



MISSY

ELLIOTT



PHOTOS GREG B. / WORDS TAMARA WARREN

MISSY "MISDEMEANOR" ELLIOTT HAD A HEADACHE AFTER AN AFTERNOON OF DRIVING HER FERRARI 360 MODENA. IT WAS NOT THE CAR THAT CAUSED IT, BUT THE JACKED UP NEW YORK TRAFFIC SHE ENCOUNTERED AMID A BEVY OF POTHOLES AND BLARING HORNS AS SHE MADE HER WAY FROM HER HOME IN NEW JERSEY TO HER LABEL'S MANHATTAN OFFICES.

"I left here with the worst headache," she said. "The car sits low to the ground. You're trying not to hit the bumps. When I go to parking places, I always park my own car, even with the valet people at my building."

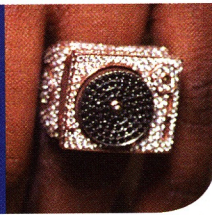
Elliott takes care of her car collection seriously. Her current fleet includes some of the most distinguished brands in the automotive world—an Aston Martin V12 Vanquish S, a Bentley GT Coupe, a Lamborghini Gallardo, a Rolls Royce Phantom, a Hummer H2, a Cadillac Escalade and the Modena. And she is not stopping there. "It's like tattoos," she said with enthusiasm. "You get one and then you get another one."

Elliott's fixation with cars is no secret. Like her rich catalog of hits, astute sense of style and growing list of productions, she is constantly besting herself. With her sixth album, *The Cookbook*, fresh out the oven, she is prepping to dish it out again this summer. Several songs dabble in car talk like, "Lose Control" with Ciara and Fat Man Scoop and "Mommy."

Her cars make for a fantastic sideshow, but they are also like a studio on wheels for Elliott's super-producer ear. "With the cars that I get, I always want to have a sound system so that I'm hearing what I'm hearing in the studio," she explained. She has a range of systems to hit all ends of the sonic spectrum, including JL Audio tweeters, JL Audio W6v2 Subwoofers and



Custom diamond-studded turntable ring from Jacob the Jeweler, designed by Missy



In many ways, her fascination with cars is reflective of the caliber of artists with which she surrounds herself in the studio. Elliott is a formidable producer currently composing beats for Tweet, Whitney Houston, Ciara and her very own girl group. "I'm always on knobs, whether its cars or studio," she said. "It's the first place I like to play my music."

At this point, Elliott is a pro when it comes to spitting lyrical tie-ins spliced between her cacophonous flow. "Spelling Bee" is a prime example.

I got a truck sittin' on Sprewells/My flow tight as h-e-l-l.

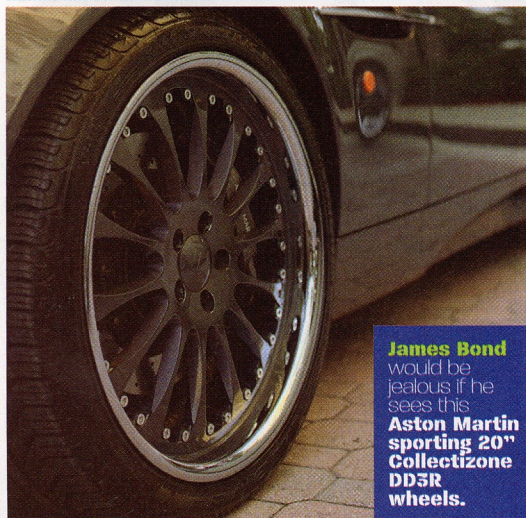
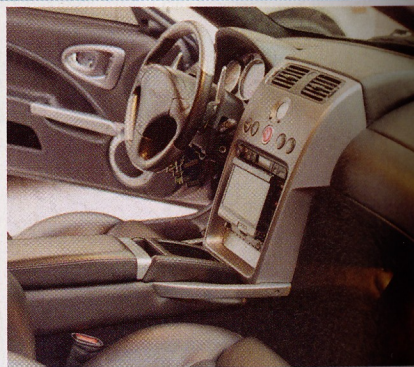
Elliott is known for telling it like it is—whether it is pillow talk or big time boasts and her rim references are valid also. She sits squarely on the ground with 24" Giovanna Gello wheels and Pirelli Tires for her Rolls Royce Phantom. The Gallardo is laced with GFG Trentos, pumped up to 20 inches in the rear and laying low at 19 inches in the front. Her Aston Martin is regal with 20" Collectionze DD3R three-piece forged wheels colored to match the body paint.

