

# SPEED LINES

A walk with Jay Koka on Ocean Avenue during Monterey Week.

**WE CAN ALMOST** see the impending return of Monterey Week, can't we? Or maybe the monthly Saturday breakfast with your local chapter of the PCA? Or maybe just a drive out to the old Mobil gas station that's been converted into a restaurant, of which there are many scattered around the country.

It's our habit as car people to drive places and then stand around and look at other people's cars, and now as the summer begins, all of us can see the prospect of renewed opportunities to do so. And just to remind us what it's all about, Jay Koka takes us to Ocean Avenue in Carmel-by-the-Sea during Monterey Week, which is the ultimate expression of gawking at cars.

The Porsche 918 is the kind of unicorn car that invariably shows up at Monterey, so there are always lots of gawkers. Such cars are cloistered for much of their lives, and yet they invariably make at least one

pilgrimage to Monterey. You might even see a Ferrari LaFerrari, Lamborghini Huracan, and a Porsche 918 together, as Koka has portrayed elsewhere in his portfolio.

What is remarkable about this Toronto-based artist is his ability to show us the entire scene, as he includes all the background that most automotive artists miss. Here we are somewhere along Ocean Avenue, the main street of Carmel-by-the-Sea, and it's hard to say just where, as the street names in this little town are carved into little, upright wooden posts, so you can neither find the signposts in the dark nor read them if you do, and you are always, always lost. Meanwhile the narrow sidewalks are particularly treacherous at night, since the roots of the Monterey pines have uprooted the pavement, and those with high-fashion shoes must beware.

And as Koka portrays here with Cathy, his wife, our more sensible

companions in these adventures quickly grow tired of gawking at cars, even in Monterey. You'll recognize that familiar posture of impatience, which is meant to be a non-verbal reminder that a restaurant reservation awaits. (She's practically tapping her foot, isn't she?) The scene is altogether Carmel.

Koka's work shows us not just cars but also buildings and people (especially people, which are really difficult to draw). It's life with cars, which is in a different dimension than the usual abstract depictions of the automobile. And as this summer begins, the prospect of renewed life with cars appears to be just ahead for all of us. ●

**To see or purchase Jay Koka's work:**

Internet: <https://jaykokastudio.com/>

Internet: <http://www.k20.ca/>

Facebook: [jayKokaStudio](https://www.facebook.com/jayKokaStudio)

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