



# Ride of a Lifetime

Cars are a form of expression. They are associated with nightlife, fashion, luxury and are a direct image of their owners. Car enthusiasts with money to splurge are in a never-ending market for the posh amenities. Platinum Motorsports, the brainchild of Gevork and Hakop Keshishyan, has cultivated a global brand and lifestyle with its upscale car restylings. George and Jack, as they are known in the business world, have been featured in innumerable magazines from every corner of the world. When the two brothers sat down with *Yerevan Magazine* for an interview in its "Automobile Issue," they were genuinely honored.

Text Manouk Akopyan | Photo Tigran Tovmasyan

The last 12 years have driven by faster than any one of the exotic sports cars George and Jack Keshishyan have ever owned. Over those years, the Platinum Motorsports brand has evolved from a concept and design to a successful enterprise and a lifestyle simply branded as PML. In every car enthusiast's circle, the Los Angeles-based automobile restyling company is known to be the premiere one-stop car shop. With around-the-clock work, dedication and tenacity, they deliver to high-end clientele and their six-figure rides. They cater to a VIP customer base around the world – which reaches everywhere from Russia, France, Japan, Dubai and the United States – with unique and distinct car makeovers that incorporate the latest and greatest in cutting-edge designs. “Everyone comes to us asking for one of a kind looks that have never been done before, and they are usually willing to pay any price to get it,” says George. Before living a life of opulence in which they rub shoulders and do business on a daily basis with a revolving door of musicians, actors, dignitaries and royal families, the Keshishyan brothers were getting their hands dirty in their formative years. While attending high school in Los Angeles, they had no interest in the gang-infiltrated neighborhoods they grew up in, so they gravitated to their father Armen's car shop after school instead. They changed the oil on cars, tightened bumpers and mopped

the bathroom floors. After putting school on the backburner for good, they went full throttle into an idea that had been brewing between them: starting their own automobile boutique where they'd accessorize everything from wheels, body kits, interior and stereo systems. Armen, who had immigrated from Yerevan (Aresh) in 1979 and made a living as a mechanic, invested in the future career of his two teenage sons with the initial funds. That was then. Now, flash forward to present day where we are gathered at the Beverly Hills Hotel, the iconic century-old Hollywood getaway that embodies all things that are affluent, extravagant and luxurious. I meet George, Jack and Sam Telikyan – their marketing guru and lifelong friend – at The Polo Lounge. Sitting at the table behind us is actor Bruce Willis. It is just another ho-hum Wednesday afternoon for the triad, who go on to pop a bottle of champagne for lunch and seemingly order everything on the menu during a three-hour lunch. Every life and career has a turning point. The Keshishyan brothers caught their huge break when former athlete and music manager Fred Crawford entrusted a brand new SUV into their unproven hands. After a stereo, interior and wheel upgrade in what is now typical PML fashion, Crawford, who managed the R&B group Dru Hill, soon referred the members of the group and began spreading



NFL wide receiver Chad Ochocinco contacted George through Twitter and shipped his Rolls-Royce Phantom the next day. The brothers took over from there and refinished the exterior in a matte gray finish full of shiny black accents and threw on 26-inch wheels.

the word. Everyone looking to enhance their image – and their cars – began flocking to the brothers. Currently, approximately two-thirds of their clients are involved with music – primarily in hip hop. Every name in the industry – from Lil Wayne to P. Diddy, Drake and Kanye West – comes to them for a souped-up ride. Most of the time, the cars come into the Platinum headquarters on a flatbed truck straight from the dealership with less than 100 miles on the speedometer. Take football player Chad Ochocinco for example: he contacted George through Twitter and shipped his Rolls-Royce Phantom (left) the next day. The guys took over from there and refinished the exterior in a matte gray finish full of shiny black accents and threw on 26-inch wheels. That said, they dedicate just as much time and energy to a customer who has a budget of a couple hundred bucks the same way they do with a high-roller. “To be honest with you, we didn't know what we were capable of,” George reflects in hindsight. “Nothing was ever given to us. We worked very hard to be at the point where we are now. If you work hard, you can reach the top of any heights.” “We are not just a car shop anymore, we are a way of life,” adds Jack, “A car is a representation of you, and people come to us to enhance their image.” Their business motto is simple: going beast mode at their goals and enjoying life with whatever time left in between. George and Jack see eye to eye and share the same outlook on life. They hit the gym hard and party even harder. They are both taekwondo black belts. They argue about the simplest of things, like screaming at each other for hours on picking the right colors. ▶



