

## ALONE IN A CROWD

Authentic replicas turn back time



Mike Hanlon and his new old bike

by Eric Copper

EL PASO, TEXAS—Amidst the fat tires, big-inch engines and over-the-top displays at last year's V-Twin Expo was a subtle hidden jewel: The Timeless Motor Company, a division of Mean Street Products. Mean Street, operated by brothers Mike and Tim Hanlon, has a reputation for building a wide variety of high quality custom front forks and suspension products. Good stuff to be sure, but what really caught my eye were two glistening motorcycles that looked as if they should be behind glass in a museum, not on a trade show floor.

I circled the display a few times waiting to talk to Mike and in the process determined these bikes really were brand new, not 1910 origi-

nals! The bikes were not only new, but were built with great attention to detail, with every effort being made to remain faithful to the design and building process as well as the finished product. The materials used and the process to create them are as original as is humanly possible.

Mike didn't just wake up one day and say to himself, "I'd really like to create a brand new, old bike." It happened a little at a time over several years. As a master machinist and mold maker he began by creating a few reproduction parts for other people's restoration projects. But one thing led to another and before he could stop himself he had the tooling and castings for the entire bike!

These Timeless machines aren't 20th century technology and craftsmanship.

They just are; they actually run and you can ride them. A 440cc, four-stroke, single-cylinder engine was created and special molds were made to recreate the white, button-tread tires too. In all, over 150 molds plus all the tooling for these motorcycles was made by Mike and his team. But don't run off to your DMV for tags just yet. The bikes are sold as "collectibles" and are not titled or intended for street use. The attention

to period details that makes them so desirable is what keeps them from being "attractable." The antiquated technology of brakes, emissions and lack of electronics are obstacles when it comes to modern liability and licensing. Owners will have to be satisfied knowing they own a piece of art they can ride on private property that was crafted as faithfully as possible to early



The board tracker features dropped bars

the "Classic" version is made up of nearly 50 pieces!



A 440cc, four-stroke single provides power

The early 20th century craftsmanship means generous helpings of polished brass and nickel-finished parts, along with bronze castings. Detail and authenticity in components such as the carburetor and the Springer forks are astounding and represent the quality throughout the entire "Timeless" machine. The sprung seat of

Buyers have two Timeless models to choose from, an original, classic street version and a board track version. Both share the essentials and quality, with the board tracker featuring dropped bars, a racy seat, no fenders and a straight pipe. The street version features a period-correct exhaust and muffler, front and rear fenders, and a sprung leather saddle. An assembled board tracker

can be yours for \$9,995 with the Classic Street version a few dollars more (\$10,995). Both feature standard colors of black or gray with other color options available. Unassembled kits are available for about \$8,500.

The bikes are started by pedaling, with final drive provided by a 5/16" thick by 1/8" wide leather belt 99" long. The "clutch" is a mated belt tension arm. All you need to supply is a wool sweater and your own leather helmet, just like in the good ol' days.

If you just have to have a brand new, 100-year-old, American-made moped, built to exacting specification by an obsessive-compulsive master machinist—and who doesn't?—get in touch with Timeless Motor Company. Harry, production is limited and time and tide wait for no man. Or do they? ([www.timelesstor.com](http://www.timelesstor.com))

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Based on information from the manufacturer's Tech Sheet (October, 2002).

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