

Custom motorcycles are often far out creations that push the limits of design and belief. In fact, many of these custom machines can't be ridden – their ergonomics are terrible, it's impossible to turn them – what they are really meant for is ... posing.

By Keith W. Strandberg

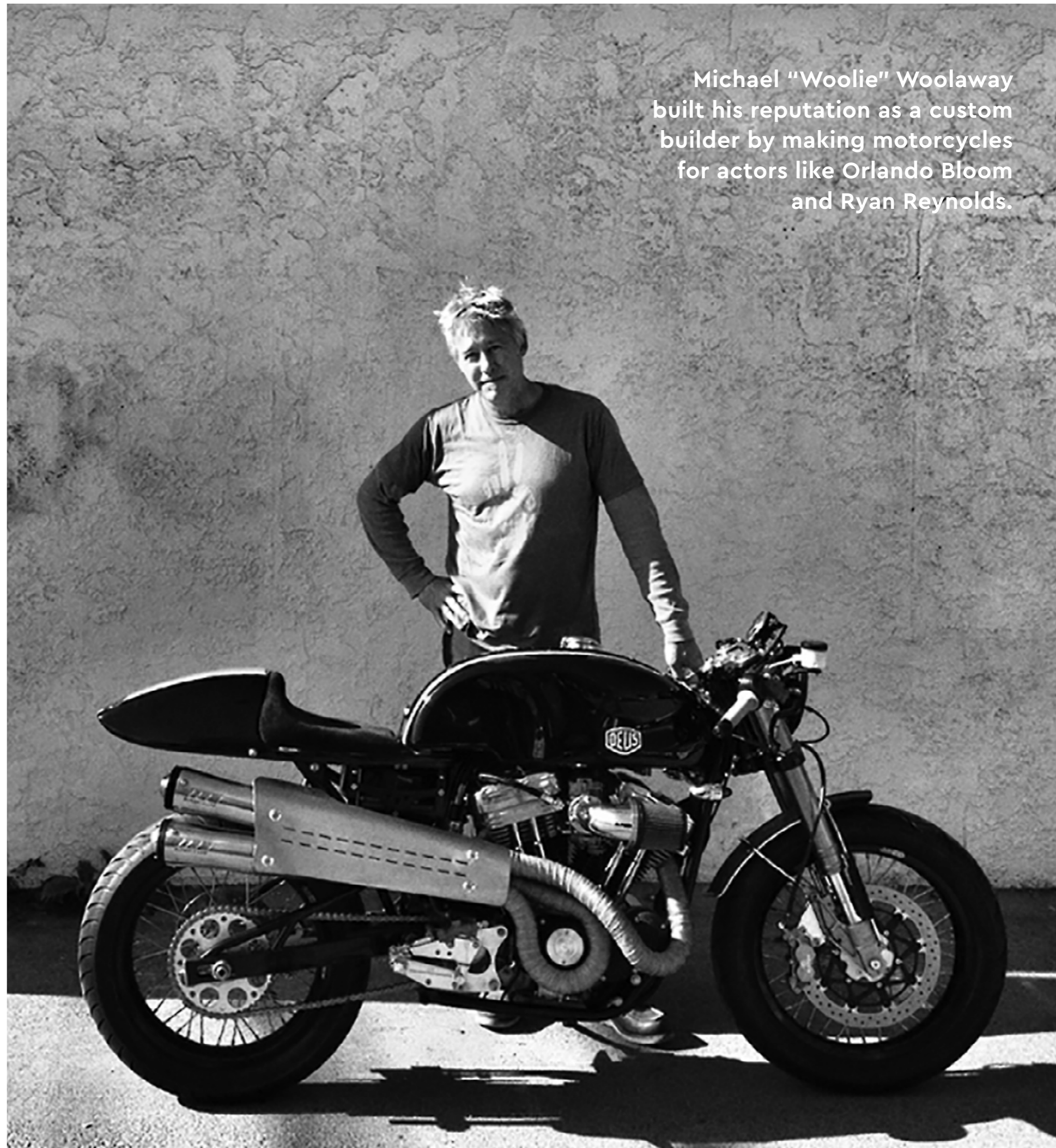
**T**he opposite is true for the bikes designed and fabricated by Michael "Woolie" Woolaway, motorcycle design director for Deus Ex Machina, an eclectic emporium of cool stuff. "I have been building motorcycles since I was a kid," Woolaway says with a smile while sitting in his Venice Beach workshop, attached to the Deus Ex Machina store. Woolaway comes from a racing background, so pure riding is his focus. "One of the great things about our bikes is that they are very functional."

ALL CUSTOM-MADE MOTORCYCLES BY DEUS EX MACHINA ARE A REFINEMENT AND A PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE IN EVIDENCE.

