Robocar 2057

The Los Angeles region, long hailed as a leader of creativity and consumer trends, is home to the world's largest concentration of manufacturer design studios, representing automakers from North America, Europe and Asia. It is also the home of the Art Center College of Design, one of the foremost transportation design institutions where many of today's leading automotive designers graduated.
The Design Los Angeles Challenge has evolved into an integral element of the Los Angeles Auto Show, held in November. Now in its fourth year, it is a unique annual contest open to the many local car design studios. The 2007 theme, "RoboCar of 2057", asked to form a vision of the future by depicting a vehicle that incorporates artificial intelligence engineered to make life easier and more attractive to consumers 50 years from now. **Christian Philippsen** introduces the most significant entries, beginning with the winning Volkswagen Slipstream.

VOLKSWAGEN SLIPSTREAM
Volkswagen/Audi Design Center California
Design Team: Ian Hilton, Derek Jenkins, Patrick Faulwetter

In the year 2057, population centers have become unimaginably dense and the roadways have reached the point of total saturation. Volkswagen's solution is an advanced autonomous vehicle that dynamically adapts to minimize its footprint in the city and its drag coefficient on the highways.
When in the city, these two-wheeled, teardrop shaped pods travel in an upright orientation that occupies one fifth the size of a traditional vehicle. When on a special freeway lane called the "Slipstream", it tilts to a horizontal orientation optimizing its aerodynamic shape. Rear fins slide out to allow the rear of the vehicle to float like the tail section of an airplane to achieve speeds in excess of 250 mph.
The skin of the vehicle is made of hyper-efficient solar panels that power the vehicle.