition, there are the old-timer trade shows and fan club conventions that have the character of makeshift technical museums. In the process the Meilenwerk succeeds in enacting a “détournement” that is much marveled at by the museum theoreticians. The accommodation of old-timers in a split-level building, originally conceived of as a garage, has brought forth a self-organizing, rotating exhibition whose curator is a quartermaster. The owners of the old-timers ensure that their vehicles are always in top museum-quality condition, presenting the sometimes very rare objects to car lovers in their pure being, devoid of any pedagogical luggage. Nowhere are artifacts more freely associated and presented to such a heterogeneous public. Followers

of the 911 are materialist conservatives. Values are not abstract but a form of concrete poetry. Values arise through use. The 911 as a blue chip car has a penchant for clarity and transparency, which political conservatism lacks. Like the idealist conservative, the materialist conservative sees himself as the antithesis of indifference and arbitrariness. In a reaction to the transitoriness of fashion he sets out in search of something that endures, the classical. The disdain with which Ferdinand Alexander Porsche uttered the word “fashion” also underlies the 911 community’s skepticism towards any overzealous concessions to the zeitgeist. The materialist conservative is an advocate of evolution as opposed to revolution, whether it be the minor variety of fashion or full-blown social revolution.

The sensibilities of the followers of the 911 described in this book, including their neurotic apprehensions, have served, by means of tight feedback loops, to sensitize Porsche managers and engineers to the desires and fears of its customers. In the pre-digital era Porsche managers found themselves in constant chat with their customers. Thanks to the intensive customer support and the active participation in the Porsche clubs, the Porsche driver and customer remained the primary point of reference for product development. With the growth in production figures, maintaining direct contact with the extended family became increasingly difficult, which is why club sport events and club culture became all the more important as arenas for meeting those for whom a Porsche was an extension