**Clientele**

Ever since they started their business, Platinum Motorsports has catered to some of the biggest celebrities in the world. Some of their A-list clientele includes the following: **Musicians** – Lil Wayne, P. Diddy, Drake, Kanye West, T Pain, Akon, Jermaine Dupri, T.I., Nas, The Game, Ludacris, Rick Ross, Swizz Beats, Busta Rhymes, Cee Lo Green, will.i.am and many others. **Celebrities** - Kim Kardashian, Khloe Kardashian, Robert Kardashian, Tommy Hilfiger, Christian Audigier, Lindsay Lohan and many others. **Athletes** – Carmelo Anthony, Barry Bonds, Andrew Bynum, Metta World Peace, Reggie Bush, Shawne Merriman, Chad Ochocinco, Ryan Grant, OJ Mayo and many others.

**Music Videos**

Did you think that all of those cars in the music videos were the actual cars of the musicians? Think again. Platinum Motorsports are the car suppliers to many of the world's biggest musician's music video shoots. Here is just a small sample: Afrojack (Take Over Control), 50 Cent (Baby by Me), Chris Brown (Deuces), The Dream (Make Up Bag), The Game (Dope Boys), Keisha Cole (You Complete Me), T.I. (Whatever You Like)





“It wouldn’t be reality if we didn’t argue,” George says. “The amazing thing about us three is that we all see the big picture. We grew up with the same goals and states of mind. We all know what we want and what’s healthy for us. It’s not mine, it’s not yours, it’s not his. It’s all of ours.”

Included in the big picture is their loyal PML following – a circle of fans who recognize them as celebrities in the industry. Even if they don’t make money, they continually give back to their fans who come to appreciate their work at the year-round car shows they produce. “Every year, it gets tougher to out-do the previous car show,” says Jack. “We spend close to \$50 thousand putting it together, and just try to come close to breaking even. It’s about building our brand and bringing a grass roots movement to our fans across the world.”

At the Los Angeles Car Show in 2011, they had all the star power, including the new Lamborghini Aventador 700, which wasn’t even in the Lamborghini booth. A \$1.6 million Bugatti Veyron – the most expensive car they’ve ever owned – and several Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren lined their booth. In the Xbox 360 video game Forza Motorsports 4, the February 2012 American Le Mans Series Pack download was the Platinum Motorsport’s Bentley Continental GT Widebody. The GT received much fanfare during Forza’s “E3 2011 Car of Show.”

“As much as we love cars, we have no problem letting them go,” says Jack, noting they own eight cars for personal use. “We always have to have the latest and greatest because that’s what our customers look for. What interests us the most is picking out the cars to buy and re-designing them our own way.”

George and Jack are the chief designers of the custom work done at Platinum. But over the years, a third and improbable designer of sorts has worked with them on several projects and graced the covers of magazines with their cars. She is Kim Kardashian.



