

# Cars That Matter Ep 008 – Elana Scherr

**Announcer:** From Curtco Media.

**Announcer:** This is Cars that Matter

**Robert Ross:** I'm Robert Ross and this is Cars That Matter. We have a real fun guest this afternoon, Elana Scherr. Welcome, Elana.

**Elana Scherr:** Hi. I'm very excited to be introduced as fun.

**Robert Ross:** Well, you are fun. We've known each other for a long time as professional colleagues, if you will. The extent to which I am professional, you are. You're a real journalist and you've been writing for a number of outlets both in print and online for some time. I've followed your work. You're kind of all over the place, which is a good thing for a journalist, because your voice gets to resonate among a lot of readers and an audience of quite some breadth and scope. But we're here today, of course, to talk about cars that matter. And I know there are some cars that matter quite a bit to you. Before we talk about those. Let's get to know you a little bit better. You've got a real great writing style. I've been recently following your stuff in the sports car market and I enjoy that quite a bit. How did you get into writing?

**Elana Scherr:** It's funny because I'm going to go slightly off topic and I promise I'll come back to the question. I went to school for art, for fine art, for photography and painting. And when I was in college, a very good friend of mine, Andrew said, I don't know why you're wasting your time painting. You should really be a writer. That's what you are. And I was so mad at him because I loved painting and I still paint. And I was like, I never said I wanted to be a writer. Where did you even get this And then all of a sudden, I kind of started writing again. And I was like, man, he was right. I think I thought I didn't want to be a writer because it didn't seem as hard to me as painting did or photography. And then once I got back into it, I realized I can really make this a challenge and I can keep getting better at it, so

**Robert Ross:** That's fantastic. How did the writing eventually land you into the car arena?

**Elana Scherr:** I was always fighting this destiny of becoming a writer, so I was working first as a mechanic's assistant and then I was working in a motorcycle shop. And then I was making and.

**Robert Ross:** Well, that's not unusual is it.

**Elana Scherr:** Oh, everyone's done it. Then I was making carbon fiber for racing bikes. And really, I was better at organizing other techs than I was at being a tech.

**Elana Scherr:** I was better at writing the instructions. I was better at having the meetings with the race teams and figuring out what we needed to do next there, who we needed to talk to next. So I got into automotive PR and I worked for an agency, Dan Kahn, who runs Kahn Media. It's a big place now.

**Robert Ross:** Sure, we know Dan,.

**Elana Scherr:** I was his first employee. It was just me and him.

**Robert Ross:** Wow.

**Elana Scherr:** And I learned so much. I mean, I learned a lot of technical stuff because I already liked cars. I mean, and bikes. But I didn't know a whole lot outside of the car that I had, which was a Dodge. I had a Dodge Challenger. And so I knew a lot about Mopar muscle cars, but not the other ones. So I started learning more about other muscle cars and then I started learning about vintage Porsches and other cars because the agency covered so many different kinds of cars and trucks. And I was working with all these different writers, including yourself, you know, sending press releases.

**Robert Ross:** And I think that's where we did meet.

**Elana Scherr:** I'm sure it is. And seeing people at shows and eventually I found out that there was an opening at Hotrod magazine for a writer.

**Robert Ross:** There's a lofty title that goes back decades. About as far back as I go,.

**Elana Scherr:** I think it's even further, isn't it?

**Robert Ross:** Well, actually, it is, thankfully.

**Elana Scherr:** I mean, if you're gonna go for something, just go straight to the top. But I'd already been writing stories because a lot of what happens in PR is you sort of write things for other people to use. So I was familiar with the idea of writing features and writing about cars. And I asked David Frieburger, who is the editor there. Would it be weird if I applied for this job? And he's like, no, that would be great. You should do it. And I did. And he gave me the job. That's still kind of blows my mind.

**Robert Ross:** That's that's a great way to jump in and especially into a part of the automotive arena that is pretty esoteric and obviously has a very rich history and one that resonates a lot, I think, with people in Southern California and in certain car cultures on the East Coast as well. Elana, I think you're a little bit modest. You were alluding to some early days where you were working in the car shop and bike shop. Tell us a little more about that.

**Elana Scherr:** When I worked in the car shop, I had a very specific job and it was just taking things apart. It's the most fun. You don't have to worry about anything. Yeah, it's the easiest part of mechanical work.

