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CGC: What's your thought on current automobile design and its tendencies to go retro?

Harald: Retro is putting the passion back into Design. It is just a bummer that, for example, the new Ford Thunderbird is a piece of plastic shit. Why not bringing back some of the quality old cars used to have, which is part of the beauty of a car. Mercedes for instance is taking cues from the past and turning them into futuristic machines that are high tech. I think that is a much better direction. But, we have seen it now for years. It is time to do something new, PLEASE!



CGC: Could you tell us about your role on the latest XXX film?

Harald: Design a more outrageous GTO, and I think I did. Play around with a 67 Mustang, glitter up Hummers and other SUV, turn a F150 into a monster Truck, design a Speed train (inside and outside), design a double Turret Tank and design a flying mini cam robot. I think that was all.

CGC: What was the most exciting design you did for the project?

Harald: It really wasn't so much an individual design; I think the excitement was the speed and turn around of all the designs. Every design was a challenge; I mean where in the

CGC: The "Cover Art" image featuring an Orange No 5 car (above) has some design cues resembling designs from Pininfarina (Lamborghini, Ferrari). Is this an accident?

Harald: No no no, it's the Lexus from Minority Report all re-vamped. Same proportions as the movie car, but otherwise totally new. The danger is that some would say, why messing with something that has seen the light of day already. I did not have much time to design it during the making of it. We had about three weeks to design it and finish the 3D model. Pretty much impossible you think. Well, I consider the design very raw and it certainly has room for improvements. There for the exercise to do it a bit differently. Strangely the vehicle will appear in Michael Bay's "The Island". Don't ask...



CGC: Who are your favorite car designers?

Harald: The guys who stay modest and actually still use a pencil instead of their lips. Naturally that excludes all the "chiefs". Not to be too harsh on the guys who run the show. But looking at a car when it is done and then calling it their design just does not sit right with me. Give the little guys some credit and the modelers too. My buddy Grant Larson has to be one of the best though. He has a complete understanding of shape and form. He sketches well and knows everything about the Porsche brand. He is also a great, fun loving guy.

world do you get 2 weeks to design a High Speed Train? It is right to the point design and no time to mess around. The Production Designer (Gavin Bouquet) is good like that. I was on XXX-2 for 5 months or so and the time flew by. That was fun, no BS.

CGC: And favorite vehicle in a feature film? (Yours don't count)

Harald: That thing in the first Mad Max. Isn't everything today product placement?

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Image by Maria Trepalina >>>

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Any fetish books?

Harald: No, sorry. It kills my wife that I read popular science or computer manuals at night.

CGC: Tell us about your new DVDs you have produced in collaboration with the Gnomon Workshop?

Harald: These DVD's are a quick look into design of vehicles and products or props. I would like to make young people understand that it takes a long time and dedication to get to a level that is professional. I am trying to get kids or students interested and give them a head start. I talk about the fear and conflict of being creative and developing the skills to show ideas. Nothing will replace the years in school to learn the basics though. Computer programs offer a short cut, but you can't fool the trained eye. I also introduce some shortcuts in Photoshop that will make your live a little easier.

CGC: In a way, we could say you have already seen the future. What do you think the typical car will look like in 2015?

Harald: In 10 years, maybe more variety, probably safer cars, other wise the same with more stuff. We will never fly, so all you guys working on flying cars, stop wasting your time. People can hardly maneuver in 2 dimensions. But why isn't anyone working on mass transportation that could and would replace the car. Add little "drive by charge" for local excess single seater cars, at the station of trains etc. Mass transportation needs to be convenient and traffic reducing.

Many thanks to Harald Belker for accepting this interview and



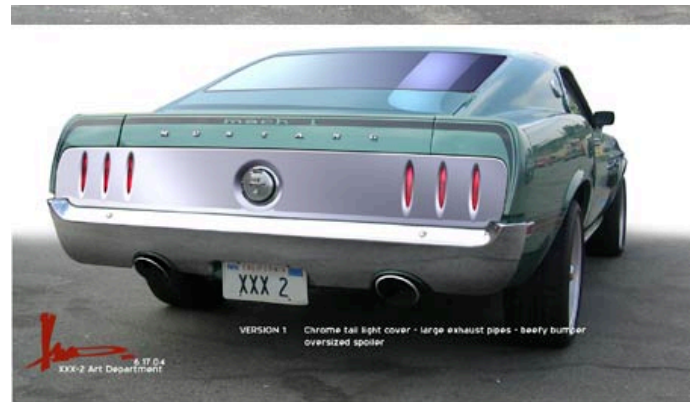
taking the time to answer all our answers.

Related Links:

Harald Belker's home-page (recently redesigned)

Other Links:

Harald Belker's training DVDs from Gnomon Workshop



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By Jean-Eric Hénault

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OF HOTWHEELS AND MEN INTERVIEW WITH HARALD BELKER

Jean-Steph Hénery

If you love cars, you will love this interview we have with Harald Belker, who designed many radical vehicle designs for numerous high-profile films and worked on a few HotWheels of his own. Learn what he really thinks of the new Ford Thunderbird and he likes to read computer manuals at night? I wonder what his wife thinks of that? Read below for details...

And for those waiting for flying cars, from the man who designed cars from the future, learn why it probably will never happen.

CGC: Do you own HotWheels, and if so, how many?

Harald: Well, when I made my deal, I made sure that I will



get lot's of samples, so I got Boxes of all the ones I worked on, and a few others that I pick up every once in a while. Not to forget the special editions they send me. As all kids I grew up with Hot Wheels or Matchbox cars, so it is just a sweet thing that I had the chance to create some and brought joy to kids and adults as well.

CGC: What kind of car do you drive?

Harald: For fun a 2003 Porsche 4S and every day a 2005 Ford F150 Truck. My wife has a Boxster and an Audi Allroad. I have to excuse the number of cars we drive, but hey - I am a car guy. What other excuse do I need? Other people have horses, and certainly I am no Jay Leno.

CGC: And what's your ultimate dream car?

Harald: Ford GT40, the original! I would find a way to park it in my living room. I was never big on Ferrari, maybe because of the people who own Ferraris. To be absolutely honest, I never cared that much about performance of cars, if I would have it my way, I would just take the body and display it. Or perhaps one of these old wooden bodies that they used to hammer sheet-metal on to sculpted classic designs for somebody like Ferrari.



CGC: Any classic automobile design you prefer?

Harald: Car designs from the early sixties. They were just great, lots of shapes and lovely curves came from that era. Classics from Ferrari to Corvette, many manufacturers had great designs in their line. But I am also a great fan of French car design. They were just incredibly innovative and still are.

CGC: If you could redesign any automobile on the road, which would you enjoy the most doing?

Harald: I am not a re-designer; the only thing that gets me going is to design something original and different. I don't mind taking cues from the past and re-shaping them to fit something modern. But, it should be the challenge to put something on the street that makes people a little bit uncomfortable, because it is so new that the public doesn't know how to react to it.

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OF HOTWHEELS AND MEN INTERVIEW WITH HARALD BELKER

JOHN-SAY: WINEBY

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