Elliott earned her mouth-watering collection through plain old hard work, a



Pirelli P Zero Rosso rubber on stylish GFG Trento forged wheels.





James Bond would be jealous if he sees this **Aston Martin sporting 20" Collectizone DD5R wheels.**

few breaks along the way, and the ability to flavor her projects with personal flair. The five-time Grammy Award winner has five Platinum albums under her belt and is the best selling female Hip Hop artist of all time.

But she has not forgotten her roots and what this success indicates about how far she has come. She flashes back to her first memory of a car. "My mother had a blue Firebird," she reminisced. "I was a little girl. I remember being in a car seat. That was years ago."

She grew up in modest Portsmouth, Va., where just having a car was a sign of status. "When I was younger, fly



cars weren't something of a necessity, it was just having a car. Things was so spaced out," she explained. "It was just about having a car, if you had a car you were fly."

Goodtime days in the Old Dominion state consisted of outings to skating rinks and drive-in movies. "The cars that had the seats that ran all the way the across," she chuckled at the memory. "If I was still in Virginia, I'd be riding in cars with seats that run across."

Elliott was destined to head down a different road, however, and her struggles have provided inspiration to make a movie about her rise to fame. She is not embarrassed to admit she grew up in a house rocked by domestic violence and is active in

incorporating this cause into her work. As the spokesperson for Break the Cycle, an organization dedicated to helping battered women, she hopes to make a difference. "As long as I'm around I'll still be doing it," she said. "When you've experienced, it's more compassionate."

Music has a way of soothing troubled souls. When talent and devotion converge, an artist like Missy Elliott becomes a reality. When she teamed up with iconic producer Tim "Timbaland" Mosley, she found the foundation for her magic formula with her 1997 debut *Supa Dupa Fly* (Elektra). Once Elliott launched, her career shot like a rocket; as a successful solo artist, songwriter and

savvy business woman.

She maintains a home in Virginia Beach, but also in New Jersey, to be near New York City. When it comes to the tedious commute, Elliott is happy to hand the keys to her assistant Larry Sims to avoid driving headaches.

"I've never been one who likes to drive distances," she admitted. "I work so hard that I fall asleep quick. I drive if it's just around the neighborhood, an hour away or if it's the store." Riding with Sims is a bit of a thrill. "I don't trust his drivin' at all," she joked. "Whoever invented seatbelts is a genius."

For Elliott, exotic car designs capture her heart. "I would love to design my own



source
AUDIO BY TRAFFIC JAM
ASTON MARTIN
LAMBORGHINI
WHEELS AND TIRES BY
BOSS CUSTOM WHEELS
ROLLS ROYCE
LAMBORGHINI
WHEELS AND TIRES BY
COLLECTIZONE WHEELS
ASTON MARTIN
**Classy 24" chrome
Giovanna Gello
wrapped with Pirelli
Scorpion Zero tires**



car," she said. "I would take a little piece of something from each one of my cars. I enjoy the ride of the Phantom. It's funny. That car reminds me of a car that my mother would drive." Her aesthetic taste for design is not limited to her garage. Elliott conceptualizes her own jewelry which is then built to her specifications by Jacob the Jeweler. She is also working in depth with Adidas on her "Respect" clothing line.

It is hard to keep up with her endeavors including the most recent broadcast of her show "The Road to Stardom with Missy Elliott," on UPN. With her busy schedule, Elliott relies on tips from trusted sources to find the scoop on the hot, new rides. She prefers cars made in limited quantities. "I'm not one to go pick up books about what's the hot new cars," she said. "Janet Jackson put me on the Aston Martin. She's introduced me to a guy she gets cars from."

While Elliott keeps things moving, she is always on the look-out for her next supra-fly ride. "I don't drive fast," she said. "I'd be afraid I mess up my rims."

This, best said by a woman who truly knows how to work it. 📷