**Robert Ross:** But you do have to be careful.

**Elana Scherr:** You have to be careful. And also you have to be strong, which honestly, I'm not anymore. And recently I was trying to do I was trying to put a spark plug wire back on number seven on the V8.

**Robert Ross:** That's a tough one. And long arm of the law to do that.

**Elana Scherr:** I just kept having to get like a taller and taller stepstool because I couldn't get the leverage to put it on. I was like, I'm going to have to start working out just so I can work on the car.

**Robert Ross:** That's funny. So tell us about this motorcycle shop.

**Elana Scherr:** Oh, well. So it was sport bikes. So Honda's and Yamaha's and Ducati's. Beautiful, beautiful Ducati's.

**Robert Ross:** Yes, beautiful, beautiful Ducati's. Do you really want to go there? We can talk about those all day long.

**Elana Scherr:** I started working at Graves Motor Sports, which was a Yamaha support team, so an AMA Yamaha's support team. And then they also ran a like a supermoto team. And then when I left there, I worked for a man named Paul Taylor who did carbon fiber. And that was when I really got to spend a lot of time at the races and work with the Ducati's.

**Robert Ross:** And unfortunately, they go through a lot of carbon fiber.

**Elana Scherr:** They do. I mean, if you have a lot of carbon fiber on a bike. Yeah,.

**Robert Ross:** They're probably gonna have to replace it at one time or another.

**Elana Scherr:** They do like to fall down. It was great. I mean, I got to go to a lot of the races and some of the offroad racing as well. We worked a lot with Honda. It was just cool to work with race engineers and I learned so much about racing that was applicable when I started writing about cars as well.

**Robert Ross:** It's fantastic. What about riding? Do you ride bikes as well?

**Elana Scherr:** I have a mini bike.

**Robert Ross:** Oh yeah,.

**Elana Scherr:** I have a Honda 90.

**Robert Ross:** Oh, that's incredible.

**Elana Scherr:** I keep talking about getting my license. I'd like to. I recently took a Honda Dirt Bike class, which was so fun.

**Robert Ross:** That is a lot of fun. and a whole lot safer than negotiate our streets in Los Angeles.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah, that was my main thing is it looks like so much fun. But also I don't know anyone who hasn't gone down.

**Robert Ross:** Yeah, it's true. It's really not a matter of if, but when I say it.

**Elana Scherr:** I mean, luckily there's so much safety gear now that people can survive things that they they would have been very hurt by previously. But you have to wear it.

**Robert Ross:** That's right. And when it's 100 degrees out it's not a very enticing proposition to say I'm going to put on 60 pounds of leather and reinforcement.

**Elana Scherr:** Well, I always feel like a leather jacket is more comfortable than a body cast for three months. So.

**Robert Ross:** Good point.

**Elana Scherr:** I'm all for it. And yeah, so my one of my 2020 to do list things is to get my license.

**Robert Ross:** Good for you. Well talk about where you think the market's going or interests are going now with the phenomenon of Resto mods.

**Elana Scherr:** That is a good thing to talk about because I was just thinking about it. You know, recently a collector in Florida sold a whole bunch of original race cars, all the Dick Landi pro stock cars. And I should say he put them up for auction. But they a lot of them didn't reach a number that he was happy with and he didn't sell them all. And I was like, huh. It's hard to tell sometimes. Does that mean that people aren't interested in this era anymore? Or is it just that there's so many auctions going on that people are

looking at all these different places and you really need, especially if it's a race car where you're not gonna be able to drive it every day?

**Robert Ross:** That's right.

**Elana Scherr:** You need two people who want it.

**Robert Ross:** Right.

**Elana Scherr:** And so then you need if you have two people who want it, you need only one car. If you have multiple cars, which they did at this auction, then you got, you know, everyone can bid on the one they want and they can all get them.

**Robert Ross:** That's a rare set of buyers. And I think you've probably hit on it. People want cars so they can drive. And of course, these restomods, that is, old cars that are equipped with modern underpinnings are cars that you can drive.

**Elana Scherr:** So for a long time, you kind of had to do that yourself, right? I mean, that's what HotRod, popular hotrodding were are all about.

**Robert Ross:** Exactly. No two alike.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. And you know, the definition of a restomod can be mild or or very extreme. But a lot of times it involves either putting a modern engine into a car, like, for example, putting a 50 Mustang engine into an older Ford or putting a modern Hemi into a Chrysler or putting an L.S. engine from Chevy into anything.

