

BURNING DESIRE

Mike Zimmerman's latest VW creation is indeed hot!



Mike Zimmerman handled the mega bodywork on his customized '69, but had help from Ted Munsell, at Trickworks (Telford, PA), to spray the Orange Glow over Pure Gold PPG Radiance II Tri-Coat finish. Candy Plum over Charcoal Silver flames were masked at Premier Sign and Graphics.

BY BRUCE SIMURDA

Where do you start writing about a 1969 VW Beetle that has been as highly modified as Mike Zimmerman's? The right-hand drive conversion? Its hidden door hinges, body modifications, or incredible paint job? How about the full-custom tweed interior stuffed with a Blaupunkt stereo system pumping out too many amps to count? Without question, full-custom is an understatement when it comes to Mike's car.

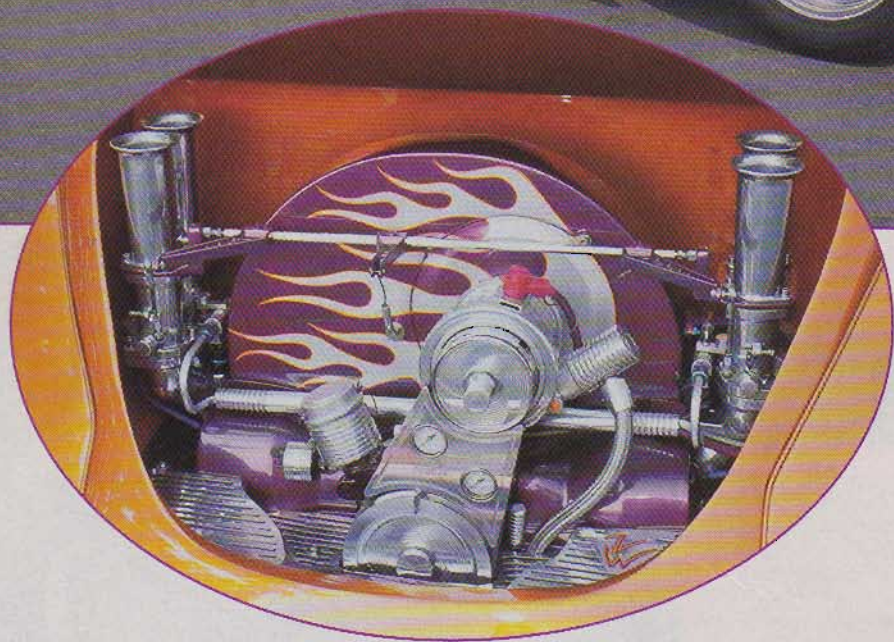
Built in a large part as a rolling showpiece for his many sponsors, Zimmerman, a resident of Harleysville, Pennsylvania, spends most of his summer weekends on the road, showing it at different events throughout the east and midwest. And wherever he goes, it's sure to catch the attention and admiration of those who view it, whether it be at a VW event or general car show.

Mike handled all the custom sheet metal fabrication and bodywork himself, including complete dechroming, adding a '60s-style front clip, grafting a '60 ragtop,

filling the front cowls, and removing the windshield wiper mounts. For super-smooth body lines, he also shaved the rain gutter, installed hidden hinges (from Rocky Hinge Company), and grafted-in recessed door handles from a Dodge Neon. The engine compartment also received major attention, with the upper vents removed and the entire opening completely "smoothed" to effortlessly blend-into the exterior. This car does not use a decklid to cover the highly detailed engine, and is definitely not a daily driver!

Before painting, three-inch-wider fiberglass fenders from Creative Car Craft were installed, but not without first being fully molded and smoothed underneath. Matching Creative Car Craft wide fiberglass runningboards were also used, to complete the look. Once Mike and Ted Munsell of Trickworks in Telford, Pennsylvania, finished applying the PPG Radiance II Tri-Coat system in Orange Glow over Pure Gold, the Candy Plum over Charcoal Silver flames were added, with flame masking by Premier Sign and Graphics. After painting, the entire car was sanded and buffed to a perfect shine, and topped off with Briz Billet bumpers, a custom whip antenna from Billet and Acrylic Fantasies, LED taillights in rear bumper by Ron Francis and Art Moyer, and Euro headlights with fluted lenses.





