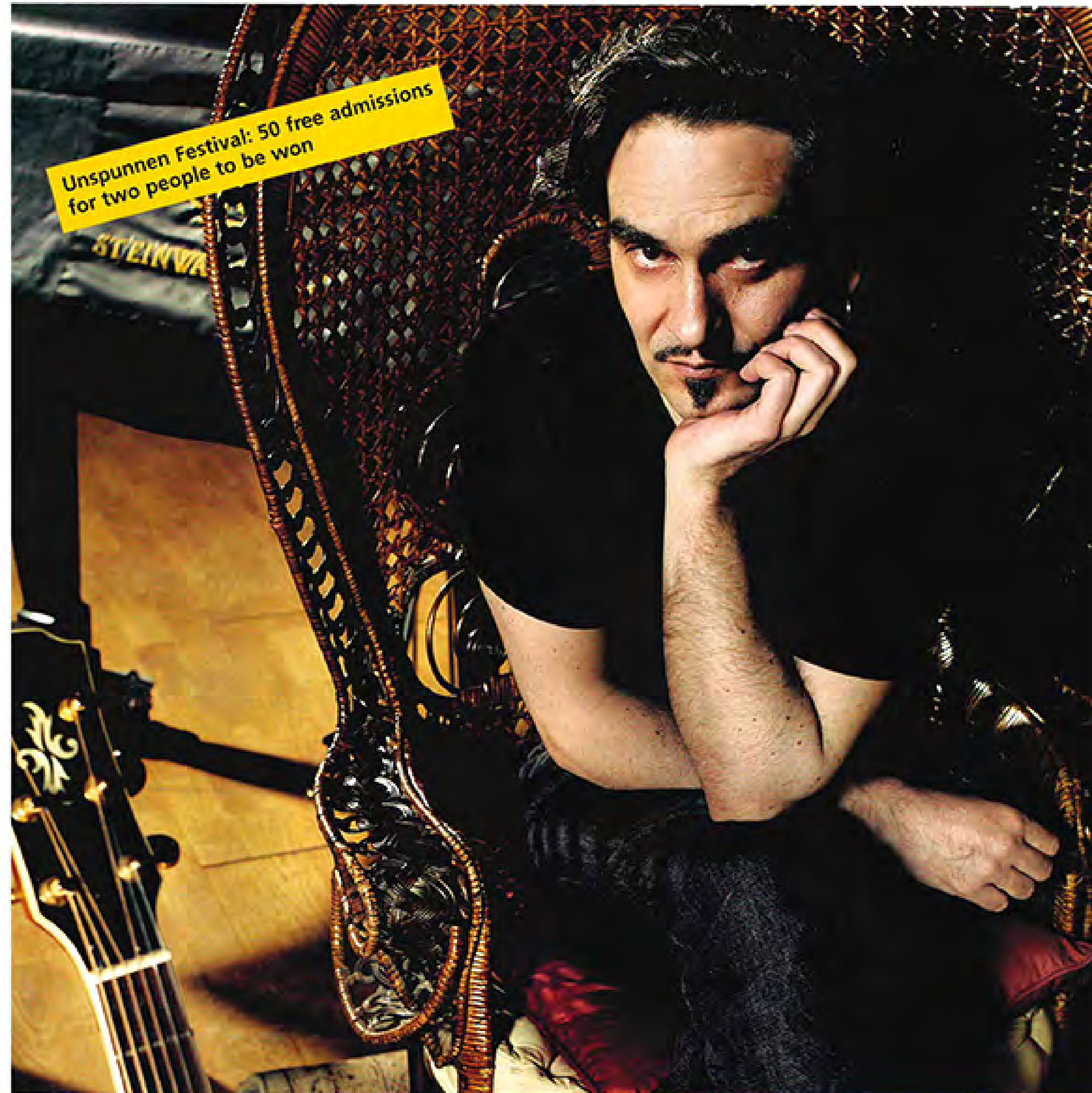


Focus on stamps

The Collector's Magazine

Issue 1/2005



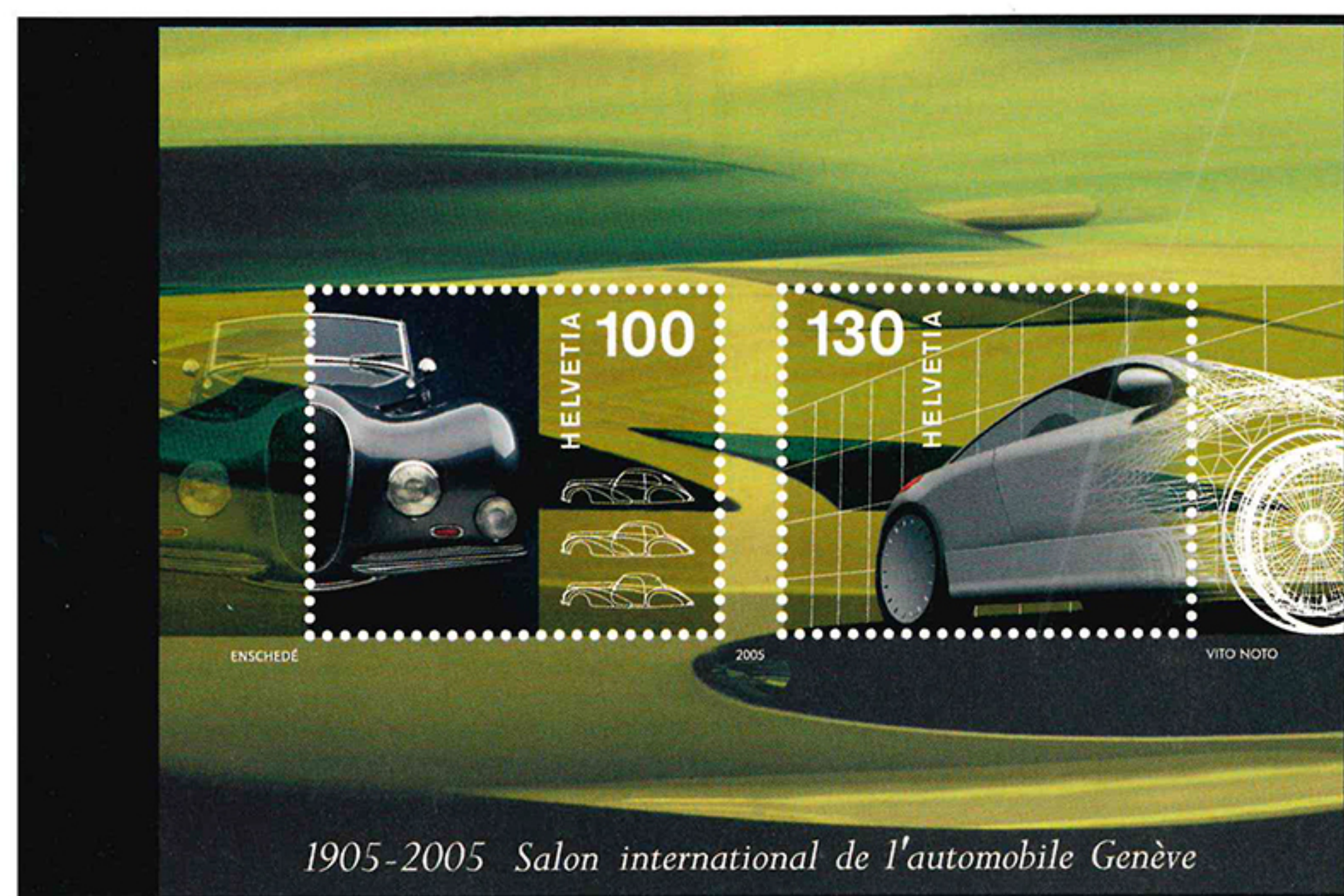
Unspunnen Festival: 50 free admissions
for two people to be won

- A celebrity "Thank you": Stephan Eicher says "Merci"
- A work of genius: Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity
- Smart rodents: Uli Stein's mice nose ahead

SWISS POST 

Motor Show Miniature Sheet

Automobile history made in Switzerland



From 3 to 13 March 2005, the Geneva Motor Show will be staged for the 75th time in the hundred years of its existence. Once again, Geneva's Palexpo will provide a platform for the fascination with personal mobility as the latest vehicle models are put on show. The Geneva Motor Show is the only one in Europe that is held annually, and it is the third time it has been honoured with a postage stamp.

