

# Out of Gas

**FLAGLER COLLEGE GRAD AND FILMMAKER JEREMY DEAN WAS** last in these pages for his work excavating St. Augustine's brutal Civil Rights history in the documentary "Dare Not Walk Alone." Today, he's excavating a different kind of history, one that offers irresistible commentary on the future. Dean's "Back to the Futurama" project is a series of 25 custom Hummers, each uniquely designed and converted into horse-drawn carriages. Modeled after the little-known Hoover Carts of the Great Depression — which families too poor to buy gasoline made by hitching horses to the front axle of their otherwise useless automobiles — Dean's Horsesdrawn Hummer was officially unveiled this week as part of the Pulse art fair in New York. The first model is the CEO Stagecoach; variations on the design include The Lobbyist, The Soccer Mom and Sweet 16.

Building the piece was a risky proposition. Dean and his wife combined their life savings with the contributions of "a few brave friends" to buy an H2 — and then destroy it. A video of the deconstruction (available at [flogfolioweekly.com](http://flogfolioweekly.com)) shows the group removing the engine, then cutting off the roof and grille, and flipping them in order to fashion an elevated coachman's seat.

The project is a bit of a stunt, of course, but so's the Hummer, a vehicle that's become visual shorthand for American pomposity, foolishness and excess.

The result is still flashy — the chrome rims and navigation system remain intact — but it's "the greenest Hummer on the planet," according to Dean.

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overnight on the streets of Seattle, so gas-guzzling that an average driver spends \$5,000 just filling the beast, so galling that it's prompted a sea of hater websites (including FUH2.com, which pretty much says it all), the Hummer has almost become a parody of itself. ("I am now completely used to people giving me the finger for no good reason," one owner writes in apparent sincerity on the "Don't Hate Me Because I Drive a Hummer" website.)

Dean's project is well-timed; GM shut down production of the H2, and last week announced it has been unable to find a buyer for the Hummer brand. It seems very possible that the brash, militaristic behemoth is about to become extinct, remembered only as an inexplicable blip in automotive history.

But Dean's commentary is broader than the vehicle he lampoons. The crashing economy, warming planet and apparent political inability to change either makes the Hoover Cart seem less a historic anomaly and more like adaptive thinking for the coming apocalypse.

Or maybe it's just really clever art. Let's hope so. □

*To see more of Jeremy Dean's project, check out [backtothefuturama.com](http://backtothefuturama.com).*

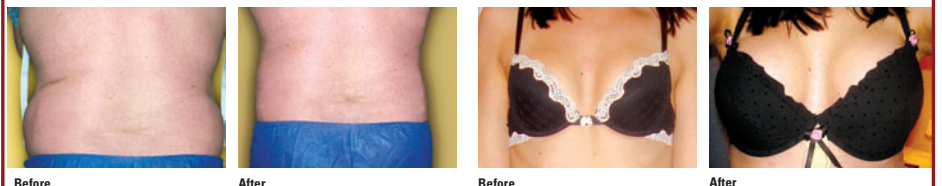


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