

Published on 04/28/2006

Supermodels and Sex Appeal 101

By Rachna Sundaram and Mary S. Butler

ForbesAutos.com

NEW YORK — The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum’s soaring light-filled atrium famously features a single continuous spiral ramp that conjures an image of circular motion for visitors standing in the ground-level open rotunda with heads rolled back and eyes cast skyward. Architect Frank Lloyd Wright’s vision calls for museum goers to start with an elevator ride to the top floor and then take a leisurely stroll down the ramp and through the galleries. One criticism of the stunning structure is that the container detracts attention from the contents. The same criticism could apply to supermodels and the designs they wear as well as to a high-end tire manufacturer that is now better known than some of the cars that feature its products.

These three disparate elements – a cultural institution located on Manhattan’s Museum Mile, a flotilla of professional clothes hangers and a marketing-savvy Italian tiremaker – formed a trifecta of beauty, good design and glamour at last night’s glitterati-filled book launch and 2006 Pirelli Calendar party at the Guggenheim.

The Pirelli-sponsored “branding” event was held in the Guggenheim’s rotunda, which showcased dozens of blown-up photographs that have appeared in the legendarily sexy calendar. The blown-up photos included a shot for the inaugural 1964 calendar by Robert Freeman, the Beatles photographer, a 1994 Herb Ritts photo featuring Cindy Crawford, last year’s photo of Adriana Lima by Patrick Demarchelier to this year’s Jennifer Lopez photos by Turkish/Brit duo Mert Alas and Marcus Piggot.

Referred to as “the greatest office status symbol” in 1967 by the London Daily Mail – the blown-up photos spanned the length of the walls on the main floor of the Guggenheim. “The Cal,” as the calendar is often referred to, has become a cultural phenomenon. The fact that they are never sold, only distributed to a very limited number of customers, celebrities and political personalities has made it a collector’s item.



Party attendees mingled on the main floor of the Guggenheim.
[+ enlarge image](#) | [view slideshow >](#)

Next: The Calendar Through the Years

Copyright 2006 ForbesAutos.com. All rights reserved. This material may not be republished or redistributed without permission.