**Robert Ross:** Yeah, exactly.

**Elana Scherr:** But you don't have to. I mean, it can also be, say, putting fuel injection on an old engine or just upgrading suspension, which is what I did on Cy challenger.

**Robert Ross:** And of course, brakes, because people want to stop. Brakes, wheels, tires.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah, brakes, wheels, tires. And it can also be adding in technology that people like, you know, for infotainment. For example, you can put in hideaway screens so that you have navigation, you can put in Bluetooth, all of that stuff so you can do them in in a lot of different ways, in ways where they look stock but drive totally differently.

**Robert Ross:** Right.

**Elana Scherr:** You know, or all stuff where you have got big wheels and low pro tires. And that's a look all its own.

**Robert Ross:** And it's a very polarizing thing. I mean, purists will bristle and sometimes I'm one of those bristle like a porcupine or something with, you know, big slayer wheels, 22 inch wheels and a look that would not have been familiar to that original design of the car. But, you know, truth be told, they are a popular way to go and obviously afford a great deal of driving pleasure when it comes to actually taking them out on the road and using them.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah, I definitely feel that anybody who's really against it ought to drive one. And then even if you don't want to do it to your own car, you'll understand why other people wanted to do it to theirs. I think you said it when we first started. You know, they're not. There aren't enough cars to tell anybody that their car doesn't count. And there aren't enough people who love cars to tell anyone that the way that they love cars doesn't count. So I'm all for it. Whatever you want to do, and especially if it makes you actually drive the car, just do it. That's fine. If someone down the road doesn't like it, they can undo it.

**Robert Ross:** That's probably the best advice and the best way to look at anything that especially in a hobby that is challenged with getting new and fresh enthusiasts into the ring. That's something we can talk about when we come back after a break.

**Promo - Proud Source:** Hi, my name is Chris Porter from When Last I Left. The show you've been listening to is sponsored by Proud Source Water. Not only do they distribute their water in these stylish and recyclable bottles, but the water itself is sustainably sourced to naturally filtered. Proud Source water believes in the ripple

effect, that one person's actions can impact the world for the better. You do your part and I do mine and maybe we come out better than we started. So go to [Proudsourcewater.com](http://Proudsourcewater.com) dot to learn more about the company, their vision and their water. Leave the world better than you found it. Drink Proud Source water.

**Promo - MWSP:** On Medicine. We're Still Practicing. Join Dr. Steven Taback and Bill Curtis for real conversations with the medical professionals who have their finger on the pulse of health care in the modern world. Available on all your favorite podcasting platforms. produced by Curtco Media .

**Robert Ross:** I'm back with Elana Scherr on Cars that Matter. We're talking about some of her favorites and frankly, some of mine too, muscle cars from the 60s and early 70s. And Elana, I know you've got a couple of interesting cars. You alluded to them. I know you've got a Fury 111 and Charger, as you said.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah, we've got, we have a dozen cars now, I think. I know it's terrible. So I'm married and my husband likes cars, too. We met through cars. People are always like, oh, I really wish my partner was into cars. And I have to just warn you, you don't have anyone there who's like, no, don't buy that. You know, he comes home and he's like, oh, you know, found a seventy-eight Dodge Dually. All right, let's get it. Yeah, you know, we're both each other's devils. So most of what we have are Chrysler products. We've got two big ramp trucks like the kind that they used it for hauling race cars in 1970 and a dump truck which honestly we just keep in the backyard and let my niece and nephew play on.

**Robert Ross:** You know what could be more fun than a dump truck except maybe a half track or a or a World War Two Army ambulance or something like that. That's fantastic.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. I recommend it instead of a swing set. Keeps everybody happy. But it isn't all Chryslers. We've got a couple of others. We have a Ford wrecker, a sixty five Ford wrecker like a tow truck. Looks like Tow Mater from the movie Cars. It's really, really cute. We like taking it to like our in-laws for Christmas and stuff and just parking it outside their house. But nobody minds. Everybody thinks it's cool because it looks like a cartoon. And I have a Meyers Manx project.



**Robert Ross:** Oh good heavens, now that's a, those have actually come back into the collectors orbit a bit. I know I've talked to a few fellows that have expressed some interest in those.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. And then again, talking about opportunities to make things your own and then use them. There are just so many ways to take a dune buggy. You know, it doesn't have to be a dune buggy. You could make a good street car. They handle very well if you put real wheels and tires on them. So you could make an autocross Manx. You could you know, you could make a just a cruise around town Manx, or you could really go off-roading with them. You know, people enter them in the vintage Off-Road races down in Mexico and in the Mexican 1000 Norra race.

