

How to make classic cars electric - and why you should

How to make historic and celebrated cars future-proof. Plus, the world's most exclusive car dealership

By Jeremy Taylor
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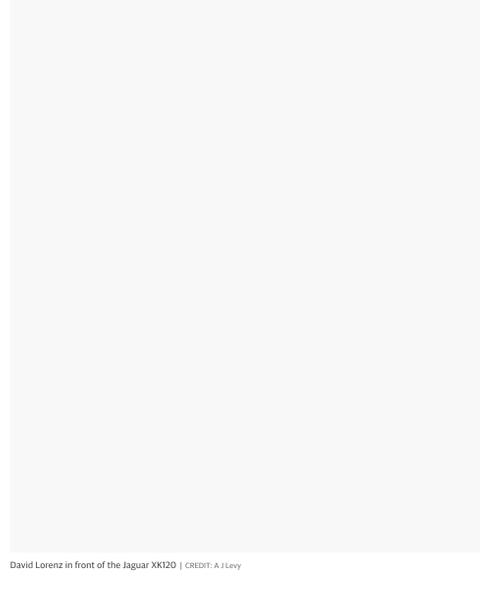


Inside the Lunaz workshop | CREDIT: A J Levy

The only conundrum facing owners of a classic car created by Lunaz Design is what to do with the spare engine. The fledgling firm electrifies famous British vehicles of yesteryear, ingeniously swapping pistons for battery packs.

"We have one owner who has crafted a dining table around his engine - it's quite a talking point when guests sit down to dinner," explains founder, David Lorenz, as we walk around his Silverstone workshop.

Traditionalists might want to look away now. The very thought of removing a 3.4-litre, six-cylinder engine from a perfectly formed Jaguar XK120 dating back to 1953 may give them the vapours.



David Lorenz in front of the Jaguar XK120 | CREDIT: A J Levy

Indeed, the engine would usually be a talking point of a car like this. It's a gem of a motor, hidden away below a long, low hand-built bonnet, itself held in place by a weathered leather strap.

Yet there is nothing traditional about a Lunaz Jaguar, apart from British craftsmanship. Underneath bodywork that could have been inspired by Gina Lollobrigida, is a 80kWh battery and twin-motor unit producing 375bhp.



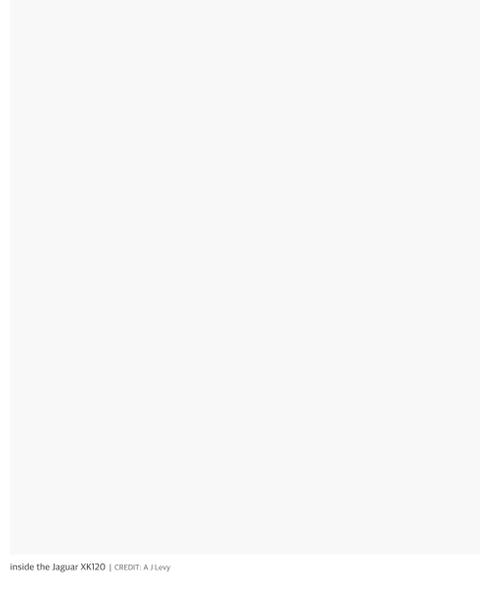
Inside the Lunaz workshop | CREDIT: A J Levy

Lorenz, 34, a former London nightclub owner, had his electric-car epiphany watching Prince Harry and Meghan Markle drive away from their wedding reception in an electric Jaguar E-Type in 2018.

He quickly teamed up with ex-Renault F1 technical director, John Hilton, with a plan to make some of the world's most celebrated cars future-proof.

"I don't know what will happen to classic cars in the future - nobody really knows where or how we will be able to drive them as legislation changes and autonomous vehicles take over," says Lorenz. The Law Commission is currently considering regulations for self-drive cars in the UK.

The Lunaz Jaguar XK120 is already undergoing tests and has a year-long waiting list. With a range of 250 miles Lorenz regularly commutes to and from his home in central London. Apart from Hilton and him, I'm the first person to drive it.

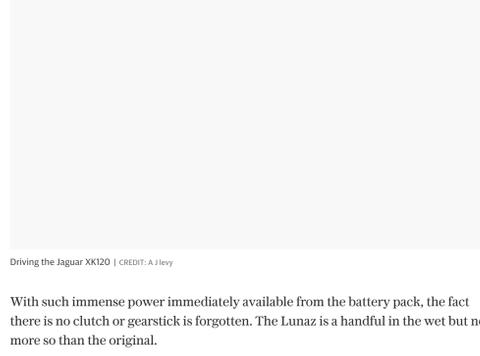


Inside the Jaguar XK120 | CREDIT: A J Levy

The interior is a subtle blend of old and new, with original Smiths dials above a discreet satnav screen and Bluetooth telephony. It smells like old school Jag but now the driver can listen to Apple CarPlay.

Silverstone is mid-deluge as I squeeze the XK out of the car park. Prices start at £350,000 for a Lunaz conversion and the only feature not yet installed for my test drive is traction control. The potential for an embarrassing wheelspin is immense.

The soundtrack of an exhaust pipe is missing but silence can be compelling. The wind whistling across Sir Williams Lyons' iconic bodywork as we barrel across the Northamptonshire countryside is strangely satisfying.



Driving the Jaguar XK120 | CREDIT: A J Levy

With such immense power immediately available from the battery pack, the fact there is no clutch or gearstick is forgotten. The Lunaz is a handful in the wet but no more so than the original.

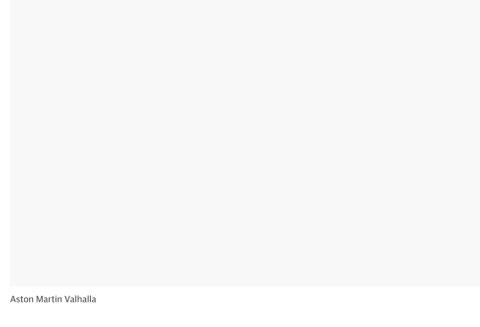
Purists will hate it, of course, but for others, charging headlong back to the future will be an appealing and unique prospect as mainstream manufacturers can only offer conventional modern cars without genuine retro appeal.

Visit [Lunaz.design](#)

Is this the world's most exclusive car dealer?

James Banks sells some of the rarest cars in the world. The former boss at McLaren Special Operations can even reserve a slot for hypercars yet to be built, such as the forthcoming Aston Martin Valhalla and the new Ferrari Monza SP2.

Surrey-based La Source doesn't operate a showroom but brings customer and buyer together online, brokering deals on collectible sports cars with an average sale price of £3 million.



Aston Martin Valhalla

"When very rare cars become available there can be a global outbreak of Chinese whispers among collectors, which can then have an adverse effect on value and provenance," explained Banks.

"La Source acts as a showcase for these cars among bona fide buyers - they are usually known to me but may need to be vetted before they gain access to the rarest vehicles."

Banks says he has yet to sell a car to a UK buyer, as his customer base is firmly in the US and Middle East. The elusive-build slots he offers are for cars already secured by customers of the car manufacturers themselves who now no longer want to buy.

And the car on Banks' own wishlist? A rare Ferrari 250 GTO dating back to the early 1960s and worth around £40 million - if you can find one for sale.

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