



## Spinning Herbie - From Disney to Mid America Motorworks to Barrett-Jackson

When Disney filmed the fourth installment in the Herbie movie series, they used a total of 26 VW Beetles, each designed for specific tricks and stunts. Only 4 of those Herbies remain, including this Spinning Herbie, dubbed Car #20 for filming.

### Modified for Filming

This authentic, special effects Beetle was modified for "Herbie Goes Bananas," including a scene in which Herbie fights a bull. The front wheels do not touch the ground. Instead, the car is supported by a small "fifth wheel" mounted between, and slightly to the rear of the normal front wheels. This hidden fifth wheel allowed Spinning Herbie to revolve around and turn within its own length.

A secondary steering, gearshift and pedal assembly in the rear seat allowed a hidden driver to make the car perform, seemingly at verbal command. A complex chain and linkage mechanism moves the normal front wheels and the front steering wheel as the rear steering wheel is turned, maintaining the illusion of Herbie driving himself.

### Loving the Love Bug

When Spinning Herbie arrived at Mid America Motorworks, both the fifth wheel and the auxiliary driving controls were missing. Mid America Motorworks designed, sourced and fabricated a new fifth wheel assembly, new rear seat controls, and various wiring harnesses. The exterior was carefully restored with the hand-painted "TAXI" signs, smiling flowers and splashes of fake mud.

The secondary steering control was built from 3/4" drill rods, custom steering wheel, bearing assemblies and a chain gear drive to mate it to the stock controls. Mid America Motorworks' Interior Division designed, fabricated and installed a movie-style interior in Herbie, including microphone-ready seatbacks.

Now road-ready, Spinning Herbie may be driven from the front or rear seat. When the fifth wheel is activated, it can once again spin in its own length.

### Co-stars Reunited

In the film Paco, an orphaned pickpocket, and Herbie become friends. Herbie hides Paco in his storage compartment and later in the film, Paco paints the word "Taxi" on Herbie's side and goes into business for himself. Once Spinning Herbie became part of the MY Garage Museum collection, Mid America Motorworks invited Joaquin Garay III, who played Paco in Herbie Goes Bananas, to attend Funfest for Air-Cooled VW as a guest of honor. In 2005, Garay personalized Spinning Herbie by autographing the glove compartment.

### See You in Scottsdale!

The next adventure for this Herbie begins with a trip to Barrett Jackson Auctions in Scottsdale this month. Spinning Herbie will cross the block between 4 and 5 pm Thursday, Jan. 28 as Lot #751.1. For more details on the Auction, [click here](#).

(<http://www.barrett-jackson.com/Events/Event/Details/1960-VOLKSWAGEN-BEETLE-SPINNING-HERBIE-188881>)

