

# lowitt

*handcrafted motorcycles*

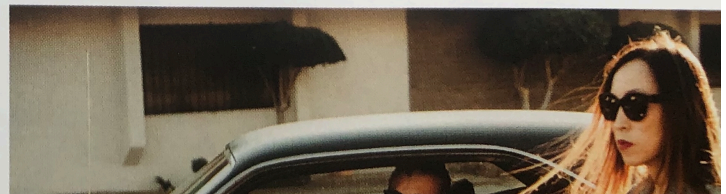
# 25

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DEBOLEX @ LONDON / UK



# Blatant Plug

Remember this day - it's the one when you first saw a customised electric bike in *Built*. There are bound to be more, and if this one is anything to go by there's hope for us all

Photography by Tom Horna from autohouselondon





**T**here has been much talk of a customised electric bikes, but finally someone has put their money where their mouth is.

This machine, built by deBolex, is based on an Energica Eva, a high-end electric bike costing £24,000. It was created to celebrate the launch of *Oil In The Blood*, the film on custom motorcycle culture (see Built #24).

Why? Well, director Gareth Maxwell Roberts concludes the film by looking to the future of motorcycling, exploring the possibilities of alternative power-sources. Consequently, he wanted to build a bike that addressed some of the questions while also promoting his movie.

He discussed the idea with friend Calum Pryce-Tidd at deBolex Engineering, who jumped at the challenge. And as the film also examines collaborations between brands and builders, Gareth went looking for an appropriate brand to help with the funding. Auke Fossel of watchmaker TW Steel immediately liked the idea of an electric custom. "It was obvious we all spoke the same language and had the same objective in mind: create something special," says Auke.

Gareth and Calum researched electric motorcycles and one manufacturer stood out – Energica. This is an Italian manufacturer that has been building and racing electric motorcycles for over a decade – they provide the machines for the MotoE class this season.

Energica has a range of three models homologated for road use: the Ego sportbike, the Eva streetfighter, and the Essee9 retro naked.

Eva is an out-and-out muscle bike with 125 lb.ft of torque from zero revs – that's more than a GSX-R1000 has at its peak – and there's no clutch or gears. Energica claim a range of 120 miles and 95bhp. Calum and Gareth visited the Energica factory in Modena, were briefed by Giampiero Testoni, Energica's chief technology officer, and the bike was delivered a week later.

"The chance to put our design into an electric bike made this project really exciting for us," says Calum, "and the Energica Eva as the base motorcycle made it even better."

The only issue was time. Gareth: "Calum took delivery of the bike in early December, and we only had one stipulation, the bike needed to be finished by February 3 for the launch screening of *'Oil In The Blood'*. I figured I'd be working 24/7 to finish the film, so why couldn't he share the pain to finish the bike?"

Calum: "The deadline was tight and we knew from day one that every second counted if we were to complete it in time. As with any of our builds we don't really know what we are up against until the bike is on the ramp and the panels have been stripped off to leave a bare rolling





BELOW  
Calum from deBolex and his electric  
creation. Note the absence of a  
clutch lever - like most electric  
bikes, this is a twist and go





chassis. We were pleasantly surprised with the Eva as we only had to relocate the ABS and water pump, and make some adjustments to the rear subframe before we had a clean rolling chassis ready for our new body work."

Calum and his right-hand man Des Francis spent the next few days sketching and prototyping different body lines before settling on a direction for the build.

"As with all our 1/1 builds, aluminium is the material we choose to work with when creating our panels. We ordered in some fresh sheets and set to work."

The design focuses on lines that flow from front to back with slimming being one of the prime objectives. As with any electric motorcycle the battery tends to dominate the area below the frame. Calum and Des worked the design to cover up the squareness of the battery but expose the more interesting electric motor.

Sitting snugly behind the new tank skin is the power controller – this is water-cooled and incorporates an electric water pump and water cooler. The cooler was a starting point for the design, working lines away from this that led into the tank knee holes and the tail. The rear subframe houses the onboard charging unit – this presented a new challenge for Calum as most of his designs feature fairly slim and minimalist tail units, but this threw him down a new design path.

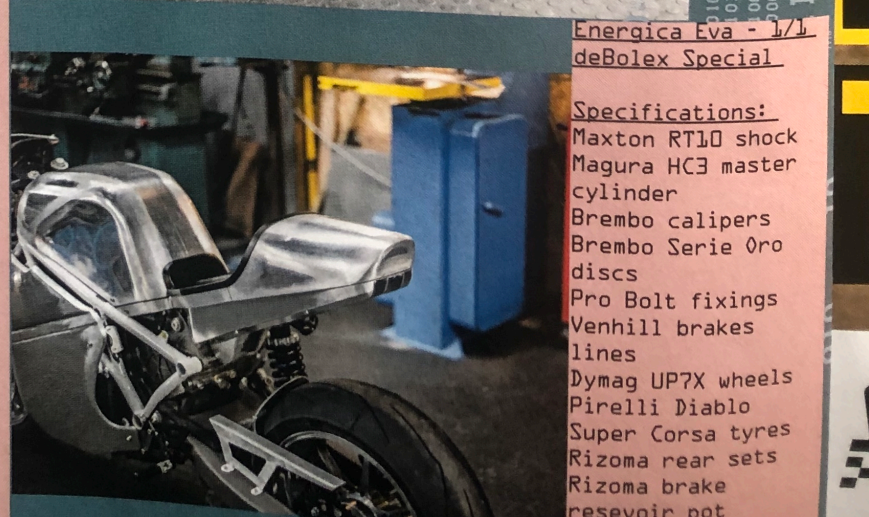
"One of the most testing areas of the build was the lower fairing," says Calum. "This incorporated lots of detail around the water-cooler and also the vents into the battery housing which is air cooled via a central vein that runs through the battery."

With only a week till the launch Calum and Des completed fabrication and started preparing for paint. "We spent hours discussing the final colour which landed on this mix of greys, silver and white."

The seat pan incorporates deBolex's quick release mechanism and is trimmed in house by Des and finished in Alcantara. The bike was finally finished at 6am on the morning of the launch and the project demonstrates how collaborations between builders and brands can work to create interesting and ground-breaking machines.

Gareth: "The entire process knitted together perfectly. All our interests were aligned, which was to give Calum the support and resources to create a great custom bike for the future. It captures the spirit of 'Oil In The Blood', the possibilities of an electric power-train, the potential of an Energica motorcycle, and the ethos of TW Steel."

[debolexengineering.com](http://debolexengineering.com)



**Energica Eva - 1/1  
deBolex Special**

- Specifications:**
- Maxton RT10 shock
  - Magura HC3 master cylinder
  - Brembo calipers
  - Brembo Serie Oro discs
  - Pro Bolt fixings
  - Venhill brakes lines
  - Dymag UP7X wheels
  - Pirelli Diablo
  - Super Corsa tyres
  - Rizoma rear sets
  - Rizoma brake reservoir pot