

Inked

CULTURE. STYLE. ART.

NY Ink's **MEGAN MASSACRE**

PLUS:

Jason Momoa
is Conan the
Barbarian

Adam Goldberg
Dazed and
Amused



AUGUST 2011
ON DISPLAY UNTIL AUGUST 25, 2011



STEVE MEADE



The subject of the e-mail was: "Uddi's system shreds a phone book!" The body of the e-mail was a YouTube link that played a video of a gassed guy in a flat-trimmed ball cap and sleeves taking you through the sound system he built in a Chevy Tahoe. His name is Steve Meade, and he shows off the truck's four 18-inch Signature Series "SMD" subwoolers from Ascendant Audio, four Rockman 350 amp alternators feeding the 10 XS Power batteries, and more Rockford Fosgate than Fleet Fly has in stock. The Tahoe is painted a custom color he calls "MeadeCherry." And when Meade holds the Yellow Pages up to the belly of the beast and cranks the system to 30,000 watts, it's completely "shredded" in seconds. Before the song is over, listings for plumbers, pizza joints, and injury lawyers flutter around the garage like ticker tape.

After the video is over, YouTube suggests more of Meade's videos. In one his bass snaps a CD (they still serve a purpose); in another it makes girls' hair stand up on end. But one of the best? "I was doing a demo at a show and this woman stuck her head in my car and the bass made her glass eye pop out," he says. That video has more than 4 million hits, and Meade's website, stevemeadedesigns.com, has an Alexa traffic ranking more than 100,000 spots ahead of West Coast Customs.

With all that hype, guess how many rappers' rides Meade has worked on: zero. He is a guy who works for a commercial roofing company, who just works on his and his friends' vehicles. Being both meticulous and a show-off, he started posting shot-by-shot photos of him building his systems on car stereo message boards and forums several years ago. Then, because he didn't want his stuff to get lost in threads, he created his own website and YouTube channel. YouTube drove so much traffic to his site that he had to work in advertising to offset the bandwidth costs. "I now make triple the amount on the site than I do at my job," he says. "And the kicker is that audio companies now send me stuff for free or at a deep discount to get views. It's absolutely amazing. I have a \$65,000 Lexus IS F sitting in my driveway, and it's from the internet."

Not only has his side project earned him stereo equipment, it has afforded him a higher echelon of ink. "I have a couple of names scribbled on me for \$400 apiece, but Bill Liberty of Liberty Tattoo in Pomona [CA] has done all my real art," he says. His tattoos feature strong figures, including a lion, a water buffalo, and a portrait of his mother and the Statue of Liberty that twists up the contours of his arm and holds her flame over his shoulder. And much like his work on speaker boxes, the tattoos are self-documented on YouTube and his website. —Rocky Russo

INKED PEOPLE

SYSTEM BUILDER, ENGINEER, CHIEF



"This woman stuck her head in my car and the bass made her glass eye pop out."
—Steve Mercede

PHOTO BY MIKE GRAFF

