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# Iron and Emotion

## A love affair between man and machine

There are some people who get strangely attached to inanimate objects, like the man who married his pillow, in China. Or the man who married a steam engine. Love itself is quite strange when applied to another human being, but what happens when it's applied to another object, mechanical or full of soft feathers, is even stranger. It cannot be explained, or justified in any rational sense.

Consider this to be your confession booth and take me to be the priest. If you are reading this with any kind of a vested interest and not just glancing through it because it has some really pretty pictures, chances are, you've felt "it". That longing, that heartache and that thinly veiled attraction for a lump of metal and glass and rubber. If you have, give a little nod, and read on.

Most of you will have started quite young. A bright red Ferrari Testarossa remote control car. A scratched, dented, hand me down Porsche 356. Maybe even a poster of a Lamborghini, bright colours and a jaw droopingly gorgeous shape making that bedroom wall that much faster. At an age when other kids, for fun, watched furry animals shoot lightning bolts out of their backsides and were literally obsessed with that show, you lot, the special, "different" lot, had a fascination for something much cooler. Automobiles.

The first love always sticks with you, and no matter how much you grow up, your soul is still going to be stirred by a nostalgic Google image search.

Just as we don't understand another man's love for his pillow (till morn do us

beginning of a long line of beautiful, sensuously flowing and eternally modern cars that expanded over seventeen years and over six different models, and Aston Martin was voted "coolest brand in the world" recently as a result. Aesthetics sell, and for cars, more so.

The British have always given us sublime cars to look at and fall in love with. 1961 saw the launching of one of the most heartbreakingly beautiful shapes to ever emerge from a designer's mind: the Jaguar E-type. Malcom Sayer, the man responsible for penning it, designed the car with strict adherence to mathematical principles to achieve a low drag coefficient. The designer learned the black magic of aerodynamics from a German POW in World War II, while serving in the Middle East. Even Enzo Ferrari, the stringent Ferrari-Is-The-Universe boss, admitted that the E-type was possibly the finest looking car he has ever laid eyes on. Fast forward through year after year of beautiful, elegant cars till the 90s, pause in the 90's for the incredible XJ220 supercar, tolerate the post-2000 ugly ducklings and now, Ian Callum has turned Jag around

that looked like it came from outer space and somehow found its way to 1974, and it served brilliantly as a halo car for a brand that has slipped into the shadows in recent times.

Possibly the biggest heartthrob of entire generations of adrenaline and hormone fuelled teenagers was the raging bull from Santa Agata, Italy. Ferruccio Lamborghini was a tractor maker who thought he could take on Ferrari at their

the Shelby Daytona, a voluptuous beauty of a racer, and the Ford GT40, a timeless wonder and eternally gorgeous.

Cars are fine and all, but what about the two wheeled? Like with cars, people buy bikes according to how the bikes reflect their personas. Or at least what they want to project to other people. Its not unheard of, that a dad tired of his 9-5 job as an accountant would pick up the keys to a Harley V-Rod and go for a



Harley VRSC Night Rod: black beauty.



Jaguar E-Type: the science and math of beauty.



Aston DB5: Take a bow, Mr. Bond.



Alfa 8C: Heartache inducing beauty.



Citroen DS: Spaceship looks, space age tech.



Talbot Lago Figoni Falaschi coupe: the teardrop 30's.



Bugatti Atlantic: Only 3 made, and one of the most expensive cars ever sold at an auction.

part), there are people who wouldn't really understand our undying love for wheels and motion. But even these detractors will stop and stare if an Aston Martin One 77 were to blow past (well, sadly, with only 77 of these beauties made, the chances of that happening are extremely low).

Why do we fall in love with a car? We've never driven a high-end Aston. Most of us can't even imagine they will be rich enough someday to own a Lamborghini, although it doesn't hurt to dream. No, our love for these metal skinned beauties are all about the aesthetics. It's a bit shallow, and that would be quite right. What people have to realize, though, is that these cars that we gush about, are finely sculpted divas, rolling works of art that materialized from the fertile minds of men and women who are nothing less than artists. These designers drive our passions, feed us the sweet fruits of their labour, and design the posters for entire generations to fall in love with.

Ian Callum certainly made a splash in the market for high end sports cars in 1997 with the Aston Martin DB7, at the time heralded as a valuable future classic, and now, well on its way there. It was the

completely. The new XJ is possibly the coolest looking luxury sedan out there, maybe slightly edged out by the Maserati Quattroporte.

And now the Italians. Hot blooded and exhibiting a passion like no other, Italian car design has made sure that the Italian automobili is always at the pinnacle of the "Most Desired Objects" list. Ferrari 250 GTO, 256 GTB, Daytona, California, the original Testarossa (and the 80's one), F40, 458 Italia, and the absolutely stunning La Ferrari. Those are just the beauties from the Prancing Horse. There's Maserati, whose illustrious history with beautiful automobiles such as the Ghibli, would eat up my word count for this article before I can get to Alfa Romeo.

Alfa epitomises Italian automobile engineering. They are shoddily built cars, prone to rust and breaking down every time someone sneezes hard inside the car. But holy hell, do they have presence and character.

In a similar vein are the Lancias of old, and while they weren't what you would call traditionally beautiful, they had a rugged charm that was hard to find in anything else. The Stratos is an angular, aggressive, purpose built rally car

own game, and did he. The edgy, angular, obsessively aggressive supercars are testament to decades of striving to make unique cars that look nothing like anything else. The trend started with the Miura, which jumpstarted the concept of the mid-engined supercar. Giorgetto Guigaro and Michael Gandini's design was phenomenal: people went stark, raving mad over the sultry seductress shape and the feminine "eyes." It still reduces grown men to tears because they can't own one.