#### THE CUSTOM BIKE PROCESS

Woolaway only creates custom bikes, nothing is available in stock, and he is currently booked for more than 18 months, with the motorcycles ranging in price from \$30,000 to \$50,000 and above. It all starts with the customer – Woolaway meets with him, finds out what he loves (objects, designs, motorcycles), how he rides, how much power he needs, then he chooses an engine and designs the bike from there. "I love the old and the new, so I try to blend the two," Woolaway details. "Sometimes it starts in the front really vintage-looking and morphs by the back to something really new. I use the latest technology and design each bike to suit the customer perfectly."

Michael "Woolie" Woolaway built his reputation as a custom builder by making motorcycles for actors like Orlando Bloom and Ryan Reynolds.







**"The most unique thing is that I come from a racing background and I apply racing geometry, trueness and adjustability to each motorcycle I build."**

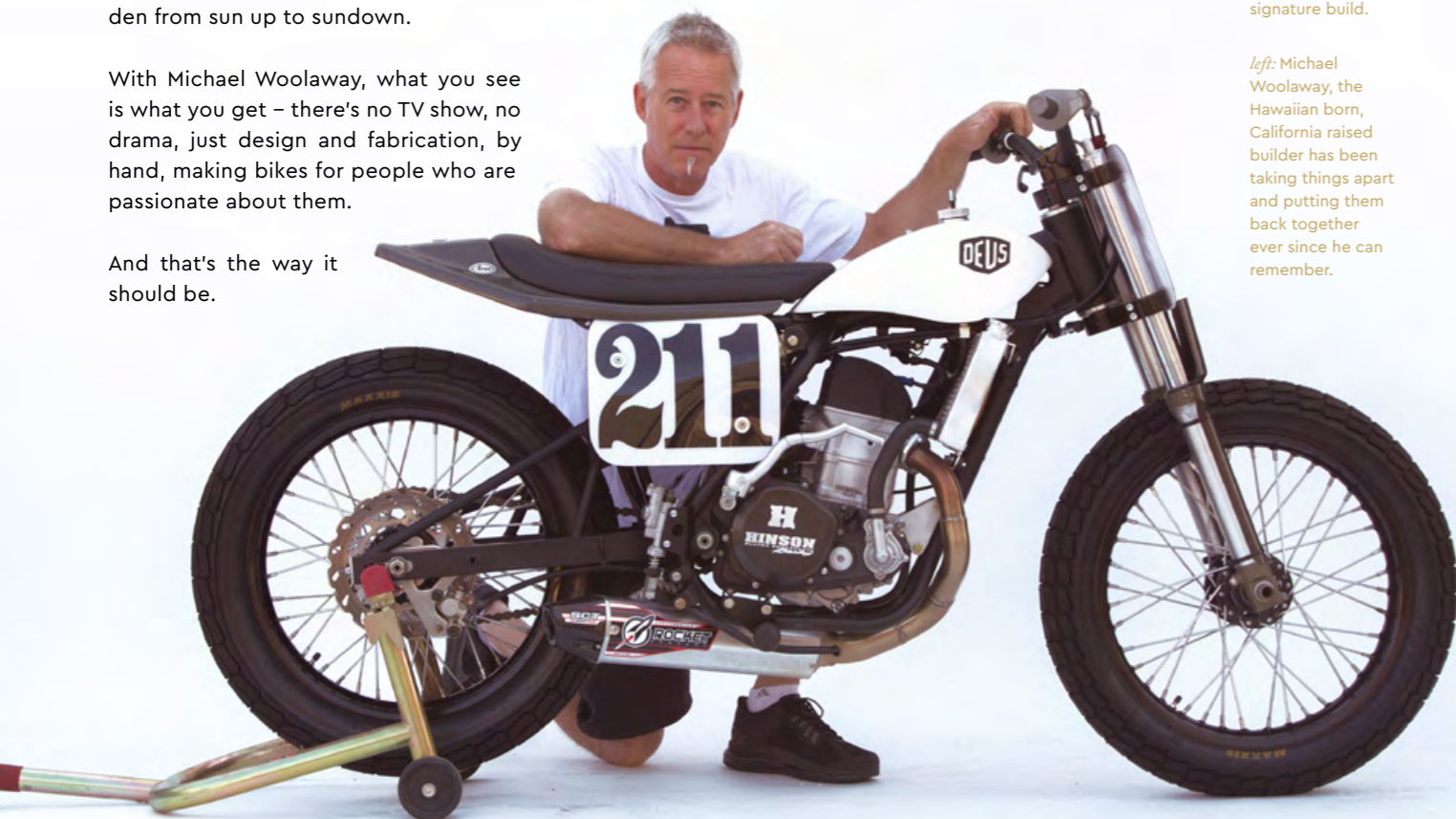
Michael Woolaway

#### THE RESULTING BIKES

The bikes Woolaway makes take him, on average, about 500 hours, which means he can do about six bikes a year. The resulting motorcycles have a rough and ready coolness that just begs to be ridden from sun up to sundown.

With Michael Woolaway, what you see is what you get – there's no TV show, no drama, just design and fabrication, by hand, making bikes for people who are passionate about them.

