

John has put as much as 60 hours of time into a single gas tank.



One of three pieces John painted and donated to the Rescue 1 charity art auction at the 2008 Detroit Autorama pinstriper jamboree.

The Art Of John Harrow

IF THE PAINT STICKS...

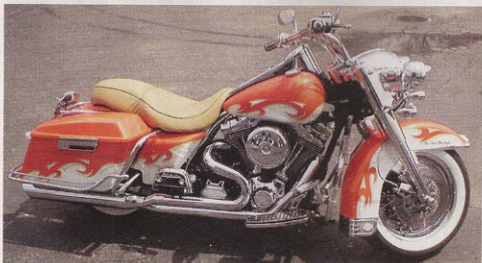
"If paint will stick to it, I'll paint it," says artist John Harrow who was originally featured in *Easyriders* in June of 2003. Back then we examined the technical process John uses to create his art. We

also got an appreciation for his versatility as an artist, both in terms of subject matter and canvas. Today, we find his penchant for variety, especially when it comes to a canvas, has not wavered. He

paints more bikes than anything, but his work is also found on cars, helmets, goalie masks, guitars, walls, signs, and even windowpanes.

Growing up in the suburbs of Detroit, John graduated high school with honors in commercial art and earned a BEA in graphic design at the College for Creative Studies. He found work in a graphic design studio "very tedious." "I needed something inspiring," John says, so he took a job painting 15-inch scale models of Sprint and Indy 500 racecars for Fournier Enterprises. "This is how I learned how to use catalyzed automotive grade paint," he explains. It was then he began getting requests to paint racing helmets and goalie masks. John moved on to painting motorcycles for two years at an independent Indian motorcycle dealer. It was at his latest gig, working at Classic and Exotic Service, Inc. (C&E), where he was presented with a new artistic challenge.

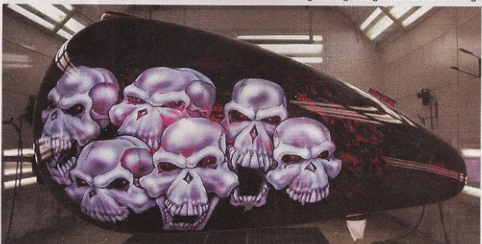
Because C&E specializes in restoring and servicing pre-WWII cars, and since many of these classics are from the era of pinstripping, John chose to learn that skill, but it did not come easily. "Air-brushing and hand detail painting come



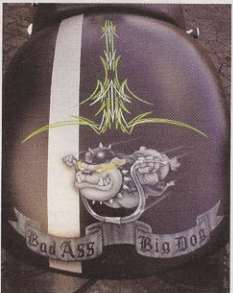
John, who is his own toughest critic, feels fortunate to be making a living doing what he loves doing.



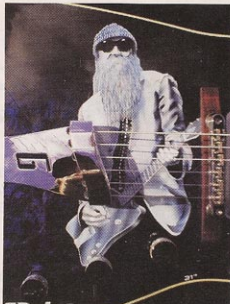
"Pinstripping wasn't as easy as it looked," says John of the technique he fought to master.



Pushing and challenging himself, John's ongoing goal is to "try to make my next piece my best one."



Big Dog K-9 painted with flat clear and hand pinstriped.



Here's a cool Billy Bob Gretch custom guitar that John painted especially for Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top.



Images: John Harrow

He's gone global. Recently, John completed goalie masks for clients in Alaska, Sweden and Japan. Painting the masks requires safety certification; John holds six different certifications.

naturally to me," says John. "Pinstripping wasn't as easy as it looked. It was extremely difficult and challenging to finally understand and be able to execute the proper brush strokes. In a way, the frustration pushed me to conquer striping." He practiced by painting fine art stripe designs on old windowpanes. "It is a great canvas to practice on," John tells us, "and when you are finished, you have a beautiful piece of art."

John Harrow talks fast, and his enthusiasm for his work flows like paint. "It's like a compulsion; I have to paint," he says. He works with each client to develop a design to its fullest potential. Once approved, "I meticulously follow the design and apply it to whatever my canvas happens to be," he says. So, if you have a bike (or car, or helmet, or some other canvas paint will stick to). John issues you this invitation: "Bring it, don't sing it! And remember, it's all about the art."

John Harrow may be reached at 248-269-9346 or by visiting the Web at www.classicandexotic.com.

—Joanne Morris

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