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News

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HOLDEN'S WILD HOT ROD BRINGS FJ BACK TO LIFE

Sydney showcar delivers retro, mumbo and gizmos

EFFIGY (EF-ij-GEE) n.
FJ (EF-JAY) n.

Stylistic representation of someone or something famous
Iconic Australian motor vehicle released by Holden in 1953

Australian International Motor Show, 13 October 2005: A wild 21st Century hot rod reincarnating Australia's most famous car, the FJ Holden, was unveiled today at the Australian International Motor Show in Sydney.

EFIJY is a radical pillarless custom coupe boasting V8 Supercar power under the bonnet, Chevrolet Corvette underbody and state-of-the-art automotive technology throughout.

The 'Soprano Purple' paintwork highlights its curvaceous 5.2-metre body, reinterpreting the classic design cues of the iconic 1953 FJ Holden. It delivers retro, mumbo and gizmos in one glorious package.

Obviously not intended for production, EFIJY has been a passionate side project for some Holden Design team members otherwise dedicated to creating the all-new 2006 Commodore.

A long-term dream for Chief Designer Richard Ferlazzo, EFIJY brought together almost 20 suppliers to highlight the latest in mechanical, electronic and material products and ideas.

Automotive excess pounds through a 480-kilowatt, supercharged six-litre V8 engine and air-adjustable shock absorbers through to a touch control LCD screen and fan-cooled LED headlamps.

GM Holden Chairman and Managing Director, Denny Mooney, today said the EFIJY project was a bold statement on the creative talent available within Holden's design ranks.

Mr Mooney said the project was developed as a collaboration with suppliers which reduced impact on the company's heavy work schedule and ensured the highest possible quality result for the showcar.

"EFIJY is all about fun, emotion and imagination. It shows what a bunch of clever and talented design people can do when they are let loose to create something really wild," Mr Mooney said.

"This year was a fantastic opportunity for us to create something which highlights our designers' ability and versatility.

"EFIJY is sure to evoke different memories for everyone who sees it. People might focus on the FJ links, the glorious custom coupes of the 1930s or the great design flair of the 1950s."

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Design philosophies

Holden Chief Designer and EFIJY project leader Richard Ferlazzo, who sketched the first EFIJY designs in 1989 and is a long-time custom car fanatic, said the car existed purely for automotive entertainment.

“Invariably, people smile when they see it for the first time. EFIJY is our accolade to the talented designers who cut loose with some fantastically flamboyant styling in the post-war 1940s and 1950s,” Ferlazzo said.

“Ask the question, ‘what would these people have created using all the skill sets and technology we have now’, and EFIJY might be the all-Australian answer to that question.

“EFIJY is also aimed at the legions of custom car and hot rod enthusiasts out there whose appetites aren’t generally met in the concept car arena.

“Most importantly, it sends the message that the same people who have sensible day jobs designing entirely practical cars have the passion and inspiration to create something as outrageous as EFIJY.

“We’re all car nuts together and the fact that EFIJY stands on our Sydney motorshow stand goes some way to legitimising this form of automotive design in the mainstream.”

Exterior and interior highlights

The design team has cleverly incorporated FJ design cues into EFIJY’s radical custom coupe body, acknowledging the most important aspects of the iconic 1953 release.

The famously familiar FJ grille looms larger than life, fronting a low, wide and handsome body extravagantly elongated and brimming with retro chic style.

The Corvette rolling chassis was lengthened to accommodate the EFIJY body, which is more than 700 millimetres longer than the FJ by which it was inspired.

The Soprano Purple paint has multiple layers of translucent pigmented topcoats which creates the rich, deep effect.

All brightwork on the vehicle is hand-made billet aluminium to maximise its authentic look, nowhere more evident than the stunning grill salute to FJ’s distinctive front.

A proximity sensor opens the door automatically as the driver approaches, revealing deep cream leather twin tombstone-shaped seats equipped with integral belts.

The drop-down, touch control LCD screen and an instrument cluster glowing with the number ‘53’ – another FJ gesture – are set in the body-coloured metal dash and pulsate with a radiogram retro orange glow.

There are pearlescent, Bakelite-look push button controls for the electronic automatic transmission and the hard curved floor is finished in figured maple timber veneer with aluminium inserts.

EFIJY’s prowling appearance can be accentuated by the air-adjustable suspension. At the touch of an LCD screen, At a touch of the LCD screen, EFIJY can hunker down to just 27 millimetres from the ground or rise to a more practical drive height.

The use of LED headlights and tail lights is accompanied by liberal LED applications inside the vehicle, including courtesy lamps and sill plate illumination lamps. Several are dual filament, allowing them to throw different colors depending on the application.

Like any great showcar, EFIJY is stocked with a cutting edge entertainment system featuring hard drive audio and video storage driven through a major amplifier and speaker setup.

