

CLASSIC DRIVER

Land Rover by Studio Job: Birthday cake on wheels

Lead

Land Rover Defenders are frequently endowed with additional features, designed for a specific purpose, such as snorkels for wading or bullbars for intimidating. But nothing will prepare you for the artistic addenda that Studio Job applied to this example...

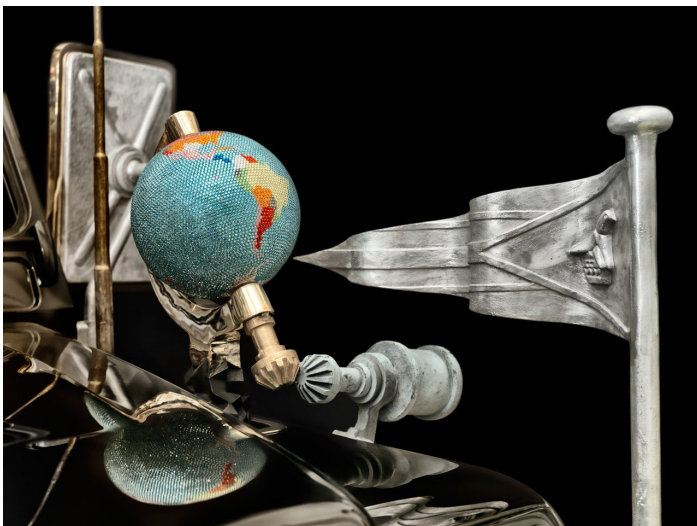
Formed in 2000 by a pair of Antwerp-based graduates, Studio Job has gained fame in art and design circles, partnering with the likes of Bulgari, L'Oreal and Swarovski. For its latest collaborative project, the studio was given a Land Rover Defender in order to create a 65th anniversary tribute to the pensionable workhorse. Land Rover's only condition was that it remained 'drivable' - a line which was toed with as much leeway as possible, as you can see.

Opulence, intricacy and irony



Studio Job has become known for its "high levels of craftsmanship with extreme ornamentation", with a calling card of "opulence, intricacy and irony". The Defender employs flourishes of each: the bonnet-mounted globe and comically oversized wing-mirrors are inlaid with Swarovski crystals; the windows are replaced with stained glass; and one of the headlights has been supplanted by a candle, giving only minimal night-time illumination. The implementation of ironic imagery is perhaps the most interesting, a good example being the hand-beaten aluminium tongue protruding from the grille. "The numerous elements kept accumulating," says Job Smeets, co-founder of the studio. "The car literally sticks its tongue out. It wants to be something that it actually isn't. It's become a great concoction, monumental and cynical. But isn't that also true for power and class structures?"

Popemobile for an African chief



Along with several geographical references (the United States Capitol and Roman Colosseum each decorate one wheel), the Studio Job Defender also pays homage to African culture. "I imagine this car as a Popemobile for an African chief, personalised in a bizarre way," says Smeets. "It's a caricature of a status symbol." As a result, you'll find that one of the chunky wheels has been replaced with a simple cartwheel, while flags of Zimbabwe and the Congo 'fly' from the bumper-mounted poles. Inside, seat and curtain fabrics - look closely and you'll see various car parts among the African imagery - have been provided by Vlisco, a company which provides exclusive materials to wealthy Africans. Meanwhile, a gilded rhino tusk sculpture sits proudly on the bonnet.

One of the car's purposes is to launch an "unsutle protest" at the lack of imagination in today's car industry. "We didn't want this to be a simple styling task - there are better people for that than us," says Smeets. The result might be harder to swallow for Defender devotees than the wheel-mounted 'sex cake', but the crazy Dutch duo certainly represents a more interesting design force than Victoria Beckham.

Photos: R. Rezvani (black Defender, photographed March 2013 during 'making of') and Zero40 (white Defender, photographed November 2013. Now Studio Job is planning to papier-mâché the entire car...) for [Studio Job](#).

Gallery

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/art/land-rover-studio-job-birthday-cake-wheels>
© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.