**Robert Ross:** What do you have powering yours?

**Elana Scherr:** So I'm building it with my friend Perry, and he's a collector. So Perry and I are building this together and we keep going back and forth about engine. For a while we were like, oh, let's make a cobra manx. Let's use like a Shelby steering wheel and, you know, make it kind of racy. And then the last time that I talked to him, he was like, how would you feel about doing an EV Manx. And I was like ooh that would actually be a really good match-up. There's like plenty of room for a battery and it'd be fun to have a dune buggy that was all quiet. I mean, that's the whole point of it, right, is to just say which direction do I want to go in? And I could also change my mind and go a different direction.

**Robert Ross:** That sort of brings us into the next topic, really in a more serious topic in many ways. How do we keep this flame alive? Obviously, we know what's good for us and we think that cars that matter or something that should be important and go well on in through the 21st century and beyond because they're more than just cars. Let's talk about car shows, which are your favorite car shows?

**Elana Scherr:** My favorite car shows are car shows where there's an activity other than just sitting next to your parked car.

**Robert Ross:** So I'm guessing then that your least favorite would be traditional venues like Pebble Beach or any anything that falls along that line where people kind of park them in start them only for the judges.

**Elana Scherr:** Well, Pebble is an animal all of its own, and there's so much going on there that it's a pretty exciting place to be. And you can always go to the racetrack.

**Robert Ross:** Absolutely, certainly won't take anything away from Monterey car week.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. So I would say Monterey Car Week is pretty good as far as, you know, car shows go. And it's not that I don't think that there's a place for, you know, morning cars and coffee meets or or for like days in the park. You know, Woodley Park here in Los Angeles.

**Robert Ross:** That's a fun show. The Italian /French car show.

**Elana Scherr:** I love that one. They do a Mopar one. They do a Ford one, you know. So it is nice to have a place to just get together and see people, you know, in the hobby and maybe look at cars that are similar to yours. But the ones that I really like have been shows like Roadkill which is an offshoot of Hotrod magazine, does a show in Detroit in the summer where they shut down Woodward, which is where the original engineers used to drag race back in the 50s and 60s, 70s. And they shut it down and they do illegal drag racing show, an event. And they also, it's right outside of M1, So they also have drift rides inside the venue. Dodge does a drift right. And it's just it's so fun because there's stuff happening all over the place. So there are cars parked and you can look at them, but then you can also see those cars racing each other. A few minutes later, when they drive down the drag strip and to me, a car that is parked and not moving and that you never see moving, you don't really understand.

**Robert Ross:** That's right.

**Elana Scherr:** Like, I feel like I didn't really understand the appeal of vintage Lamborghinis until I rode in one and I heard what it sounds.

**Robert Ross:** Well, now you're talking my language. Yes. There's nothing quite sounds like a V12 from that era. And a Lamborghini. sounds different than a Ferrari. And that makes it even more interesting.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. And so, you know, when I only saw them at auctions or parked in museums, I thought they were pretty. But I did not get it. And then once I was in one, I was like, oh, yeah. There's nothing else like this. I've never experienced this before.

**Robert Ross:** I'll bet that was a Miura.

**Elana Scherr:** It wasn't a Miura. It was an Espada.

**Robert Ross:** Oh, an Espada. Well, that's one of my favorites. Beautiful, long, low, flat cockroach of a thing. One of the most beautiful Gandini designs ever. I love those cars.

**Elana Scherr:** I still haven't been in a Miura. So if somebody is listening and would like to give me a ride in a Miura, I am available. Just contact Robert.

**Robert Ross:** That's great. Well, that's a great car to drive to.

**Elana Scherr:** I mean, and I think earlier you were talking a little bit about how do we get more people to do this? How do we get people to love cars the way that we do? And I think that there are a lot of different approaches to it. And people are making those approaches. I mean, one of them is to be less snobby, for all of us, you know, to release the desire that we have to tell people that the way that they're doing car stuff is not cool.

**Robert Ross:** Go back to that more inclusive kind of thing. We can't afford to alienate all the enthusiasts because there aren't that many of us.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. And so I think that trying to make things not so separate and you know, there used to be so many different ways to be into cars that you could be like, well, I'm a low rider guy and it's no connection to hot rodding. But really, if you look at low rider and hot rodding history, they joined.

