

'If you ever wondered if a mechanical object could be described as art, look no further'

THE TEST DRIVER



Davide Testi joined Pagani in 2000 at the tender age of 19 and worked with supercar chassis master Loris Biccocchi in the early days, but he had sole responsibility for the development of the Huayra, which until recently was known only by its code name, C9.

'Testing started in 2007 with "M1", which was the original C9 mule fitted with modified Zonda bodywork,' he says. 'Initially the problem was one of refinement. The AMG engine was too aggressive in its delivery because the C9 is so much lighter than an AMG Mercedes. The gearbox wasn't great either, being too clunky and unrefined.'

'We have now covered over one million kilometres in the C9 development cars and Mercedes have done a brilliant job on the engine, fitting smaller turbos, a revised ECU and different intercoolers, and now the engine is unbelievable! Throttle response is so much better. You don't think it's a turbo when you first drive it, but when the turbos are really working the acceleration feels extraordinary, like a Veyron. It is much, much quicker than a Zonda! The performance is incredible.'

'The car is completely different to the Zonda. The chassis is much more friendly at the limits as the engine and gearbox are both lighter and shorter, as well as sitting lower in the chassis. The wheelbase is longer, too. Then the noise is very different, more induction than exhaust compared to the Zonda but still very exciting. You hear this hurricane when the turbos are working, then the wastegates when you come off the power.'

'The Huayra is an amazing car and I'm very proud of it.'