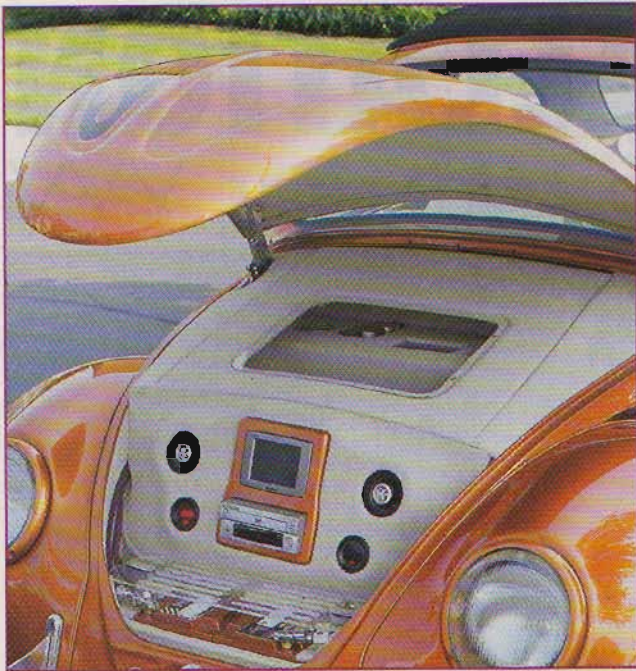
Mike also handled the suspension work, which included a 3-inch narrowed front beam. CB Performance 1-1/2-inch drop spindles, and lowered coil-over springs up front, and readjusted spring plates and coil-over shocks in the rear, which dropped the car between four and five inches all around. Using four-wheel disc brakes from CB Performance, the rotors were redrilled at Reubes Machine, in a Ford 5-on-4-1/2-inch pattern, and huge G-Force BFGoodrich tires, mounted on 16x7-inch front and 17x8-inch rear Colorado Custom "Fire" rims, bolted in place. Before the body was set back on the pan, it was converted to right-

hand-drive, painted PPG Sterling silver, and flamed in Candy Plum. There is also an orange under-body neon lighting kit, from Street Glow, for visual effects.

Interior stitchery was handled by John Zimmerman, using sand tweed with orange stitching. The mega-customized setup includes Honda Civic seats (headrests removed) with flames stitched into the seat bases and backs, custom door panels with painted flames, custom center armrest made of painted wood, custom dash with Cyberdyne digital gauges (speedo/tach, air/fuel, oil temp, oil pressure, fuel, and volts) full Blaupunkt electronics (including



ABOVE LEFT, Mike even maxed-out in the performance department, with a K&M Racing-built 2275c engine, featuring a fully polished fuel injection system from CB Performance and mega-detailing. **ABOVE,** count them — there are fourteen Blaupunkt Class "T" PA 2100 amps, each with neon lighting from Street Glow.



LEFT, one of the highlights of this car is a mega dose of Blaupunkt electronics, like in the trunk where there is a custom enclosure housing a modified gas tank, two Stinger dry cell batteries, Ron Francis fuse block, master power switch, front-mounted TV and DVD player, 3-1/2-inch speakers, Street Glow neon and strobe lights, and more. **BELOW**, interior is just as decked-out with Blaupunkt electronics, including a head unit, 5-disc changer, navigational unit, dual five-inch monitors, and more. Gauges are trick Cyberdyne digital.



LEFT, custom-molded fiberglass rear enclosure holds eleven Blaupunkt 10-inch Overdrive speakers. **BELOW**, custom bodywork includes Dodge Neon door handles, and hidden hinges, from the Rocky Hinge Company, for a clean look.