The first "National Motor and Cycle Show" was held in Geneva's Palais du Conseil Général from 29 April to 7 May 1905. Federal Councillor Ludwig Forrer opened the show which had 59 exhibitors and was highly successful from the word "go". A second show followed in Geneva in the following year and a third in Zurich in 1907, but the fourth Motor Show did not open its doors until 1923, this time in Geneva's Bâtiment électoral.

International since 1924
In view of the Show's success in Switzerland, the Standing Committee founded in 1923 decided to open the 1924

event to exhibitors from abroad. The first "Salon international de l'automobile, de la moto et du cycle" (International Motor, Motorcycle and Cycle Show) was ceremonially opened by Federal President Ernest Chuard in Geneva. 68,000 visitors came to see what 200 exhibitors had to offer, and the show stimulated sales in Switzerland with the number of motor vehicles shooting up from 33,000 to 39,000 in just one year. Following a break during the war years, the Geneva Show was the first major exhibition of its kind to open its doors again in 1947 – with staggering success. 305 firms displayed their creations over a total exhibition area of 9600 square metres.

Palexpo today
Since March 1982, the Motor Show has been staged in the Palexpo Fair and Congress Centre that was inaugurated in December 1981. Although the site was expanded several times – 1987 Hall 5, 1995 Hall 7 and 2003 Hall 6 – the Motor Show has always completely filled the total area, despite its doubling in slightly over 20 years! The number of visitors is also climbing



steadily. In the year 2000, the 700,000-mark was passed, and 2004 set an absolute record with 730,000 admissions. The Geneva Show is the only international motor show that is still staged every year.

Special stamps of the past
Swiss Post has already issued two special stamps to mark Motor Show anniversaries, in 1955 (25th anniversary) and 1980 (50th motor show). On the 1980 stamp, Geneva designer Jean Ongaro shows a "Pic-Pic" oldtimer, built by what was once a well-known Geneva car factory which, however, disappeared long ago.

The special position of the Show can be explained not only by the recognized strengths of its organization and infrastructure but also by its unique location. For Switzerland has no major car manufacturers of its own and therefore gives free rein to competition in which all the exhibitors are treated equally. The Geneva Motor Show is the biggest annual event in Switzerland, attracting about 40 percent of its visitors from abroad (from some 100 countries and all continents) and over 5300 journalists (15 percent Swiss and 85 percent foreign). As a public-utility foundation, the Motor Show promotes the good image of Geneva and Switzerland abroad.

The design of the miniature sheet
The centenary of the Geneva International Motor Show also represents a special anniversary for Swiss coachbuilders, who have long been synonymous with tradition and quality. That's what the miniature sheet is designed to bring out, depicting the merging of past and future. One side shows the Swiss coachbuilding tradition represented statically in pictures and drawings. The other side leads us into the future as a so-called "wireframe" develops into a new form. Vito Noto, the designer of the miniature sheet, shows what technical facilities are available today for motor-car construction. Tools and tradition set their stamp on the design of tomorrow's cars.



The motor show today and way back then.
Photos: Salon international de l'automobile, Genève

Sales: from 8.3.2005, while stocks last
Post offices: while stocks last
Philatelic salespoints: until 30.6.2006
Pre-release: from 1.3.2005
Validity: unlimited from 8.3.2005

Unstamped covers will be available for CHF 0.90 each at all philatelic salespoints and the Stamps and Philately Customer Service from 22.2.2005

Printing: offset, 4-colour; Joh. Enschedé, Haarlem, Netherlands

Sizes:
Stamps: 33x28 mm
Miniature sheet: 96x70 mm

Paper: white stamp paper, with optical brightener, mat gummed, 110 gm²
Perforation: 14/13%

First-day cancellation:



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Author: René Lambelet, Salon international de l'automobile, Genève