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FACTS & STORY

Manta Ray (USA, 1953)

PROTOTYPES

scale 1/43

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limited edition 333 Stk.



The Lifetime Dream

In the early 1950s the US-Americans Glenn Hire and Vernon Antoine came up with the idea of transforming a customary vehicle into a futuristic car with visual features of an airplane. They christened their car Manta Ray.

Inspired by similar pioneering prototypes – first and foremost by the 1951 XP-8 Le Sabre from General Motors – both Californians made the decision of realizing their own car design. It comes as no surprise that the design orientated itself towards an airplane, as both earned their living as aircraft designers. In 1952 they started with the construction of the body and after altogether 4,000 working hours a newly bodied Studebaker rolled out of their backyard garage. The coachwork was carefully thought out. The substructure of the subsequent body shape was made of wooden parts, which divided the strung-out body into 14 subcomponents. Afterwards the substructure was wainscoted with several layers of fiberglass until the coachwork was

solid. Even though their dream of a series production seemed to become real for a short time, it turned out different. In 1953 during the presentation at the Los Angeles Auto Show the exhibited prototype won a price including trophy money for its extraordinary creativity. Due to this award Bob Yeakel became aware of the golden extraordinary car. He was so enthusiastic that he bought it, but his enthusiasm did not last long.

Finally with Glenn and Vernon he found enthusiasts, who intensively pursue the goal of series production as he did. Vernon planned to furnish the car with four seats instead of a single front bench seat for only three occupants and to mount a Cadillac V8-engine. But out of these ambitious plans came nothing.

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