



**NORTH AMERICAN
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CLASSIC MG MAGAZINE ART DIRECTOR RECOGNIZED



Michael Sanata, the art director of *Classic MG Magazine*, was recognized earlier this year for nearly four decades of photo taking at the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix.

A two-page spread of his work and a story about him were published in the PVGP's widely circulated event program. Along with contributing to *Classic MG Magazine*, his work has been published in a number of other magazines, including *AutoWeek* and *Victory Lane*.

Here are excerpts from the story.

Born in 1981, my parents took me to the first year of the event, 1983, as a toddler. From that point, I have continued to return to the races year after year, missing only a few in the ensuing 40 years.

As a child, my father was a newspaper reporter who also wrote freelance automotive features and vintage racing coverage for different car magazines.

That enabled us to attend lots of events for free, as well as providing us access to restricted areas. In order to benefit from this, both my mother and I were issued press credentials and described as photographers.

So starting at age 13, I began to document the PVGP for publication. In addition to attending the event, my family and I also exhibited our vintage cars at the British Car Shows for many years.

I have years of fond memories of riding in the back of my parent's Austin-Healey 3000 and later driving my MGB from our home in Sharspsville, Pennsylvania



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to Pittsburgh. Even sweat-soaked and sunburned after the drive, I loved the event.

In 1999, I enrolled at Ohio Northern University where I majored in Fine Art. During the later years of my studies, I took a photography course.

As a result, I found that I could express myself and the events I attended through my photographs. Prior to this, I had half-heartedly taken photos with no thought toward composition, focus or storytelling.

My instructor, a professional photographer best known for documenting the ship-breaking yards of India, pushed his students to go beyond merely taking a picture to illustrate a story.

With this newfound interest in photography, I approached the PVGP with new interest and started to explore Schenley Park as my canvas and the cars and spectators as my characters.

Starting in 2007, I purchased a Nikon DSLR camera and a range of lenses. With these, I finally had the equipment to shoot a nearly unlimited number of photos, review the images instantly and use the lenses to explore depth of field and distance.

Over the years, I had covered the event with a variety of cameras starting with a WWII-era Leica and a fixed lens, a point-and-shoot Panasonic, and a Nikon SLR using film.

2015 brought about another change in my approach to the event. That year, my family and I acquired *North American Classic MG Magazine*. This international



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publication focuses solely on classic MG automobiles.

My photography at the PVGP now began to focus mostly on MG cars in competition along with spectator cars. MG has a long-standing association with the PVGP, as evidenced by the MG TC in the event logo.

For years, there was an only MG T-Type race, but since the beginning MGs have competed in other race categories. With nearly 40 years of attending the PVGP and almost 30 years of photographing the event, I am now looking at new ways to challenge my photo skills and maintain my excitement.

With such a long history, it is interesting to see how the event has grown and changed. I look forward to attending this event for years to come. ○

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