Some say the Japanese can't do beautiful. The Toyota 2000GT was Japan's first entry into the sports car market, and what an entry. They came out of nowhere with a powerful, finely honed GT car that looked stunning and went like a mad dog, and had agility to boot. The rarity makes the Toyota a bona-fide collector item, and is one of the most valuable Japanese classics in the world.

Americans are often overlooked when it comes to the idea of design, and the snobbish, stiff upper lip will tell you that Americans can't design anything better than uninspiring, boxy land yachts. But then land yachts sometimes have grace as well, like the 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air, and the Buick Riviera. Then there is

weekend ride. On that ride, he is free, and the world will know it by looking at him and his raked back chopper.

The café racer and bobber look are common fantasies on two wheels, and we can see the charm in them. Goggles, a classic style helmet, and a Triumph Thunderbird or a Bonneville, maybe even a Norton Commander, and you can pretend to be Che Guevara on his ride through South America. Out on that open road, its easy to fall in love with the raspy burble of a V-twin motor, and with the wind in your face and a well-balanced bike between your legs, you discover freedom, and life. Easiest path to being a philosopher, or a revolutionary.

So not all that shallow, then, the love for these machines.

Whatever machine you fall in love with, it takes a rare amount of courage to commit to your love for an inanimate object. Whether you love your dad's beat up Corolla, that wallpaper of the beautiful and quirky Citroen DS you have, or even a truck, belching out black fumes on your face, if you're in love, you're in love. We salute you.

SHAER REAZ

## Reader Hearthrobs

We asked the fans on our Facebook fan page what, according to them, were the most beautiful cars ever made and why. Here's what we got.

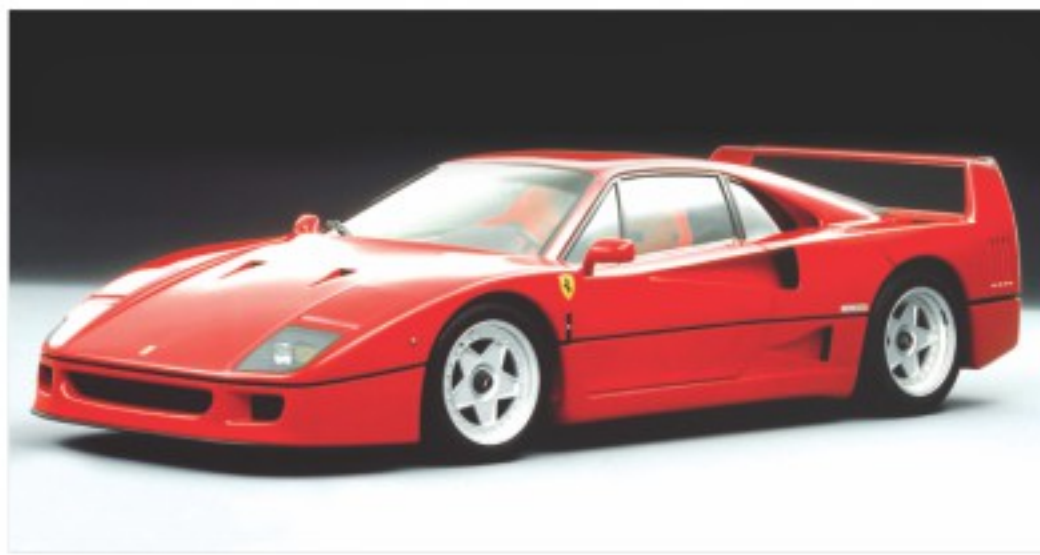


**Raian Choudhury:** Citroën DS (still looks like it's from the future). Alfa Romeo 8C (this is what Da Vinci would do if he designed about cars). Aston Martin DB7 (not a AM design fanatic, but it's like an orgasm for your eyes). Subaru SVX (very futuristic for its time). Mazda



Renesis-Xpermental 7 ABflug (FD3S) (no explanation required). Subaru Impreza P1 (GC8). Eagle Roadster (the modern iteration of the Jaguar E-type). Chrysler Atlantis (the way electric cars should look). Bugatti Atlantic (no explanation required) Nissan R308 (how Le Mans cars look when its function over form). Hyundai Matrix (dont know how to sell it to you guys).

**Joy Syed:** F40 isn't just beautiful. F40 is bloody beautiful. Pure piece of art. Perhaps it's the only reason I like Ferrari. Rest are Aventador, Murcielago, Miura, Gallardo STS, Nissan R32, R34, R35, Honda NSX, Toyota 2000 GT, AE86, RT40, Mazda RX7, Lexus LFA, Pagani Huayra and of course McLaren P1.



**Munajj Ahamed:** McLaren P1. Nothing on this car was overdone. Just form following function. Wastefulness was never attractive to me and the power-train of this car is cleaner than my bed right now.

**Shadman Ahmed:** F40 Because its F40!

**Muntasir Hakim:** BMW 8 series, because of that seamless A-B pillars and perfect pop-ups. Volkswagen Beetle 1967, because it is beautiful! Nissan Silvia S15, because it has the most beautiful post 2000 body shape and frame. Voluptuous from every angle. Breathing headlamps. Very well proportioned. I strongly believe that this car was meant for me. I'm biased to any Japanese car as well as 90-'00 period.



**Shayan Farzad Ahmed:** Ferrari 512TR.

**Arbab Siddiqui:** Volkswagen Karmann Ghia! Alfa Romeo 2uetottantala!

**Md Samir Iqbal:** Jaguar E-type, the new F-type coupe, the Ferrarri 250 GTO, most Aston Martins and the Alfa 4C.

**Rajiv Hassan** Corvette C3.

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