**Robert Ross:** They do coincide. It's all about customization and expressing yourself.

**Elana Scherr:** And they also started in some of the same places. You know, I mean, like the artists who did, you know, who kind of developed into the low rider style of painting. They were doing custom hotrods before that. And if you start looking at cars from the late 40s and the 50s and when they first started doing these kind of decorative paint jobs, you will recognize the design elements that became lowrider paint jobs.

**Robert Ross:** Absolutely, you're right. Some of the best pin stripers, for instance, would work from one vernacular to the other.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. And so things like that, where to say like there's not a wall between these things and there isn't a wall between American cars and European cars, you know, outlaw Porsche guys, for example, you know, doing these kind of funky, off-road Porsches. And there's also people doing that with American muscle cars. And then obviously trucks are right in the middle of all of that.

**Robert Ross:** Right.

**Elana Scherr:** You're using that technology for both of those cars to learn how to deal with having big wheels and tires and Nobby's and all of that. But also and this is a hard one for a lot of people. One thing that I've noticed in sort of reading and reviewing and being in the community is that I think that there's a real interest in climate, you know, climate change and ecological concerns in younger people for good reason, because they're gonna have to be around with whatever mess that is left.

**Robert Ross:** That's right.

**Elana Scherr:** And in the car community, especially in the performance car community, kind of across the board, there's a real reluctance to have that conversation because it's not a super easy one.

**Robert Ross:** It's a good point. I mean, you're burning dead dinosaurs to the tune of, you know, five, six miles a gallon in some of these super high performance cars from the era.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. And I mean, I would say as somebody who drives these cars, that there are solutions to it. One is, first of all, most people who have old cars don't drive them as much.

**Robert Ross:** That's right.

**Elana Scherr:** You know that they're really not the problem. But also, like I bought the Opel and I get 30 miles per gallon in the Opel.

**Robert Ross:** Isn't that amazing?

**Elana Scherr:** It's incredible. It's better than the new Mercedes that I've got parked downstairs right now.

**Robert Ross:** That's so funny.

**Elana Scherr:** So there are classic cars that get great mileage. So if you want to drive a classic car daily, you could look into that. To not deny and to not demonize people who care about the world and wanting to save rainforests and stuff, like it doesn't have to be either/or. You can care about both things. And I think that that's going to be really important moving forward, because you don't want to make people choose like you don't want to make people say, I can only love cars or I can only care about the earth.

**Robert Ross:** That's a that's a really valid observation. You know, Elana, let you bring up some real good points. Obviously, it's a matter of the mindset and it's a matter of how we want to look at this hobby going into the future. You're right, certainly. These high fuel burning super cars and hot rods from the past are not being driven that much. But the idea of being conscious of future needs is certainly something that's going to be top of mind for younger enthusiasts as they come into the hobby.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. I think that there are ways to to address that or to at least allow that to be a part of the conversation without it being an enemy situation.

**Robert Ross:** That's right. That's absolutely right. Because certainly there are there are some people that have no understanding of why we would ever be interested in these things.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. And if we can make it something that people are okay and comfortable talking about without, you know, name calling or deciding that one side is, you know, old dinosaurs and the other side is that is mindless tree huggers.

**Robert Ross:** That's right.

**Elana Scherr:** Then we'll have a better voice to make sure that the rules and the laws that are made are not going to just punish us who collect old cars and do nothing to solve a problem. Right. You know, like you could ban every car from pre 1973 right now.

**Robert Ross:** And it would not make a dent in the environmental concerns that we have. You're right. You're absolutely right.

**Elana Scherr:** I mean, it would make a dent in the environmental concerns on my driveway where I currently have an oil leak.

**Robert Ross:** Well, I think to that extent, we're probably safe. You know, you talk about some people in programs that are trying to engage younger enthusiasts. I know Hagerty is folks who do the insurance. This is not a plug for them but I know for a fact that they're trying to have some substantial outreach to younger folks by way of their teach a kid to drive days and those kinds of things that hopefully get young folks drawn into the hobby and into the mindset by doing it, not by sitting behind a computer game and playing, you know, playing a video game about racing a car, but actually by getting out there and driving one.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. I mean, I think letting people drive, whether that's a young person in your life or a spouse or a friend, you know, I mean, I'm always amazed how many times I'll meet somebody whose spouse has never driven their car like, what?.,.

