



Ed Roth's

MEGA CYCLE

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Model: Mary Katherine Creason

When the name Ed "Big Daddy" Roth is mentioned, most people's thoughts either bolt directly to Rat Fink and the other wild characters Roth created or to his wild automobiles, usually "Outlaw" or "Beatnik Bandit." People who are only mildly familiar with Roth may not know about his motorcycle side. He published a chopper magazine, appropriately titled *Choppers Magazine*, from about 1968 to 1970 and was like many of us, a gearhead with no respect to the number of wheels involved.

One of his lesser-remembered customs, though significant at the time and impressive in retrospect, was a single seat hauler and accompanying motorcycle, finished in 1967. Artist Robert Williams dubbed the vehicle combo "Captain Pepi's Motorcycle & Zeppelin Repair" and as you might expect, show promoters thought that was a little long. We'll have to admit, it doesn't exactly roll off the tongue. The name was changed to "Mega Cycle," not especially memorable but simpler.

In typical Roth show car fashion, Mega Cycle's body was handbuilt of fiberglass. It sat on a rectangular perimeter tube frame. Powered by a Buick V6, it had a widened Corvair front suspension and a 1957 Chevy rear end.

After showing the car for a year, Roth was ready to move on, so he traded its use to a junkyard owner in exchange for a VW rear clip for his next project. The yard owner let his dogs use it for a doghouse and it was a total mess. Eventually Mega Cycle wound up in Harrah's collection and then Roth's son bought it and reworked it, later selling it to Jay Ohberg for his collection.

SAVED BY THE FRITZ

The intervening history is pretty sketchy as the car passed through several owners but Mega Cycle finally got a reprieve, ending up in the hands of our pal, Fritz Schenck (Spritz by Fritz). Fritz has a reverence for all things custom, especially the work of Ed Roth, and Fritz determined that Mega Cycle needed to be properly restored.

Proper matching of the paint on the car was a big issue for Fritz, and seemed like it was coming to a dead end. There weren't very many good quality color photos of the car from 1967 and even the ones he found in magazines had faded or discolored after 40+ years.

"At one point, the Mega Cycle was stripped of its paint all the way down to the fiberglass, but I did get lucky and find a small spot of the original sky blue metalflake on the body just under the front windshield lower section," Fritz relates. "I put a piece of clear packing tape over it and sliced off a section with a razor blade."



Thanks to some close observation, computer color matching, and luck, he was able to match the color, that sky blue metalflake on one side and the same color on the other side but covered with candy blue. He sourced the paint from House of Kolor, which not coincidentally has awarded Fritz's paint jobs their "Prestigious Painter Awards" for 2009 and 2010. Fritz is a pretty fair painter, we'd have to say.

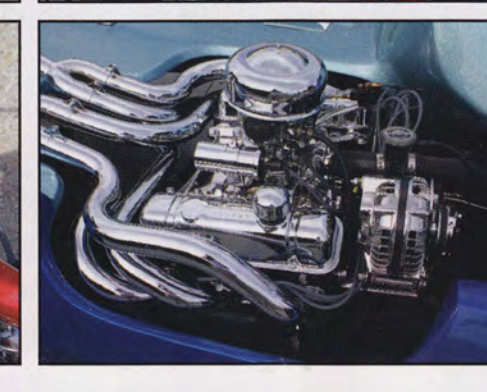
The paint wasn't the only adventure. Fritz also found Roth's wads of newspaper and plaster still stuck up in tight corners of the underside of the body. He gave those out as souvenirs to friends who visited his shop during the restoration.

Always quick to give credit where it's due, Fritz acknowledges that in building customs and radical show rods for a living, he is living his childhood dream, a dream that got its seeds from Darryl Starbird and Ed Roth. Poncho Billy Haas and Riviera Rich were on hand when he was ready to move the body on and off the chassis, which made things a whole

MEGA CYCLE



Resource:
Spritz by Fritz
Belton, MO
www.spritzbyfritz.com
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lot easier on the ol' back! The chrome on the Mega Cycle (and the motorcycle) was done by Rick at V-Twins Cycle in Oyster Bay, Long Island.

THE TRIUMPH

The Triumph that rests with Mega Cycle wasn't originally with the car when it was built. Roth built the car to accept his Harley XLCH, but he later traded that to Bob Aquistapace for a show Triumph. Over the years, the Triumph had been treated even worse than the car, so Fritz not only had to restore it, he had to track down some missing parts. "Greaser Mike" of New York City, whom Fritz met while he worked with Indian Larry, was a great help in finding some of the vintage Triumph motorcycle parts.

"The motor and tranny on the bike are empty," Fritz says. "It appears that the bike was built for static show display only. While restoring the bike, after stripping the old paint and such, I found 'Black Magic,' an old - and maybe the first - auto body filler of the '60s! I haven't seen that stuff since I was a little kid," says Fritz. "The tires on the motorcycle are the ones that have been on it since Roth got it back in the day."

The seat upholstery on the motorcycle was done by Dondi of Huntington Station, Long Island, New York, in white pearl. Fritz says the seat pan on the bike looks like it was an old Schwinn Stingray piece.

TECH SHEET

BUILDER: ED "BIG DADDY" ROTH
YEAR: 1967
MAKE: HANDBUILT CUSTOM
GRILLE: HANDMADE BY ED
COLOR: SKY BLUE METALFLAKE ONE SIDE; CANDY BLUE OVER SKY BLUE METALFLAKE OTHER SIDE
PAINT TYPE: HOUSE OF KOLOR
PAINTER: FRITZ SCHENCK (SPRITZ BY FRITZ)
ENGINE: BUICK V6
TRANNY: GM 3-SPEED
EXHAUST: INDY CAR STYLE
INTAKE/CARB: STOCK 2-BBL ROCHESTER
REAR END: 1957 CHEVY
SUSPENSION: F- EARLY CHEVY CORVAIR WIDENED; R- 4-BAR & COIL SPRINGS
BRAKES: F- CORVAIR DRUM; R- 1957 CHEVY DRUM
WHEELS: 15" CRAGAR S/S
TIRES: F- GOODYEAR POWER CUSHION 7.75-15; R- GOODYEAR BLUE STREAK 12.00-15
SEATS: ONE CUSTOM SEAT, CONFORMING TO BODY
UPHOLSTERY: DIAMOND BUTTON TUFT
STEERING COLUMN: HOMEMADE (TUBING & HARDWARE STORE BEARINGS)
STEERING WHEEL: CRAGAR METALFLAKE
WINDOWS: BLUE PLEXIGLAS WINDSHIELD
TAILLIGHTS: EARLY BARRACUDA