And that's the way it should be.



*above:* Transforming one of the winningest Baja racers into a road-worthy, super-single-styled café racer, Boodaak is Woolie's tenth signature build.

*left:* Michael Woolaway, the Hawaiian born, California raised builder has been taking things apart and putting them back together ever since he can remember.



Custom-Bikes sind hinsichtlich des Designs zumeist sehr auffällige Kreationen, oftmals zulasten der Fahrdynamik. Tatsächlich sind viele der individuellen Anfertigungen nicht mal fahrtauglich – ihre Ergonomie ist extrem schlecht und sie haben eine unmögliche Kurvenlage – diese Bikes wurden nur zu einem Zweck gemacht ... zum Posen. Genau

#### DIE MOTORRADMANUFAKTUR GILT ALS HOTSPOT DER COOLEN DINGE.

das Gegenteil trifft auf die Motorräder von Michael „Woolie“ Woolaway zu. Er ist US-Motorcycle-Design-Director von Deus Ex Machina. Die Motorradmanufaktur gilt als Hotspot der coolen Dinge. „Schon seit meiner Kindheit schraube ich an Motorrädern“, sagt Woolaway und lächelt, als wir ihn in seiner Werkstatt in der neuen Deus Ex Machina Filiale in Venice Beach/L. A. antreffen. Woolaway hat eine Rennfahrer-Vergangenheit, daher legt er Wert auf Performance und das perfekte Fahrgefühl. „Die Funktionalität ist einer der Gründe, die unsere Motorräder so besonders machen.“

# THE STEPS

OF A CUSTOM BIKE BUILD

- MEET WITH THE CUSTOMER
- BASIC DESIGN CREATED
- FEEDBACK FROM THE CUSTOMER
- CHOOSE MATERIALS, COLORS, FINISHINGS, DETAILS
- START THE BUILD, GET FEEDBACK ALONG THE WAY
- COMPLETE THE BUILD AND DELIVER THE MOTORCYCLE.

DEUS EX MACHINA AND WOOLAWAY HAVE CUSTOMERS IN THE US, INDONESIA, AUSTRALIA, CANADA, FRANCE, MEXICO CITY AND ALL AROUND THE WORLD.

[deuscustoms.com/bikes/builders/woolie/](http://deuscustoms.com/bikes/builders/woolie/)



*above:* Woolaway designs motorcycles that express the customer's personality and fits their style of riding.

*middle:* Hand built motorcycles to meet or even exceed the highest standards.

*right below:* Deus ("day-us") didn't set out only to sell custom parts and hand-built motorcycles, but to celebrate a culture of creativity.





*left:*  
In this workshop, finely tuned luxury bikes with solid handling for a thrilling road experience are being built.

*below:*  
A friendship with Orlando Bloom and his recommendation brought Woolaway to Deus Ex Machina.

#### WIE EIN CUSTOM-BIKE ENTSTEHT

Woolaway hat sich auf persönliche Anfertigungen spezialisiert – nichts ist auf Lager erhältlich. Die Motorräder haben einen Wert von \$ 30.000 bis \$ 50.000 und mehr und momentan ist der Designer für über 18 Monate ausgebucht.

Alles beginnt immer beim Kunden – Woolaway trifft sich mit ihm, findet heraus, was er liebt (Objekte, Designs, Motorräder), wie er fährt, wie viel Leistung er braucht, um dann einen Motor auszusuchen und das individuelle Design zu entwickeln. „Ich liebe das Alte wie auch das Neue, deshalb versuche ich häufig beides zu verbinden“, so Woolaway. „Manchmal beginnt es vorne mit einem Vintage-Look und entwickelt sich bis zum hinteren Ende zu etwas sehr Modernem. Dabei nutze ich immer die neuesten Technologien und Designs, um das Motorrad ideal für den Kunden anzupassen.“

#### DAS ERGEBNIS: AUF DEN LEIB GESCHNITTENE PERFEKTION

Durchschnittlich arbeitet Woolaway über 500 Stunden an einem Motorrad, deshalb schafft er nur etwa sechs Maschinen im Jahr. Die entstehenden Modelle zeichnen sich durch eine lässige Coolness aus, die nur so danach schreit, damit von Sonnenauf- bis Sonnenuntergang über die Straßen zu jagen. Michael Woolaway ist authentisch – es gibt keine TV-Show, kein Drama, nur Design, Qualität und echtes Handwerk. So entstehen perfekt zugeschnittene Custom-Bikes, gemacht für die Leute, deren Leidenschaft den Motorrädern gilt. So und nicht anders soll es sein. ■



**"I meet with the client and we talk about how he is going to use the bike, which tells me how much power he needs, then I pick a motor. I have him send me images of things he loves, like motorcycles, objects, designs, and I get a sense of his style and the time period he is in love with, and I can usually translate that into an era of motorcycle design to use as a base point."**

Michael Woolaway

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