**Robert Ross:** That's kind of odd, isn't it? That's, that's a very, very, strange thing.

**Elana Scherr:** I mean, I think that people get really intimidated. So I feel like it's our job as people who have cars to be a little less precious about them and to be a little more generous with them.

**Robert Ross:** Boy, guilty as charged. I think I probably need, I need some couch time.

**Robert Ross:** Well, I mean, just find a big parking lot where there's nothing to hit and just let someone take one circle in the car like it just in first gear. They don't need to go fast. Really unlikely that they'll break your car in one circle. And if they did, they're just finding a problem that was going to break on you anyway.

**Robert Ross:** That's very interesting. See, you're always thinking positive. That's what I like. I need to be around a little more of that kind of attitude.

**Elana Scherr:** In fairness, your cars are worth a lot more than mine, so I won't deny that.

**Robert Ross:** No. You know what? But they're just cars. I guess we always have to remind ourselves they're just cars. You mentioned a Mercedes down in the lot. Talk about new cars. What have you been driving recently or driven in the not too distant past that you find interesting?

**Elana Scherr:** Actually, I just drove a really fun car.

**Robert Ross:** What's that?

**Elana Scherr:** I just drove the Aston Martin Vantage AMR manual and I really liked it.

**Robert Ross:** Well, I'm finding a manual anything these days is quite a rarity apart from Porsche and BMW and maybe Aston Martin. I can't think of too many people that make them.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. I mean, the new Corvette doesn't even come with a manual, so. And I am not one of those people who thinks that all cars have to be manual or that driving a manual makes you a morally better person.

**Robert Ross:** Well, even if it does.

**Elana Scherr:** Even if it does, no. I come from drag racing. Automatics are a lot easier in drag racing.

**Robert Ross:** Of course.

**Elana Scherr:** There are some, nowadays automatics are amazing performance wise. But what a manual car does is that even if it's a new car, it gives you some of what's fun about driving an old car. And weirdly, what's fun about driving an old car is the possibility of screwing up.

**Robert Ross:** That's a very good point and it really makes you engage with the car and the whole act of driving. I think without that manual decision that you have to make, every time you shift up or shift down, you disengage a little bit from the whole driving equation.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah, well, and when you drive a manual and there's a lot of chances to do things and get them right or get them wrong. So depending on how much challenge you want to give yourself, you know, I'm not, the Opel's a manual and I drive it as a daily. So, you know, most of the time I'm just if I'm stuck in traffic or whatever, I'm just lugging it along and whatever gear I can, you know, I'm not paying that much attention. But sometimes I'll get bored and be like shifting gears or like, oh, can I try heel toeing around this, you know, around this corner? Maybe I can. Maybe I can't.

**Robert Ross:** Of course you can And when you get it right, it's a lot of fun. It's like when your parrot says exactly what you wanted it to sing, you give it a treat. Well you give yourself a treat when you do it right, you know.

**Elana Scherr:** That's exactly true. It's like you're training yourself to be, to be better at it. And that's just a fun thing that you don't really get to do with an automatic car and especially with a modern automatic car where they're so fast. That in order to get to a place where you can feel pleased with yourself for doing something smart, you're going very fast. And if you do mess up, it's a real problem. Whereas with a manual, it's like



you can play with it between first and second. You can play with it between second and third. You don't have to be going 90 plus miles an hour to have fun with a manual car.

**Robert Ross:** That's right. So this Vantage, that's their compact version. I've always like the Vantages the most because they are the smallest or the shortest wheelbase and the most interesting handling dynamics for me among the Astons. And of course, this one has the new Mercedes based engine.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah, that's right. It's a twin turbo V8. Yeah, it was really a lot of fun. Like it was just difficult enough that you could occasionally not get it right. But it also had enough modern helpers that you weren't going to ruin your life by getting it wrong.

**Robert Ross:** Precisely. Or blow the clutch. What else? Anything else you were doing recently that you like?

**Elana Scherr:** I really I like new cars. I think they're amazing. I again, talking about ways that we can make the world work for all kinds of people. I think that there are new cars that do a lot of great things and are also not using so much gas. But an old car to me is like a pet or a friend. You know, it's just really different experience to drive one.

**Robert Ross:** That's absolutely true. As far as the future is concerned, you know, you mentioned gas. Maybe it's not gas at all. What do you think.

