

The Art Of BMW: 85 Years Of Motorcycling Excellence

PETER NETTESHEIM is well known within the world of vintage and classic BMW motorcycle enthusiasts. A self-taught machinist with a serious passion for restoration work, Nettesheim has assembled an enviable collection of antique BMW motorcycles at his museum in Long Island, NY. For years, his rare machines have been on display at major BMW Motorcycle Owners of America (BMWA MOA) rallies, and there Nettesheim never fails to impress the audience with a personal story of each bike's restoration. He starts and runs them as well, to satisfy the curiosity of the aficionados in the audience.

At long last, noted moto-enthusiast Peter Gantriis has catalogued Nettesheim's collection in a new book, *The Art Of BMW: 85 Years Of Motorcycling Excellence*. As an added bonus, the book features stunning full color pictures by famed Argentinean photographer Henry Von Wartenberg. The result is easily one of the most impressive BMW motorcycle chronologies ever written, and certainly the most visually appealing.

Peter Gantriis succeeds in consolidating the rich sequential history of the Nettesheim bikes by noting the cumulative engineering achievements of each model. Engine and frame designs are highlighted in detail, as are BMW's impressive array of technological innovations, from its first opposed boxer twin in 1923 to more modern breakthroughs like ABS. The technical descriptions are peppered with interesting historical observations that add perspective to the reader's appreciation of the times of these machines.



The icing on the cake and the real value of this book is Von Wartenberg's magnificent photography. Readers of *National Geographic Adventure* are no doubt familiar with Von Wartenberg's work, and the vivid images in this book are more proof of the man's boundless talent behind the lens. Each picture is a true work of art, and Von Wartenberg travels well beyond the requisite profile shots to deliver the intricate details that reveal the soul of each motorcycle. The tiny pits in the cast cylinder heads of the 1929 R62, the elegant chrome driveshaft of the 1955 R25/3, even the striking yellow final drive assembly of the 1990 K1—all here in precise detail.

Complaints are few. The front cover of the book does not make plain that the motorcycles covered are limited to the Peter Nettesheim collection. Though this collection is comprehensive, it does not contain every model of the past 85 years. I was disappointed that the 1970-1973 /5 Series was excluded, and the unique R1200C Cruiser model was also noticeably absent.

Regardless, these niggling details do not detract from this must-have for any self-respecting fanatic of vintage and classic Beemers. Readers will come away not only with a more thorough understanding of the company's pedigree of innovative engineering, but thanks to Henry Von Wartenberg, a new appreciation for the timeless beauty of the forms which underlie the function.

—Moshe K. Levy

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