

You are a platinum rapper. Your label has just given you a new Dodge Charger. How do you trick it out? Mr. "Bring Em Out" is here to help. BY TAMARA WARREN

T.I. Pimps Your



HOT CARS ARE MORE THAN JUST A SPOIL OF VICTORY FOR RAPPER T.I. — they're his business. The million-selling Atlanta MC owns an auto shop, Elite Auto Concierge, in his hometown with Oakland Raiders cornerback Charles Woodson and Miami Heat hoopster Shandon Anderson. So T.I. was prepared when we came to him with a unique challenge — turn a 2006 black Dodge Charger R/T into something that a member of his crew, the Pimp Squad Click, would roll around the ATL in. For T.I., car customization is an essential aspect of hip-hop. "It's the expression of the artist as the car," he says. Time was tight, so he had his staff of twelve work overtime for three days. The true sign that he succeeded in his mission: T.I. asked about buying the Charger when we were done.

CAR/ENGINE

The car that we put on T.I.'s operating table was a 2006 Dodge Charger, which is inspired by the muscle cars of the Sixties and Seventies. He and his shop manager, Kevin Shuler, made sure they got the Dodge Charger R/T, which has a 340 horsepower Hemi V-8 engine — "in case you got to get somewhere really fast," T.I. says with a devilish smile. The Hemi goes from 0 to 60 in six seconds with an enthusiastic gurgle. **\$30,195; dodge.com**

WHEELS

Wheel rims are a crucial element of any hip-hop car — and especially if you're T.I., who devoted an entire song to the 24-inch variety. T.I. put "22s" on the Charger — specifically, 22-by-9.5-inch KMC Dime chromes. "They're classy yet sporty," he says. He also likes them because they're "deep dish. They give it a nice, sporty, bowlegged look." **\$2,400; kmcwheels.com**



HOOD

The airbrushed "PSC" logo, for T.I.'s Pimp Squad Click, makes it clear that this is a real-deal show car. "This is my group," he says. "We're all into muscle cars." **\$1,050**



TIRES

High-end tires are absolutely key: "If you have a motor like the Hemi that can withstand extreme conditions," says T.I., "you have to have them." He put on four Pirelli Scorpion 22-inchers. **\$1,200; pirelli.com**

Ride



INTERIOR

T.I. is partial to white leather seats, but time was limited: "We went with suede seats with embroidery in the headrest and suede headliner." Note the obligatory P&C logo. "I sewed the headrests by hand," says interior specialist Alejandro Salinas. The process involved taking out the seats and making new covers from scratch, then adhering the suede to the seats with a torch - "You have to be careful with that," Salinas says. The bonus: "I put a little extra foam in to make them more comfortable." **\$4,500**



STEREO

After the rims, the stereo is the most important part of any MC's car. T.I. is always trying out new music on Atlanta's I-85. "It can make you work out that engine," he says. "The right song can make you do 140 on the highway." His setup includes an XMDirect XMD 1000 tuner box for XM satellite radio, plus a Kenwood iPod adapter.

SUBWOOFER

Anybody can buy loud-ass subwoofers, but T.I. arranged for energy-efficient ones with these two MTX Thunder7500 subwoofers. "The MTXs don't pull a lot of current from the batteries," says Shuler, "but they put out a substantial amount of boom."

