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PONTIAC

ENTHUSIAST

RESTORATION SPECIAL

BEFORE

PONTIAC HISTORY
'69 TRANS AM

WEST COAST RACING

• PHOENIX • LOS ANGELES

HOLLYWOOD INSIDER

• THE CARS OF "THE LAST RIDE"

Stuck On Trans Ams

A few 'graphic' questions for Brian Kotarski

YOU MAY NOT KNOW HIS NAME, BUT IF YOU'VE RESTORED A PONTIAC — PARTICULARLY A TRANS AM — AND NEEDED TO REPLACE THE FACTORY GRAPHICS, CHANCES ARE YOU'VE CALLED BRIAN KOTARSKI'S PHOENIX GRAPHIX.

Kotarski lives in the Phoenix area with his wife, Anna, son, Kanton, and a yellow lab named Scully. Son, Anna, Kanton, wife of Phoenix Graphic's Gungade Boy, when 15-year-old Kanton often can be found with his dad under the hood of one of Brian's new Trans Ams or 1978 Black Special Edition — and a 1980 Anniversary Model.

We recently talked with Kotarski about his cars, business, and the old hobby.

Phoenix Enthusiast: How did you get started?

Brian Kotarski: In 1986, I was looking for graphics for my '78 Black Special Edition. They were discontinued and the only option was a "basic master" set for \$1,200. Just out of college — Arizona State — I couldn't afford it, so the quest began to make them, and make them affordable to others who wanted them.

I took two years of working as a part-time graphic designer and had some money to supplement my income while Phoenix Graphic got off the ground.

The '81 graphic we created and sold was the 1978 Gold Eagle hood kit, and to this day it remains one of the most difficult products to produce because of its six-color screen-print process.

PE: So, you've decided to do a Trans Am, right?

BK: Yes. I knew I had to have a Trans Am fully decided on with a hood kit since 1978 — the year I learned to drive. When the Black Special Edition was created with that magnificent black paint and gold appointments, I knew I had to have that car! Here it is: here's some to-offer one in 1980 (page 22).

PE: Is it difficult reproducing the graphics, exactly?

BK: None of the graphics is computer-aided into the drawings; that's our staff painstakingly measuring against original artwork. But yes, it can be difficult.

Colors have always been the hardest part of reproducing details. We use color samples by hand, screen them on 24" or 48" and cut and separate them in total sunlight in the hot Arizona sun. Several employees must monitor on whether the color is correct — it's not just one person's job.

PE: When do you do before computers?

BK: Believe it or not, the staff uses a camera and projection to reproduce the artwork. Our 1978 Anniversary Trans Am hood kit was done the way, and it took more than two years to complete!

PE: Besides car show and magazines, where else have we seen your graphics?

BK: Our names are in the air at some of the best agencies and we've supplied graphics to Fiat '78 show, Fiat Dur-Dur, Joe Bar (Joe School), and others.

We also supplied the 1978 Special Edition hood and stripes for the car in the *MacArthur Dew* commercial — the one where the Trans Am was the obvious focal point, though the other cars, "I forget my Dew..." ■

"My first Pontiac was a 1978 Gold Special Edition Trans Am. I also have owned another Gold Special Edition and an '81 that I race. Oh, the black '78 and the '89 Anniversary model I own are my favorites." —Brian Kotarski

