

THE DINKY WORLD OF JOE 90 by Chris Jelley

FANTASY AND smash television hits—that seems to be the result of the inventive genius of Gerry Anderson and his back-up generation, Century 21.

Think of world famous T.V. puppet series "Thunderbirds" or the equally famous "Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons" and you are thinking of the work of Gerry Anderson. He has revolutionised puppetry with his detailed stories, his lavish sets and his futuristic outlook, but perhaps more important, his past successes have not drained him of ideas. On the contrary, he has now produced yet another equally clever, drama-packed show, "Joe 90," currently running on commercial television.

In a nutshell, "Joe 90" depicts the work of the World Intelligence Network—W.I.N. for short. Star of the show is top secret agent Joe McClaine, code-

named Joe 90 who, within the context of the show, is the adopted son of Mary and Ian McClaine, the latter a Professor of Electronics. Professor McClaine has developed a complex electronic brain capable of transferring the knowledge, personality and skills of any chosen individual to Joe, and it is by taking over somebody's "life" in this way that Joe is able to perform his tasks. Once he has absorbed the desired knowledge, Joe is able to tune into it, when necessary, by donning a pair of special glasses into which electrodes are built. Without the glasses, he is his normal self.

Anyone who has seen the T.V. Show will know that it bristles with fantastic machinery, equipment and vehicles, the most interesting example of the last being Joe's car itself.

According to Century 21, this was hand-built by Professor McClaine and designed for efficiency rather than appearance. Powered by fully-exposed twin turbine aero-engines, the car travels not only on land but also flies at some 300 m.p.h., and can take to the water where it had a speed of 70 knots. Land speed is 200 m.p.h.

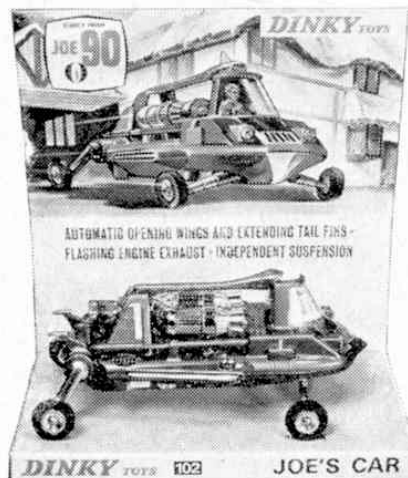
Century 21 might describe Joe's Car as being designed more for efficiency than appearance, but I personally think that its appearance is far more intriguing than any car model to be seen today. Rugged, functional and, above all, entirely different, it has the added attractions of extending wings and a pair of fold-up fins on telescopic trailing arms. For road and sea travel, the wings retract into the body.

The success of Gerry Anderson's previous series "Thunderbirds" and "Captain Scarlet" was matched by the success of Dinky Toys models of vehicles appearing in the two series. In the first case we had FAB 1 and Thunderbird 2 with Thunderbird 4 while, in the second case, we had the S.P.V., the S.P.C. and the M.S.V. Now with a new series on the screens, Dinky have not been slow in upholding their reputation. As I write this, in fact, just beginning to come of the Binns Rd. production lines is a fabulous model of—wait for it—Joe's Car! (As if you hadn't guessed!)

"Fabulous" is the word I used here and "fabulous" is the word I meant. I was quite honestly captivated by this brand new Dinky. It is, as far as I can tell, an exact reproduction of the T.V. original in general detail, with the same rugged appearance and twin turbine engines as well as the long undercarriage legs, the correct fluting, struts and "projections," and the enclosed cabin—complete with a miniature Joe at the controls! Features don't stop here, however. Admittedly, when the model is taken out of its box it is dressed for road travel, but, if a little button built into the left-hand side of the body is pressed, two wings shoot out of the sides and, at the same time, the fins on their extending rods shoot rearwards.

It's all very fascinating, but there's even more to come. The simulated turbines, with a bright plated finish, feed into a single exhaust chamber that, at first glance, appear to have a rather dull red aft-section. However, if a small switch in the underside of the model is moved, this aft section lights up and, after a few seconds, suddenly begins to flash, thus simulating a realistic engine exhaust. The light is powered by a Vidor VI6 or equivalent battery which fits into a cavity in the base. Because of the danger of deterioration, the battery is not sold with the model, but is readily obtainable from any electrical suppliers.

Marketed under Sales No. 102, Joe's Car is finished in a metallic blue-green colour with white leading edges to the wings and fins and plated undercarriage legs which, incidentally, are all sprung. Jewelled headlamps just give the final touch to a really great Dinky Toy.



Dinky Toy No. 102 Joe's Car, is based on one of the vehicles in the highly popular series "Joe 90". Joe's Car is sold complete with a special display platform, but, because of storage deterioration, the battery for the flashing engine exhaust is not included.