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Australian artist DREZ creates one-off Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.3-16 Cosworth art car

By taking his signature geometric art from walls and laneways to Bruno Sacco's iconic Baby Benz, DREZ has created a brilliantly unique rolling artwork



James Ward

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Art by its very nature is an independent expression of light and colour, and in the case of this **1986 Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.3-16 Cosworth**, an expression of sound and motion too.

This is the *Mercedes-Drenz*, an art-car collaboration between Melbourne street artist [DREZ](#) and Creative Director (and the car's owner) Subha Naidu - [@nycars](#) on Instagram.



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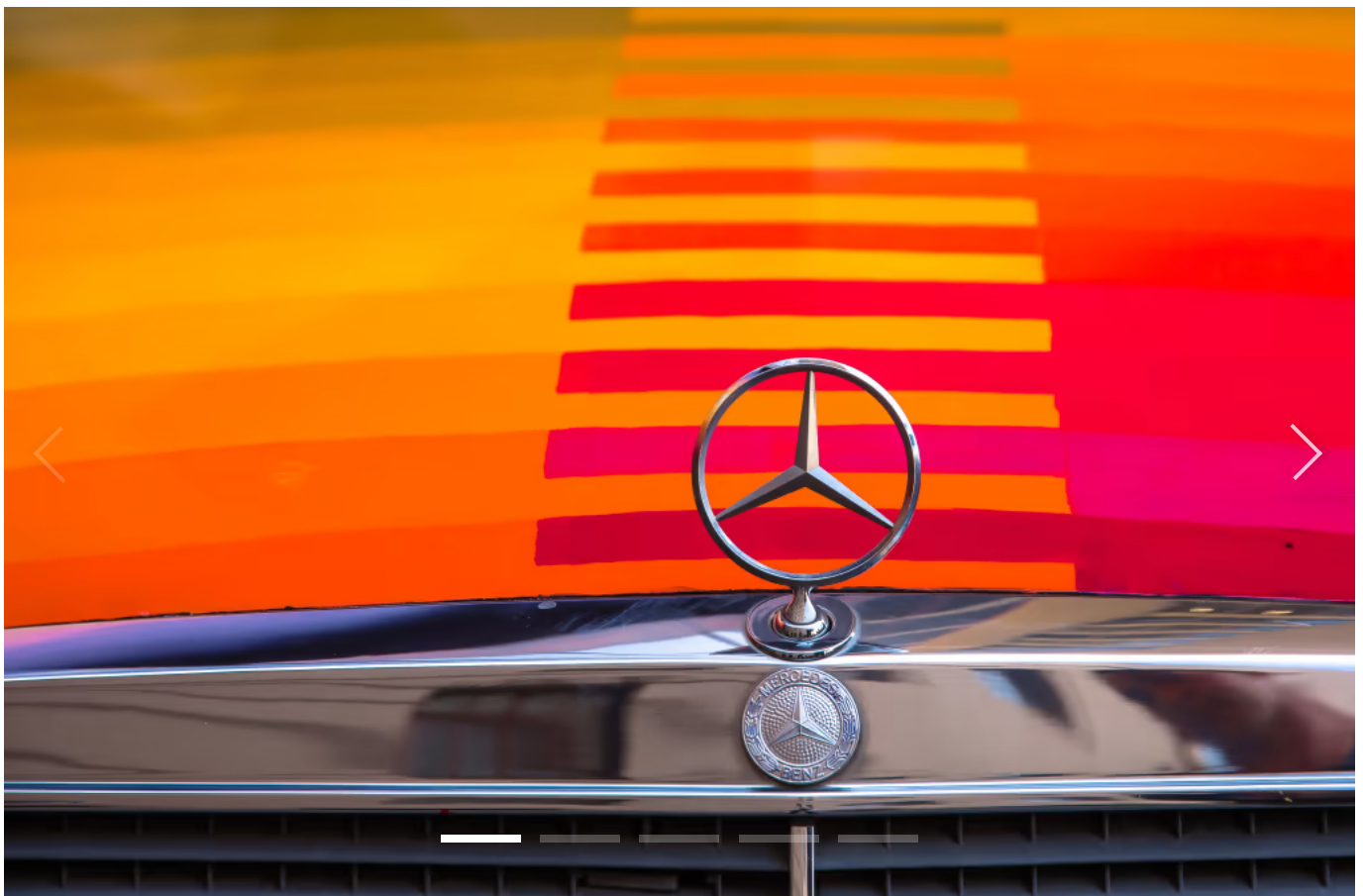
Is it worth it, let me Merc it. I put my thing down, flip it and reverse it. OK if you haven't seen it already, the Cosworth has been given the art car treatment by legendary Melbourne artist @d.r.e.z , with some help from tonnes of friends. Come see it @black.label.invitational this Sunday at Melbourne Showgrounds.

