GM Styling 1927-1958 walks through the Harley Earl era of automotive styling, with research and interviews that extend beyond Olds, Pontiac, Chevrolet, Buick and Cadillac, and into the dream cars and Motoramas of the 50s. Behind studio doors readers learn about the politics and inner workings of Earls Art & Colour Section--later to become GM Styling--and how the diverse melting pot of talent orchestrated standard-setting products and techniques. The group of men and women would become the model for automotive design from that day forward. More than 30 full-color artist renderings are revealed, some for the first time to the public, from the drafting tables of the stylists. Telling historical photography also complements the story of the personalities and their milestone cars, including: the 1927 LaSalle where it all began; the 1938 Buick Y-Job that sparked a line of dream cars; Bill Mitchells first major contribution, the 1938 Cadillac 60 Special; the 1953 Corvette; and other dream cars including the 1951 Buick Le Sabre, the 1955 Cadillac Eldorado Brougham, and Firebirds I, II and III. An in-depth chapter on the birth of the Tech Center, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2006, covers its conception and construction, much of it gleaned from the talented Earl and his stylists. The story of Harley Earl has been told before. So has the history of GM and most of its cars. But this book takes readers inside the studios as if stepping back in time and in the thick of the highly competitive and electrifyingly creative hub of American car design at its zenith.

My Personal Review:
My review of Tracy Powell's General Motors Styling 1927-1958 is from the vantage of having worked in the industry during this, its most glamorous period.
His book contributes a historical perspective that adds insight and is a tribute to the genius of Harley Earl, as the father of automotive styling. Powell collects the stories of the players from that period and follows their interactions, bringing faces and names to life, as they would influence the industry.

All in all, it is a remarkable book, with photographs and illustrations, which-as a participant--accurately reflects the individuals and their places in automotive history.

A very enjoyable read.

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