

ing up here. As a matter of fact, from '69 and up they offered the lower molding and the upper molding, and it got very busy. But they were trying to do away with the delicate look established in 1967. I mean, look at that [the '67]. It's just gorgeous! There are very few cars that are as well tailored and as carefully refined in their styling as that ['67] truck is. Look at the way that bumper fits. Now go look at a '67 Ford, and they're much more brutal and muscular.



JA: And those [Ford] trucks don't have the loyal following that the GM trucks do.

HB: GM has never been able to do a bold, masculine-looking truck, and as far as I'm concerned that's a marketing problem. But I think GM trucks look better than anybody else's. I mean, they are beautifully thought out. They are just absolutely magnificent. The '67 was a gorgeous truck.

JA: It seems that the concept drawings are all done as Fleetsides, never stepsides.

HB: No, as a matter of fact, you see this little yellow drawing! The whole purpose of that was to do a stepside, and I threw all this in here—

the girl, the bicycle, the dragster, and the truck pulling it—all because of what they wanted to do on the stepsides of the all-new '67 Chevy and GMCs. They wanted to use the previous fender, which actually dates back to 1955. I've always been a real car nut, and I couldn't tolerate the idea of us doing that. So if anybody is responsible for that new stepside fender, it was probably something that I did in the studio. I really got to the point where I thought trucks ought to have more bold fenders than they did, so the Fleetside that was offered in 1967 as part of the all-new lineup was really a struggle.

My studio chief, Don Lasky, who was a really talented man, agreed that we would be ever so much better off if we could have a proprietary stepside fender, but management just didn't want to go with it. So we clayed it and did a complete mock-up, and of course everybody loved it because it looked so good.

JA: What about the '67-only small rear window?

HB: The small rear window on the back of the cab in 1967 was something I pushed for. What they wanted to do was stamp out the large rear window outline in the sheetmetal, and then if you got the small rear window, there would be this kind of large relief line. I thought, "Gee, I like that little rear window. It has kind of a nice coupe look to it. Do we really need this line around here?" Engineering said, "Yes, we

want it there because when they stamp the cab, they can get that line in there and it's only one more strike to cut the large rear window opening. But if we don't have that line in there, it's a two-strike process: first to establish the offset and then a second strike to punch it through." But I did all these renderings showing the back of the cab with this nice, smooth, what I call a coupe quality. The small rear window actually had lower corners that weren't rounded. Management and engineering didn't like that because it's more expensive to make a rubber gasket with corners. But I got really hysterical about that so I got the window to have a radius at the top and sharp corners at the bottom. Every now and then, I see a '67 truck and it's so nice to see that it has those really crisp elegant corners in the window bottom.

JA: That's a relief, I wasn't sure if you even cared about these old trucks.

HB: I do care about them, because I love cars, and these trucks were my first design task. Look here. This is the first Blazer that was scrapped at the last minute.

JA: Was it part of the original '67 lineup?

HB: No, not at all. That was another very strange kind of sidebar. It became apparent toward the end of the development of the all-new '67 that there was a growing market in this new area and that there wasn't even a name for it. It was not an off-road vehicle and it wasn't a sport/utility. There were the International Harvester Scouts, and then suddenly Ford came out with their Bronco. We knew there was something happening here. So we got our design together and when the Ford Bronco came out GM management suddenly said, "Look [laughs], there's not nearly enough buyers out there to support International, Jeep, and now Ford. If Chevy comes out, nobody's going to buy it." So they



scrapped the whole thing. It was fully engineered, completely tooled, and it was gorgeous! It was small and tight-looking. Then all of a sudden the sales on Broncos, Scouts, and the Jeepster went up like gangbusters. Well, all they could do at that time was just suddenly rush some solution through. So they