

New classic car website launches with gallery honouring the history of Grand Prix drivers

How a little Aussie car blog turned into the world's greatest collection of classic car images



When Melbourne's 'walking encyclopedia of classic cars' Raph Tripp contacted celebrity music designer Bencu, an idea Tripp had been piecing together for over 40 years was realised. Tunnel Ram.net was created over a two year period and represents the first time that over 7000 rare and archival classic car images from the 50's, 60's and 70's have been brought together in the one place.

Tunnel Ram is now arguably the world's greatest online image collection of classic cars, advertising and lifestyle. And what incredible imagery it is! The gallery reflects what some have called the peak of Madison Avenue (New York's advertising Mecca) when General Motors engaged the 1960's best creatives Fitzpatrick and Kaufman, to work on the Pontiac account. Two men tasked with travelling to the world's most exotic locations, inspiring a new lifestyle dream with the ads they created for the pages of New Yorker magazine over the course of a decade.

But it was not only Pontiac that received the treatment, Buick, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Camaro

Chevelle, Mustang, Shelby, Torino, Thunderbird, Corvette, Dodge all became the centre of iconic illustration, photography and advertising art.

It was a period when not only car design was at its most confident, ambitious and spectacular but the ideas around how to sell them were breaking new ground in commercial art and advertising strategy. Selling the dream had never been so well funded.

And Australia wasn't immune to this great trend, thankfully. We took our car design leads from the U.S up until the mid 70's, which meant we stepped up with our creative for cars like Monaro, Torana, Charger and the iconic Sandman. Ford too, with the Falcon GT received an elevated marketing platform (now Australia's most sought after classic car)

Tunnel Ram is a fascinating journey into one of the high-water marks of human creativity.

To celebrate the launch of Tunnel Ram coinciding with the start of the 2019 F1 Racing season, Raph Tripp has created a gallery in honour of the history of Grand Prix drivers and manufacturers going back to 1950.

While the focus is on this classic period in American and Australian design, Tunnel Ram throws the net wider, providing some further context to this period. Galleries for British, European and Japanese classics are also included as well concept cars, vans, dragsters and stars with their cars. Culturally, there are also galleries for non-car advertising, with archives of Australian and American Street Life and Surfing.

Raph Tripp is a Melbourne based classic car writer and image archivist. He has authored articles on everything from Mustangs to the Bat Mobile. His writing is available for publication, please contact info@tunnelram.net for permissions. Raph has been the proud owner of a '72 Falcon V8 coupe a-la Mad Max's Interceptor, a Monaro GTS 350 4-speed, a '67 Pontiac Parisienne, a '65 Mustang and a succession of Aussie Valiants.

Ben Cunningham a.k.a Bencu is an Australian graphic designer, producer, director and artist that has worked in music, film and fashion for 25 years. His clients have included Jimmy Barnes, INXS, Deep Purple, Kylie, Nike, Sony and L'Oreal. He was creative director at Michael Gudinski's Mushroom Group from 2000-2010 and is currently developing two feature films and Tunnel Ram. Ben has been driven around in many incredible cars but he is sad to say, has not owned any - yet ...

Contacts

Tunnel Ram

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