

MIND-BLOWING IMAGES BY FABIAN OEFNER AT THE MB&F M.A.D. GALLERY

The MB&F M.A.D. Gallery is delighted to present a series of prints by Swiss artist Fabian Oefner. Fabian has carved out his reputation by fusing the fields of art and science, creating images appealing to heart and mind. He is constantly on the lookout for capturing life moments that are invisible to the human eye: phenomena like sound waves, centripetal forces, iridescence, fire and even magnetic ferrofluids, among others.

The artworks on display at the M.A.D. Gallery from Fabian's series are mind-boggling. The three images of the *Disintegrating* series are exploded views of classic sports cars that Fabian has painstakingly created by deconstructing vintage roadster scale-models, photographing each component, piece by piece in a very specific position, to create the illusion of an exploding automobile.

The three other images on exhibition form his *Hatch* series, which explores the theme 'the birth of a car'. Inspired by a picture of a hatching chick, Fabian decided to show a manufactured object being born just like a living organism – in this case a Ferrari 250 GTO breaking out of its shell, to create a witty high-octane take on the beginning of life.

While both series feature cars, they both also involve fooling the observer into seeing the images as computer-generated renderings rather than the real photographs that they are.

Fabian says: *"I have always been fascinated by the clean, crisp looks of 3D renderings. So I tried to use that certain type of aesthetic and combine it with the strength of real photography. These images are also about capturing time: either in stopping it as in the Hatch series or inventing it as in the Disintegrating series."*

Fabian Oefner's artwork will be on show at the M.A.D. Gallery in Geneva starting on November 27th until May 2014.

Disintegrating in detail

Fabian Oefner explains that photography usually captures moments in time; but his *Disintegrating* series is all about *inventing* a moment in time. *"What you see in these images, is a moment that never existed in real life,"* says Oefner. *"What looks like a car falling apart is in fact a moment in time that has been created artificially by blending hundreds of individual images together. There is a unique pleasure about artificially building a moment... Freezing a moment in time is stupefying."*

The images show exploded views of classic sports cars: intricate scale models of an eye-wateringly beautiful Mercedes-Benz 300 SLR Uhlenhaut Coupé with gullwing doors (1954); an iconic sleek, black Jaguar E-Type (1961); and a curvaceously sensual Ferrari 330 P4 (1967).

Fabian first sketched on paper where the individual pieces would go, before taking apart the model cars piece by piece, from the body shell right down to the minuscule screws. Each car contained over a thousand components.

Then, according to his initial sketch, he placed each piece individually with the aid of fine needles and pieces of string. After meticulously working out the angle of each shot and establishing the right lighting, he photographed the component, and took thousands of photographs to create each *Disintegrating* image.

All these individual photos were then blended together in post-production to create one single image. With the wheels acting as a reference point, each part was masked in Photoshop, cut and then pasted into the final image.

"These are possibly the 'slowest high-speed' images ever captured," says Fabian. *"It took almost two months to create an image that looks as if it was captured in a fraction of a second. The whole disassembly in itself*

took more than a day for each car due to the complexity of the models. But that's a bit of a boy thing. There's an enjoyment in the analysis, discovering something by taking it apart, like peeling an onion."

However, he adds: *"The hardest part was actually setting up the camera, lens and light, because the biggest frustration is when you can't get any beautiful image out of it!"*

Hatch in detail

With *Hatch*, Fabian Oefner presents his interpretation of how cars might be 'born'. The first two images show a Ferrari 250 GTO (1962) – again a detailed scale model – breaking out of its shell. The third image shows one of the empty shells left behind among several others yet to hatch.

Fabian started by making a latex mould from the model car, which was then filled with a thin layer of gypsum to create the shell. Several dozens of these shells were made in order to complete the next step: smashing the shell onto the car to create the illusion of the vehicle breaking out. This step had to be repeated a great many times until the desired results were achieved.

To capture the very moment where the shell hit the model, Fabian connected a microphone to his camera, a Hasselblad H4D, and flashes, so that every time the shell hit the surface of the car, the impulse was picked up by the microphone which then triggered the flashes and the camera shutter.

Representing a car as a living, breathing organism that has been gestated is a neat twist on car conception; it could be said *Hatch* is to the automotive world what a stork is to delivering babies.

Profile of Fabian Oefner

Fabian Oefner was born in Switzerland in 1984. Coming from a family with an artistic background, he attended art school and gained a degree in product design.

At the age of 14, Fabian discovered Harold Edgerton's photo of a bullet piercing an apple, and this prompted him to get his first camera.

"I have always experimented with all different kinds of art forms at a very early stage," he says. "Photography turned out to be the form of art that I was most interested in."

But not just any old photography...

Fabian has gone on to blend art with science: beautifully photographing 'nebulae' formed in a fibre glass lamp and feathery or cotton candy-like puffs made by bursting balloons filled with corn starch. He has shot crystals of colour rising in reaction to a speaker's soundwaves; spectacularly captured the patterns created by magnetic ferrofluids pushing paint into canals and he has taken colour-crazy photos of paint modelled by centripetal forces.

"I am trying to show these phenomena in an unseen and poetic way," he pauses, "and therefore make the viewer pause for a moment and appreciate the magic that constantly surrounds us."

"I am inspired and influenced by the world that is around me. I have a deep interest in all kinds of fields of science. When I start with a new subject I rarely know how the final images will look. After experimenting with it, I start to get a feeling for it and after a while an idea for images develops."

Fabian has a photographic studio in Aarau, 40 minutes away from Zurich in Switzerland. His work has only been sold through direct private sales around the globe. He has worked on assignments for big international brands, on ad campaigns and art projects, including a number of free projects, available to view on his 500px.com page.

Fabian recently demonstrated his ideas and artwork during a [TED Talk](#), as part of the non-profit's initiative devoted to ideas worth spreading. His reputation has been growing steadily for the past two years.

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