

Designers take center stage at 1977 Auto Show

It may be that the engineers of the nation's automobile corporations and not the well-coiffed models will steal the limelight at the 1977 Auto Show Jan. 15-23 at Cobo Hall.

With a theme of "Design and the Future," the Detroit Auto Dealers Association have turned the spotlight at the often overlooked designers who are responsible for the look as well as the performance of the cars we drive.

Auto Show Committee Chairman Roland Rinke contends that the theme expresses what the automotive industry is today.

"The manufacturers are constantly improving, through design, the vehicles of today and planning for the future, which sets the trend not only here in Detroit but around the world.

"The industry today is alive with new ideas . . . looking into the future not just in years, but in decades," Rinke said.

The theme will be focused in the Design Center, which will offer a behind-the-scenes look at the role of the designer who conceives engineering changes and transforms ideas from blueprints to clay models to sheet metal.

Actual renderings and clay models will be displayed. Exterior, interior and engineering design features will be highlighted.

Detroiter who work for auto companies and related industries are familiar with many of the production line aspects of the industry. But Rinke believes that the story of the designer has yet to be told in such a manner.

Chrysler, Ford, American Motors and General Motors will participate in the display.

In addition to the Design Center, the Auto Show will feature a media center, new car auctions, a special lottery game and a Michigan lottery drawing.

And of course, cars, cars and more cars. The 61st Auto Show will feature 250 domestic and foreign autos.

At the media center, visitors will have a chance to meet local radio and TV newspaper personalities. Times of personal appearances will be posted daily.

The new car auction will

have the auctioneer saying, "Going once, twice, sold" five times for cars provided by the Detroit Automobile Dealers Association.

"The Automobile State," a special Michigan Lottery game will have been kicked off two weeks prior to the opening of the Auto Show and will continue through the show.

A \$10,000 grand prize will be awarded along with other prizes. The automobile lottery is an instant winner, four-dot \$1 game.

First tickets will have been sold exclusively at participating

new car dealerships in the tri-county area. Although it is an instant lottery game, losing tickets will qualify for the grand prize drawing, which will be on Sunday, Jan. 23, the last day of the show.

Close to \$2 million in prizes will be offered in the Michigan Lottery drawing Monday, Jan. 17 at the show. The 10 finalists will compete for \$1,893,742, the largest prize ever given for any lottery in the country.

The traditional kick off of the Detroit Auto Show is the charity preview night, Friday, Jan. 14. Proceeds of the \$25-per-

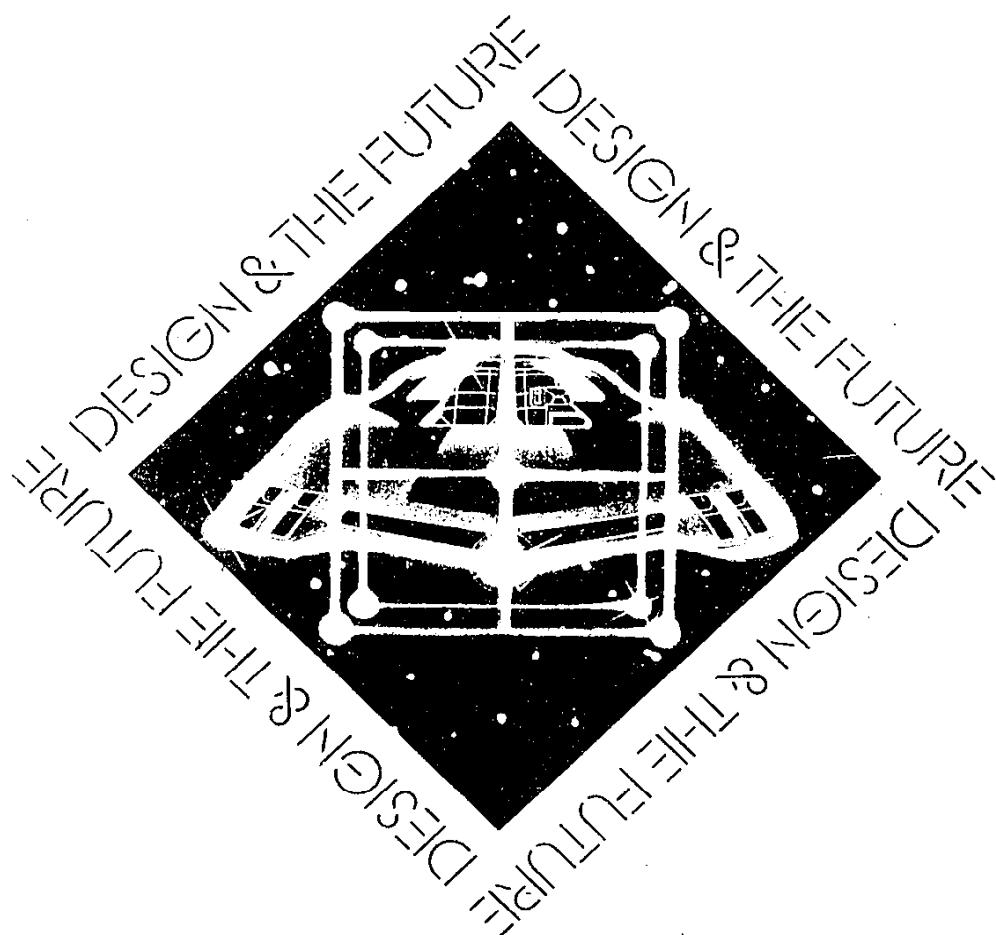
couple black tie event are earmarked for the Boy's Clubs of Metropolitan Detroit, Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children of Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties and the Northeast Guidance Center for Emotionally Disturbed Children.

Close to 400,000 persons are expected to visit the Auto Show this year. Rinke points to an upturn in the economy.

"We have turned the corner from a sluggish economy and consumer skepticism," he said, "and are now embarking upon a most exciting period in automobile history."

1977 DETROIT AUTO SHOW

JANUARY 15-23, COBO HALL



Auto Show facts & figures

WHAT: 61st Detroit Auto Show

WHEN: Saturday, Jan. 15 through Sunday, Jan. 23

WHERE: Cobo Hall, Halls

A, B, and C

WHAT HOURS: Saturday and Sunday, noon to 11 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 2 to 10 p.m.

Friday, 2 to 11 p.m.

HOW MUCH: Adults \$2.50. Children under 12, 50 cents. Senior citizens, free.