AMPLIFIERS

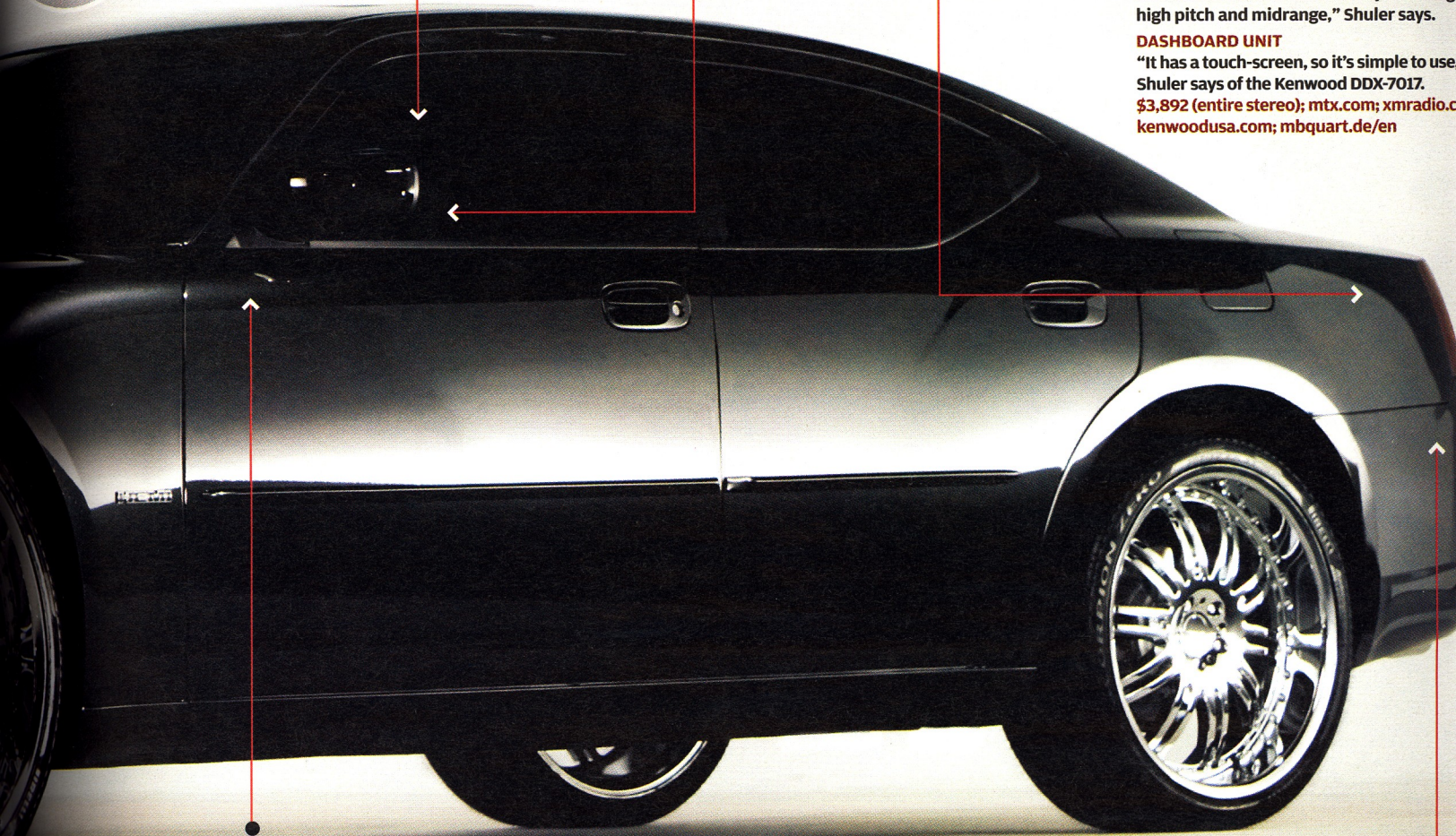
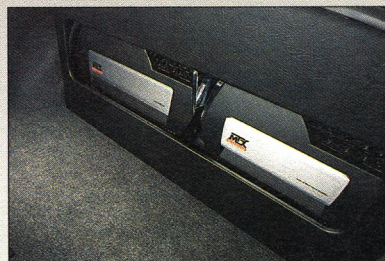
Amps are the building blocks of a high-end stereo system, and T.I. isn't taking any shortcuts on his. For the door speakers, he's using an MTX Thunder340 four-channel 400-watt amp, and he's got a separate MTX TA5601 one-channel 600-watt amp wired to the subwoofer for truly mammoth bass. A sharp, powerful bass sound is extra important to him, because he likes to come up with lyrics over instrumental tracks in his car.

SPEAKERS

No messing around: two top-of-the-line MB Quart RCE-216 6.5-inch two-way speakers in the front, and two MB Quart RCE-213 5.25-inchers in the back. "MB Quart has got high pitch and midrange," Shuler says.

DASHBOARD UNIT

"It has a touch-screen, so it's simple to use," Shuler says of the Kenwood DDX-7017. **\$3,892 (entire stereo);** mtx.com; xmradio.com; kenwoodusa.com; mbquart.de/en



REMOTE START

A no-brainer. Allows you to show off the car's roar without even having to climb in the driver's seat. **\$240**



TAILLIGHTS

Who needs all that red on your caboose? T.I. gave the Charger's taillights a mysterious smoked effect by having his guys at Elite Auto use spray paint to clear-coat them. **\$450**