

NOMONOCHROME

Art and Classic cars integrated by artist Jaime Gili

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A Volkswagen Golf Mk1 Cabriolet from 1991 is the first in a series of recent classics completed with the art of London-based, Venezuela-born artist Jaime Gili.

Gili is an artist known for expanding painting beyond its traditional limits. His work encompasses canvas, but also large walls in private and public buildings. On several occasions he has completed works that take over whole facades of buildings, and has realised one of the largest public art paintings in an industrial storage plant in Portland (Maine), as well as large sections of a town in Petare, Caracas. A car was nonetheless a childhood dream, something that he felt he simply had to do at some point. To realise the dream he contacted one of the best classic car workshops, Toni Chinchilla, of AMT, in Manresa (Barcelona), with whom he has worked since 2008.

Gili has said jokingly that he had to start his own series as he “couldn’t wait until old age to be invited to the BMW Art Car programme”, referring to the BMW art car programme which has existed since 1975 and which began with a car from 1972, the same year Gili was born. Artists such as Frank Stella, Alexander Calder, Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol were invited to paint on recent BMW models. The idea of Gili’s *Nomonochrome* project is instead to work with selected classics or recent classics, and accept commissions just like in any other part of Jaime Gili’s oeuvre.

The lines of the design of this model of Volkswagen always attracted Gili, and this very specific work adapts to the shape of the car and subtly enhances and highlights some of its curves through primary colour combinations, whilst creating new points of visual tension. The seemingly all-straight-line design perfectly follows the slight curves of the body, whereas the colour palette refers to the beginnings of Modernist geometric abstraction.

The convertible version of the Golf Cabriolet was produced from 1980 to 1993. The model used is an original 1991 model, one of the last ones in production. It has a reinforced body, transverse roll bar, and a high level of trim, keeping, as all models did, the pre-1980 style of rear lamp clusters. The Mk1 Cabriolet is of unibody construction built entirely at the factory in Karmann: from stamping to final assembly, with Volkswagen supplying the engine, suspension and interior for Karmann to install. The body of the Cabriolets like this did not change through the entire production run, except for a larger fuel tank and smaller spare tyre introduced in the 1984 model. This 1991 model, like all Cabriolets from 1988 onwards, is fitted with a *Clipper* kit from the factory, featuring smooth lower bumpers, wheelarch extensions, and side skirts.

Jaime Gili’s work has been described as following a Latin American tradition of modern abstract painting and the integration of the arts, mainly of painting and architecture. Gili was born in Caracas in 1972 from Catalan parents, and has lived in London since studying at the Royal College of Art in 1996. He also studied in Caracas, Barcelona and Paris. He has had solo exhibitions in London, New York, Miami, Barcelona, Madrid and Zurich, amongst other cities. His large scale public art pieces can be seen in London, Miami, Portland and Caracas.

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