Casablanca CD-51 head unit, A-09 in-dash five-disc CD changer, DX-N Travel Pilot navigation system, and two DXN-5 monitors), and Colorado Custom "Fire" billet steering wheel. As this car is a rolling display for Blaupunkt, the tweed cover Plexiglas floor panels are raised to cover Stinger wiring and fusing, which is all viewable through uncovered openings. Custom fiberglass front kick panels also hold two sets of 6-1/2-inch Blaupunkt component speakers, but it is in the back where the real sound equipment is mounted. Thanks to custom fiberglass enclosures built by Mike and Bill Weidemoyer, the rear seat area is stuffed full of mega electronics. There, you'll find amp racks holding a total of fourteen Blaupunkt Class T PA 2100 amps, and a molded fiberglass enclosure housing eleven Blaupunkt 10-inch Overdrive subwoofers. The entire system's power is provided by Stinger (AAMP of America) batteries, wiring, and fusing. Neon and strobe lighting from Street Glow is also used for interior accents.

Mounted in the trunk is, you guessed it, more electronics. Inside the custom wood and fiberglass enclosure are two Stinger SP800 dry cell batteries, a modified gas tank to allow for a front-mounted TV, DVD player, and 3-1/2-inch Blaupunkt speakers. Under a Plexiglas window in the trunk you'll find video interfacing modules, Ron Francis fuse block, master power switch, digital amp temp gauge, and two 75-amp Cascade power supplies. Of course, more Street Works neon and strobe lighting were added in the trunk area.

While this car is certainly built for show, it also is equipped with go — in the form of a K&M Racing-built 2275cc engine. This powerplant features a long list of quality components, from its 82mm DeMello full-circle crank and Scat rods to a mega-polished competition fuel injection system from CB Performance in Farmersville, California. With an Engle FK8 camshaft opening and closing big 46x37.5mm valves in Weldon Auto ported and polished heads, it pumps out a healthy 190 horsepower on the dyno. Handling the horses is a Transform-built 1969 IRS gearbox, loaded with high-performance goodies. Both

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engine and trans were paint-detailed to match the exterior, including a flamed fan housing!

Mike definitely had a "burning desire" to build something this unique, and with help from his major sponsors — Blaupunkt, Robert Bosch Corporation, PPG Automotive Finishes, Stinger (AAMP of America), Colorado Customs, Billet and Acrylic Fantasies, BFGoodrich, Trickworks, Cyberdyne Electronics, Rocky Hinge Company, High Performance Coatings, Street Glow, and Creative Car Craft — we believe that flame has been quenched. **hVWS**

ENGINE/New AS-21 Case

DISPLACEMENT/2275cc

BUILDER/K&M Racing

CRANK/DMS, 82mm, full-circle

RODS/Scat

PISTONS/Mahle, 94mm pistons,

Cima thick-wall barrels

RINGS/Total Seal

CAM/Engle FK8, .534-inch lift,

298° duration

CAM GEARS/straight-cut

LIFTERS/Rhino, solid

OIL PUMP/Melling, high volume

OIL/Mobil, 20W-50

VALVE COVERS/Empi

HEADS/VW dual-port, ported and

polished by Weldon Auto,

dual hi-rev springs

VALVE SIZE & MAKE/46mm intake,

37.5mm exhaust

COMPRESSION RATIO/9.0:1

ROCKER ARMS/Scat 1.4:1 ratio

PUSHRODS/Scat, chromoly

PUSHROD TUBES/Billet & Acrylic

Fantasies, billet

IGNITION/Compu-Fire DIS-X, electronic

INDUCTION/CB Performance, 48mm

Competition fuel injection system,

fully polished, five-inch polished

aluminum stacks

INTAKE MANIFOLD/dual CB

Performance, polished aluminum

EXHAUST SYSTEM/S&S, 1-3/4-inch

merged, 2-1/4-inch Flowmaster

muffler, HPC-coated

FLYWHEEL/200mm, 10-lb.

CLUTCH/Kennedy 2,000-lb. pressure

plate, 4-puck disc

HORSEPOWER/190hp

OTHER MODIFICATIONS/custom pol-

ished deep sump, full-flow oil sys-

tem, Bosch 100-amp alternator, cus-

tom belt guard houses VDO gauges,

billet accessories, flamed sheet

metal by Mike Zimmerman, molded

and painted engine compartment

TRANSAXLE/Pro Street

BUILDER/Transform, Long Beach, CA

SPECIAL MODIFICATIONS/Bugpack

Super-Diff, billet side plate, race

CV-joints, solid trans mounts,

paint-detailed