**Elana Scherr:** I'm not smart enough to answer or parse the information that's coming in. I don't know which bits are true and which are exaggerated and which have to do with who's making money off of what. But I think that the more alternatives there are for transportation, the better it is for everybody.

**Robert Ross:** But of course, I couldn't let Elana leave without asking my favorite question.

**Robert Ross:** You know, I like to ask all our guests, you know, that kind of crystal ball question. Three cars.

**Elana Scherr:** Three cars. What?

**Robert Ross:** Well three cars you would put in your garage.

**Elana Scherr:** Oh, all right. Lamborghini Miura, because I think it is the prettiest car ever made. The Opel G.T., which is already there. And.

**Robert Ross:** That's a great life lesson, to be satisfied with what you have. Probably the greatest philosophy and the best advice that anybody could take.

**Elana Scherr:** And maybe, maybe a Hemi Challenger?

**Robert Ross:** That doesn't make you a bad person. I think for you, it would be absolutely appropriate.

**Elana Scherr:** It's not too far off from what's already there. I mean, really, I just need the Lamborghini.

**Robert Ross:** There you go. Well, let's see. You've got two out of three. Easily done. Any new projects for 2020?

**Elana Scherr:** I have been working on a book project.

**Robert Ross:** Oh, do tell.

**Elana Scherr:** I am working with Don the Snake Prudhomme.

**Robert Ross:** Don the Snake, of course.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. So that's great drag racing history. And also just a very interesting human being, like a very interesting man who's done a lot of cool stuff outside of drag racing. And so I've learned a lot about his life. He's been very good to work with. And so I'm hoping to finish that at some point.

**Robert Ross:** That's great. I certainly don't know him well. I had a chance to meet him with Carroll Shelby at an event when he'd put his name on a more contemporary Shelby car.

**Elana Scherr:** And yeah, he was friends with Shelby and a lot of people don't know but he raced a Ford powered dragster for two years in sixty seven and sixty eight.

**Robert Ross:** Okay.

**Elana Scherr:** And he worked, Shelby sponsored him one of those years.

**Robert Ross:** I'll be darned. So that's when the connection started. Yeah. Yeah. He's part of, one of the patriarchs of drag racing and really a part of motorsport that doesn't probably get it's due because I mean high-performance really started with drag racing.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah. And you know, what I love about motorsports is that if you really start looking into the history, there's so much crossover way more than you would ever expect. And so, again, talking about not being snobby, being snobby about any kind of motorsport just is showing how ignorant you are about motorsport.

**Robert Ross:** You're absolutely right.

**Elana Scherr:** Like, for example,.

**Robert Ross:** It's not, it's not all F1 suites and yachts off of Monaco.

**Elana Scherr:** No. And all of those things were connected. Whether it was, you know, I mean, back in the day, F1 drivers and NASCAR drivers could have been the same guy. You know, Dan Gurney drove everything. Bobby Allison and Donnie Allison were both IndyCar drivers as well as being NASCAR drivers.

**Robert Ross:** That's right.

**Elana Scherr:** And like Don Prudhomme was and still is good friends with Mario Andretti and once went for a ride around the Ferrari test track with Niki Lauda, you

know, like they crossed over. And if they weren't too snobby to hang out with each other, then who are we to say that one is better than the other?

**Robert Ross:** Certainly. Certainly the fans should be able to appreciate achievements in all those different motor sports arenas.

**Elana Scherr:** Yeah and the development is connected as well whether it's aero or engine development.

**Robert Ross:** That's right. Probably now more than ever. By all means. Good luck on that Don, the snake project. It will be great to read it when it comes out.

**Elana Scherr:** And then we'll have to just all meet up again, maybe bring Don in here.

**Robert Ross:** Let's do it. Elana, I want to thank you for coming in today. It's been great to talk to you. And this is Robert Ross with Cars that Matter. We'll see you next week.

**Robert Ross:** Thanks to automotive journalist Elana Scherr for joining us on Cars that Matter. We'll see you next time to continue talking about the passions that drive us and the passions we drive.

**Robert Ross:** This episode of Cars That Matter was hosted by Robert Ross, produced by Chris Porter, Sound Engineering by Michael Kennedy. Theme Song by Celeste and Eric Dick, edited by AJ Mosley recorded at Curtco's Malibu podcast. Additional Music and Sound by Chris Porter. Our guest today was Elana Scheer. Please like, subscribe and share this podcast. I'm Robert Ross. Thanks for listening.

**Announcer:** Curtco Media. Media for your mind.