The two brothers are the chief designers of the custom work done to vehicles that come to Platinum. But over the years, a third and improbable designer of sorts has worked with them on several projects and graced the covers of magazines with their cars. She is Kim Kardashian. Their relationship and friendship go back to when Kardashian was known as a designer mainly in Hollywood circles. Based on their shared bond of being Armenian, they kicked it off instantly. In essence, Platinum Motorsports and Kim Kardashian came up together. George says that Kim would spread the good word and bring in clients, even designing some of the projects herself. For her 2011 \$6 million wedding to now ex-husband Kris Humphries, the PML triad attended as guests and supplied her with a Maybach 62S and Rolls Royce Phantom and chiefly took care of all the transportation services. As the conversation continues, George, 30, and Jack, 27, talk about the commitment involved in marriage. They are not ready for it yet, although their immediate family apparently is as they continually try to set-up the eligible bachelors with the perfect Armenian girl. They currently live with their parents but soon the brothers will be moving together into a three-story, seven-bedroom/nine-bathroom house with a six-car garage in Studio City, California. Their reason for putting marriage on the backburner is very simple: they don’t have the time to be a committed parent much like their father is.

→ George Keshishyan (top) and Jack Keshishyan (below)



“I would never want to have a child where I couldn’t be a part of its life,” Jacks says. “My father is like a brother and a friend to us, and we’ve learned so much from him about life, family and respect. We want to do it the same way as we were raised – as Armenians.” George adds, “I can’t wait to have kids – two boys. We were raised old school, so like Jack said, we want to make sure we do everything right. There is no slow day for us. We go 150 miles per hour each day.”

This last statement is validated by the speedometer-abusing numbers on how fast things move in their typical 20-hour days. The perils of owning a parking lot full of sports cars are running into a few speeding tickets along the way. As soon as the topic of traffic violations comes up, the brothers laugh as they relate that their driver’s licenses are suspended. That’s when having a limousine and chauffeur service comes in very handy. Currently, the Platinum Transportation Group is a worldwide sub-division of the parent company that offers rental cars, limousine and chauffeur services, picture cars for filming, executive bodyguards, a concierge service as well as a collision repair center. They say they are able to do everything any of their 80 employees can do, and although they have received offers to globally expand their brand to Armenia, Russia and the rest of Europe and the Middle East, they’ve declined based on the simple fact that they couldn’t be as hands-on with their baby as they’d like.

“Protecting our brand and only building upon the name and lifestyle we’ve created is very important to us,” Jack says. “We want to make sure it’s presented correctly to the public eye. The time for expansion will come.”

George continues by saying, “Being able to create relationships with customers on all aspects and giving them superior customer service is what we like to do, and that’s why PML has worked to the level it has thus far.”

Telikyan, who came on board five years ago as the marketing brains, is tirelessly working to license PML to other prestigious companies. When Telikyan came on board, Platinum quickly began its meteoric rise to where they stand today. He is responsible for the creation of the sub-divisions and is the consigliere who handles everything behind the scenes. Since middle school, they’ve created a brotherhood to the point where their father considers him a third son. From the looks, sounds, and feel of things, Platinum Motorsports will only be achieving new heights and continue building their brand name on a global level. “We’re never satisfied, yet we are not greedy. We’ve never taken bread from anyone else’s table. We’re aggressive with our daily efforts,” says George. “Considering how we started, we are very comfortable with where the Platinum name has reached today. We are treating 2012 as if we just started. We are very hungry to achieve more and capitalize on the brand we have created.” ■

## The Speed Round

### What cars do you drive right now?

**George:** A Porsche Panamera Turbo and a Mercedes G55. The Rolls-Royce Ghost is on its way too.

**Jack:** I have a 2013 Lamborghini Aventador LP700 coming in very soon.

### If you can only drive one car for the rest of your life, what would it be?

**George:** Maybach 62S

**Jack:** Lamborghini  
**Lamborghini, Ferrari or Porsche?**

**George:** Lamborghini

**Jack:** Lamborghini

### Audi, BMW or Mercedes?

**George:** BMW

**Jack:** BMW

### Nissan, Honda or Toyota?

**George:** Toyota

**Jack:** Toyota

### Manual or Automatic?

**George:** Automatic

**Jack:** Manual

### What is the first word that comes to your mind when you hear “Armenia”?

**George:** Tradition

**Jack:** Family