

William Chergosky's Inspired Designs

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“TECHNOLOGY IS GOING TO REVOLUTIONIZE THE WAY THAT CUSTOMERS PERCEIVE AND INTERACT WITH THEIR CARS.”

“WE TRY TO REALLY LOOK FOR NEW INNOVATIVE WAYS TO ENVISION THE EXPERIENCE OF OWNING A TOYOTA IN THE FUTURE.”

TOYOTA

“Every designer has this thing when they’re kids sitting in math or English class, that instead of doing what you should be doing, you’re doodling,” says William Chergosky, Chief Interior Designer at Toyota’s CALTY Design Research. “It’s this thing we all have as artists – you can’t stop being creative.”

An 18-year veteran designer at Toyota who studied at Detroit’s College of Creative Studies before entering the field, Chergosky discovered a passion for cars in his youth, whether it was ogling a Supra on his paper route or obsessively sketching the FJ 40 in his neighbors’ garage, dreaming of Indiana Jones–style scenarios. “They always left the door unlocked,” he recalls, “so I would get in and picture myself in the sands of Africa or something, barreling along and being chased by somebody. The car had this amazing ability to pull excitement and imagination out of me.”

When Chergosky arrived at Toyota, he was in for a surprise. “Basically the day that I got here to CALTY, they said, ‘You’re going to work on the FJ Cruiser,’ although actually it didn’t have a name yet.” They had already decided roughly what the exterior theme was going to be, so they were just going to start refining the interiors. I remember going home and telling my wife, ‘You’re not going to believe what I’m working on.’ ”

Still marveling at his luck landing a job he loves, Chergosky is grateful for having a chance to work on the same kinds of vehicles that he had an emotional connection to as a kid. But he understands that his art is about more than self-expression. He has to design the mood and feeling of each vehicle’s “cockpit” for customers who are looking to have more than a purely functional relationship with their car.

“Everybody who designs dreams of working on a sports car,” he says, “because it’s taking the design to high art. It’s exciting. The fast lines, exciting shapes – they inspire passion in the customer, and they inspire passion in the designer.”

Now that the automotive industry has entered the digital age, the tools at Chergosky’s disposal have changed. Lately he’s turned his attention from iconic classics like the FL Cruiser to helping develop the look and feel of Toyota’s Concept-i connected vehicle, a visionary study for 2030 the CALTY team unveiled at last year’s CES.

“We all joke that we name our cars, right?” Chergosky says. “But in the not too distant future, imagine the car having a nickname for you. Or the car actually having some level of intelligence so it can provide feedback beyond the driving experience that literally will make your day better, make your drive better. That’s what’s on the horizon, and I see it as a remarkable, exciting, enlightening time to be doing this profession.”

To view full video, click [here](#).