



VANITY FAIR

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Adrian Van Anz, with his Sausal Orange Derringer Cycle, in Los Angeles; bottom, a British Racing Green Derringer Cycle.

One could argue that design was in **Adrian Van Anz's** future from the moment of his birth. Family lore has it that his father gave him his name because he liked the way the initials AVA, looked together. Whether that's fact or fiction matters not, as it wasn't long before Van Anz was living up to his father's aesthetic prophecy, albeit with motors rather than typography. "I loved anything shiny and moving," says Van Anz, and he was rewarded with his first dirt bike at the tender age of 5, and then, curiously, his first engine—from a broken-down Volkswagen, for him to repair—at age 10.

As a teenager, Van Anz turned his attention to computers, specifically focusing on how to make them faster by cooling the processing down. At 23, he started AVA Computers, a company that builds custom PC's with raw aluminum, leather, and chrome. Van Anz recalls, "The craziest design I made was either the vodka-cooled computer—vodka doesn't freeze, so we had bottles on the sides of the computer with UV light so you could see the vodka running through the computer—or the 24-karat-gold computer we made for a rich Saudi. That one had a car tachometer rewired into it so you could see the computer activity." With a vision this nutty, it's obvious why companies known for their inspired design would hire Van Anz when they wanted to make something unique, sparkly, and badass. He is re-

sponsible for a special-edition Sony PlayStation 3, a Hewlett-Packard-branded diamond-encrusted Sean John iPod, a Gwen Stefani camera for H-P, and even a custom color for Jay-Z called—what else?—Jay-Z Blue.

Despite all the time he has spent designing shiny gadgets, Van Anz still manages to race motorcycles, and in what is perhaps the perfect marriage between his metallicly inclined design sensibilities and his passion for speed, he has begun producing the Derringer Cycle. The Derringer, named for the pocket-size handgun, is a cross between a 1920s board-track racing motorcycle and a bicycle. It can be pedaled like a bike or ridden like a motorcycle—one that gets 150 m.p.g.—and requires no motorcycle license or insurance in most states.

Van Anz describes the Derringer as "the missing link between my Schwinn and my Ducati." And to look at this truly inspired mode of urban transportation, you would at first agree, but as with all things Van Anz designs, closer inspection reveals so much more. These babies feature Honda-built overhead-valve four-stroke engines, white tires (no carbon black used to make them), hand-riveted-leather Brooks seats, and a

mind-boggling choice of 250 colors (some so rich they take eight layers of paint to achieve). If you really want over-the-top, there is a matching helmet with your name pin-striped on it and a gas cap engraved with your monogram. Each bike takes a month to make, is built by hand, and will set you back \$3,500. Bang, bang—you're cool.

—LISA EISNER



PRIVATE LIVES

Adrian Van Anz