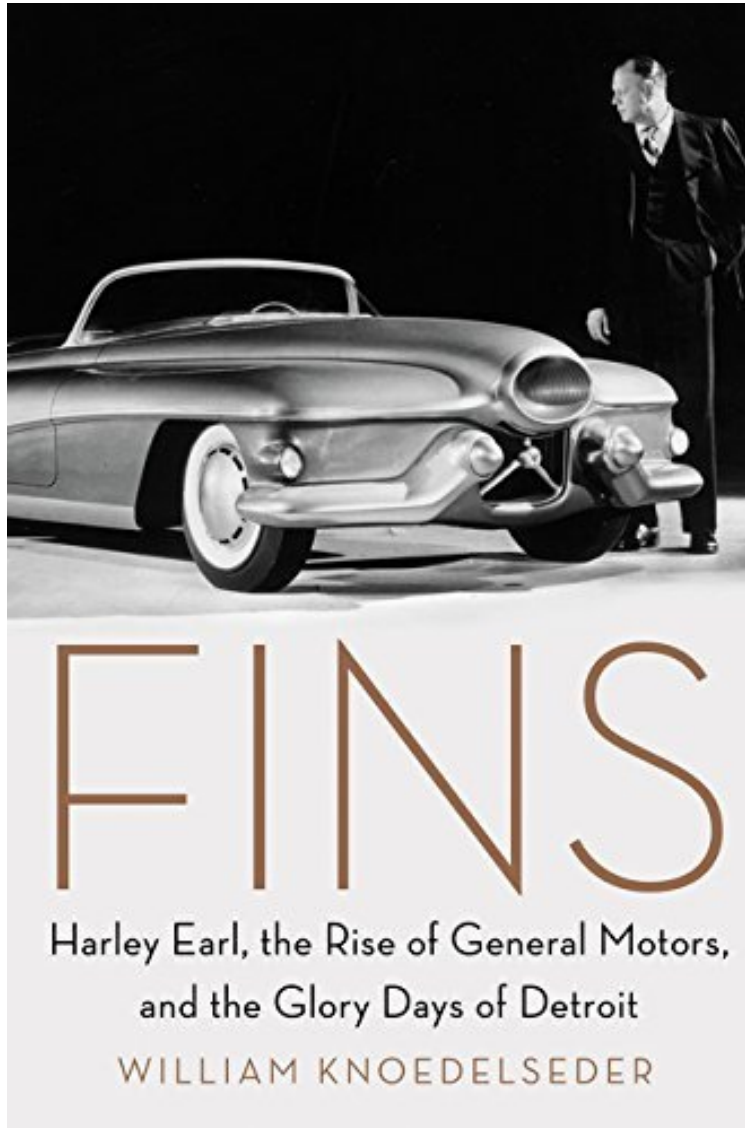


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Fins: Harley Earl, the Rise of General Motors, and the Glory Days of Detroit

William Knoedelseder

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William Knoedelseder : Fins: Harley Earl, the Rise of General Motors, and the Glory Days of Detroit before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fins: Harley Earl, the Rise of General Motors, and the Glory Days of Detroit:

The New York Times bestselling author of Bitter Brew chronicles the birth and rise to greatness of the American auto

industry through the remarkable life of Harley Earl, an eccentric six-foot-five, stuttering visionary who dropped out of college and went on to invent the profession of automobile styling, thereby revolutionized the way cars were made, marketed, and even imagined. Harley's story qualifies as a bona fide American family saga. It began in the Michigan pine forest in the years after the Civil War, traveled across the Great Plains on the wooden wheels of a covered wagon, and eventually settled in a dirt road village named Hollywood, California, where young Harley took the skills he learned working in his father's carriage shop and applied them to designing sleek, racy-looking automobile bodies for the fast crowd in the burgeoning silent movie business. As the 1920s roared with the sound of mass manufacturing, Harley returned to Michigan, where, at GM's invitation, he introduced art into the rigid mechanics of auto-making. Over the next thirty years, he functioned as a kind of combination Steve Jobs and Tom Ford of his time, redefining the form and function of the country's premier product. His impact was profound. When he retired as GM's VP of Styling in 1958, Detroit reigned as the manufacturing capitol of the world and General Motors ranked as the most successful company in the history of business. Knoedelseder tells the story in ways both large and small, weaving the history of the company with the history of Detroit and the Earl family as Fins examines the effect of the automobile on America's economy, culture, and national psyche.

About the Author William Knoedelseder was a longtime reporter for the Los Angeles Times, and he has been a television news executive for Knight Ridder, Fox, and the USA Network. His books include *Stuffed: A True Story of MCA, the Music Business, and the Mafia*, and *I'm Dying Up Here: Heartbreak and High Times in Stand-Up Comedy's Golden Era*. He lives in Woodland Hills, California.