Mechanical highlights

The 6.0-litre LS2 V8 engine has been supercharged and modified by Ron Harrop, well known throughout the Australian automotive and motorsport industry and an ex-FJ Holden racer.

Driven by a Roots-type supercharger, the engine delivers peak power of 480kW (645 horsepower) at 6400rpm and peak torque of 775Nm (560 foot-pound) at 4200rpm. Such performance figures are equal to the stated output from 2005 Series V8 Supercars, and almost 11 times greater than the 45kW (60 horsepower) offered in the 1953 FJ Holden.

EFIJY's engine is mated to a rear-mounted four-speed automatic transmission featuring push button electronic control. Limited slip differential has been fitted for obvious reasons.

The custom designed exhaust is a stainless steel 2.5-inch dual system with customised compact headers and billet aluminium exhaust tips.

The power output is transferred to massive 22-inch by 10-inch billet aluminium wheels with fluting which echoes the FJ's more modest original 15-inch by 4-inch wheels. Reflecting its street sled heritage, the front wheels are 20-inch by 9-inch.

The brakes feature 381mm (15-inch) grooved and ventilated rotors front and rear, combined with six-piston aluminium calipers at the front and four-piston aluminium calipers at the rear.

Development schedule

Advanced designs for EFIJY were prepared during 2003, the 50th anniversary of the original FJ release. Clay models were prepared but plans were shelved to make way for other stunning concept cars such as last year's Torana TT36.

The project was finally approved early this year for the 2005 Australian International Motor Show in Sydney. This gave the team eight months to bring like-minded suppliers on board and complete the EFIJY build in a way which greatly reduced costs compared with most showcars.

"EFIJY has been a real labor of love for everyone involved and it shows in the way it feels. It gave us a unique opportunity to showcase Holden's creative abilities, and those of some of our key partners, in a way which will appeal to a broader audience," Ferlazzo said.

"It's been a long road to bring this to reality and the perfect time to do it before we pull the covers off our new Commodore range. We're pretty sure that an Australian motor show has never seen anything like EFIJY from a local carmaker before."

Holden Design plans to show the car at a series of street machine and hot rod shows around Australia after its Australian International Motor Show debut.

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SPECIFICATIONS AND FEATURES

Dimensions

Length:	5162mm	Width:	1999mm
Height – drive setting:	1386mm	Height – show setting:	1274mm
Ground clearance - drive:	139mm	Ground clearance - show:	27mm
Track front:	1640mm	Track rear:	1660mm
Wheelbase:	2946mm		

Powertrain

Engine:	GM 6.0-litre, LS2 aluminium V8 with Roots-type supercharger
Bore and stroke:	101.6 mm x 92.0 mm
Compression ratio:	10.9:1
Power and torque:	480kW (645 bhp) @ 6400 rpm
Torque:	775Nm (560 ft/lb) @ 4200 rpm
Exhaust:	Custom designed, block hugger headers, stainless steel 2.5-inch dual system, billet aluminium exhaust tips
Transaxle:	GM four-speed electronic automatic transmission, push button electronic control, limited slip differential

Exterior

Body:	Two door pillarless coupe, glass fibre bodyshell; remote door release and proximity sensor systems; polished billet aluminium brightwork
Colour:	“Soprano Purple” custom ‘kandy’ mix
Head lamps:	High intensity LED head lamps; LED park and turn-signal lamps
Tail lamps:	LED dual color stop/tail and turn signal lamps; LED single ‘blue dot’; LED centre high mount stoplamp
Chassis:	Modified Chevrolet Corvette. Front mounted engine, torque tube driveline, rear mounted transaxle
Suspension:	Modified Chevrolet Corvette. Forged upper and lower control arms; height adjustable airbag suspension units with electronic control
Steering:	Variable ratio rack and pinion
Wheels:	Billet aluminium – 20 x 9-inch front, 22 x 10-inch rear
Tyres:	Dunlop SP Sport - 9090 255/35 ZR 20 front, 9000 285/30 ZR 22 rear
Brakes:	381mm grooved and ventilated rotors; six-piston aluminium calipers (front), four-piston aluminium calipers (rear); electric park brake

Interior

Seats:	Electric tombstone-style bucket, leather trimmed, integral seat belts
Headliner:	Leather trimmed
Steering wheel:	Billet aluminium and leather
Flooring:	Figured maple timber veneer with aluminium inserts
Instruments:	LCD screen display, drop-down touch control LCD screen
Entertainment:	Hard drive audio and video file system; 2000W amplifier, 1000W RMS subwoofer, two x 200W RMS mid-bass, two x 100W RMS split mid-range, two x 100W RMS directional tweeters
Lighting:	LED interior courtesy lamps; LED sill plate illumination lamps