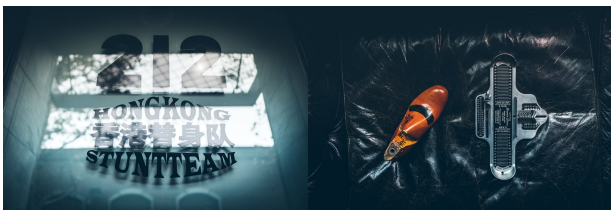


CLASSIC DRIVER

California driftin' with bohemian petrolhead Hing Yeung

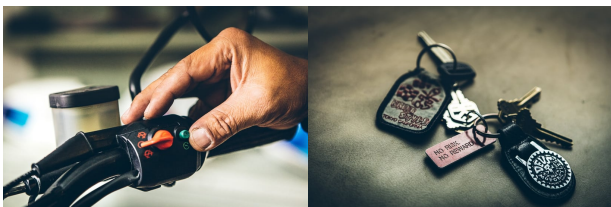
Lead

Dust surfing in the desert with a menacing black Jensen Interceptor - it's just another day in the life of the Long Beach-based designer and creative director Hing Yeung. We headed to California for a taste of his American Dream...



Hing Yeung's story is typical of an adopted Angeleno. After exploring California and its neighbouring states while on holiday some 20 years ago, the Hong Kong-born and Netherlands-raised creative director simply upped sticks and moved, lured like so many others by the sunny sprawl in the Land of Opportunity.

"I was quite naïve," he recalls as we tuck into a hearty American breakfast in a diner close to his studio in downtown Santa Ana. "I quit my job, packed a bag, and bought a flight ticket. I had a few thousand bucks and no idea you needed a visa to work or stay longer. But I just figured it out and I've never looked back."



Predominantly a shoe designer, Yeung had already fulfilled a childhood dream of working for Adidas by the time he left for Cali. But after a while of skateboarding around Hollywood and freelancing for various companies back home, he finally obtained a working visa and began designing for the likes of Puma, Reebok, and, perhaps most special for him, the cult skate brand Vision Street Wear.

Disruption has always been his design philosophy, reflected in the name of his studio, Hong Kong Stunt Team, which he established in 2004 after tiring of working for big corporations. "There's a rule - if everyone loves it, you need to do something different because it's too familiar. That's why my company is called what it is because stuntmen *stunt* people and make them think. And stuntmen from Hong Kong are the most badass people in the world!"



More recently, Yeung's clients have included Volkswagen, Legos, Hot Wheels, and Piloti, the latter of which he has completely redeveloped, taking inspiration from every facet of contemporary car culture.

"When I was approached by the guys at Piloti, I thought it was a cool concept because they made proper driving shoes that looked like and were as comfortable as sneakers. So I ran with that concept. I asked myself, why do people love cars? People don't love washing machines but they love cars and shoes, so I combined the two."



That leads us rather nicely to the menacing black Jensen Interceptor III tucked away in the garage of his studio. Man cave would be a better way of describing it, to be honest – shoes and graphic art line the walls, contemporary and vintage furniture is dotted around the generous and airy space, and a BMW R 80 G/S, Yeung's favourite motorcycle, sits in pride of place in the lobby.

"I never even knew the Interceptor existed before I moved to London. I was 25 and working in Soho. One day at lunch, I was walking along Old Compton Street when I heard what sounded like a dinosaur. I turned around and saw a black Jensen Interceptor." Yeung vowed that should he ever make enough money, he'd buy one. And years later, he did. "It represents my time in London and it reminds me of a nightclub bouncer from over there – it's got a sharp suit and talks real nice, but you certainly don't want to mess with it!"



The next thing you know, we're trying our best to keep up with Yeung as he hares along twisty canyon roads in the Jensen towards his self-confessed home from home - the desert. It sounds almost clichéd to say that LA dwellers love the outdoors, but Hing is genuinely never happier than when he's astride one of his 12 motorcycles and exploring the wilderness, be it in Baja or any of the 25-or-so countries he's traversed on two wheels over the years.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, old-school 4x4s also tickle his fancy and his current crush is the Toyota Land Cruiser. "From a design point of view, I love purpose-built vehicles. First I thought they were functional but now I just think they're badass."



Back to the task in hand, which is dancing in the dust with the gentlemen's express. It's fair to say passers-by in their hilariously big Jeeps and pickups are somewhat confused at the sight of an old English car tearing around the desert. But this is Los Angeles, remember, where anything's possible.

Inevitably, Yeung has become accustomed to the quirks of classic car ownership but his Interceptor presents beautifully (especially the cognac interior) and looks especially sinister attempting to outrun its own dust tail. After a slap on the wrist from a local busybody, there's only one thing left for Yeung to do and that's to sign his masterpiece. 'No Dust - No Glory' he scribbles onto the filthy haunch of the Jensen with his finger. If this really is the American Dream, we'd like in...

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