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#mercedes #benz #cosworth #w201 #mercedesbenz #190e #artcar #melbourne #soloparking #drivetastefully #carsofinstagram #carspotting #carsandcoffee #car #carlifestyle #carporn #carphotography #carlovers #cargram #classicar #drive #

and trim components, and features European-spec headlamp covers and a set of 18-inch Renner Aero R50 wheels.

Under the bonnet lies the Cosworth-designed 2.3-litre 16-valve engine, with **136kW** and **236Nm** output. The car has a full leather interior and is road-legal to drive on Victorian club-permit registration.



A one-of-a-kind 190 that rivals some of the best and most striking art-car projects from around the world, the '*Drenz* was a project born from the chance discovery and subsequent 'saving' of the iconic Cosworth-tuned Mercedes.

"It was found abandoned in the bush just outside of Melbourne, glass broken and a tree growing out of it, and was home to around 20 species of spider, mostly deadly", said Subha.

"The car was rescued around two years ago, and we set about getting it running. We sourced all the hard-to-find Cosworth parts and eventually got it going. However, after being abandoned for more than seven years, the exterior was too far gone."

As [something of a 190E paint expert myself](#), I know how much the duco and exterior components can deteriorate when you try to look after them, let alone leave a car untouched for years. Subha's Cosworth was originally the same Blauschwarz (Blue-Black) colour as my own 190E Sportline.



Bottom line, a standard respray wasn't going to cut it.

ADVERTISING



Subha partnered with [DREZ](#) to give the 190E a paint job like no other and to be clear, this is all paint, not a vinyl wrap.

As an artist, DREZ employs the use of geometry and colour to create multi-dimensional shapes on murals, buildings and other structures.



Third times the charm.
Previously a focal point of [#sunshinelane](#) this piece is now the new face of [@honeys](#)
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As always shouts to [@resenecolour](#) for making the colours as good as they are
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Inspired by the art cars produced by BMW from 1975, the idea was to use DREZ's style of graduated and repeated lines to create a sense of movement, and as Subha notes, "it also creates an aesthetic that's perfect for the '80s box-flare design of the Merc.

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The geometric colour bands on the 190E were hand-painted by DREZ using acrylic colour by brush, over a 20-day period.

Once the painting was completed, the car was finished with an acrylic clear coat.



For DREZ, "the most challenging part would have been keeping the lines straight across the curves of the car", as, despite the W201 Mercedes-Benz using a relatively angular and squared-off design, there are still plenty of surface changes to contend with.

The Cosworth features a body kit that adds fender flares, wider spats and multi-piece components along the side skirts and rear spoiler.

While it may have been easier to paint as a shell, DREZ and Subha kept the car intact during the project, and simply sanded and masked the original paint, adding a white undercoat before the bright acrylic was applied.

Beyond the bumpers and lower spoilers, which have been kept in their factory black, the only panel not touched are the black strips below the headlamps which house the wiper arms.



Now complete, and particularly striking when photographed next to one of DREZ's large-format urban murals in Melbourne's Spring St, what next?

"If there was any car that I could get my hands on to paint it would have to be a 70s Lancia Stratos HF Zero, those vehicles are incredibly futuristic for their time", says DREZ. To see the 'Mercedes-Drenz' in the metal, the car will make its official debut at the **Black Label Invitational car show in Melbourne on Sunday, February 28.**