



THE ART OF THE CAR:

**Rick Dore Talks One-
Offs, Hoards and
Compressors**

Rick Dore doesn't just customize cars. He designs and builds unique creations from scratch. Dore's one-of-a-kind cars combine the finest coachwork, a radical sense of style, fearless use of color and cutting edge design. His styling and craftsmanship integrate traditional custom car design with a willingness to go where others have not yet imagined.

Atlas Copco



Each Rick Dore Kustoms car is a distinct combination of the artistic and the functional. Consider an example. In 2014, he and his creative partner James Hetfield, frontman for the heavy metal band Metallica, designed a car that's known as the Black Pearl. Unlike custom cars that use a production model as the foundation, the Black Pearl isn't any particular make or model. It rests on a custom built chassis. The sculpted aluminum body, hand shaped

by Marcel, has flowing contours reminiscent of coach built cars from the 1930s. It's the physical embodiment of a vision, and in 2014 it won every category in its class at the Grand National Roadster Show.

Another Rick Dore Kustoms scratch-built creation is the Aquarius. Something of a sequel to the Black Pearl, the Aquarius is also owned by James Hetfield. It features a flowing teardrop body hand made from aluminum sheet, fully-skirted pontoon fenders and a lift-off hardtop. In January of 2015, this Rick Dore Kustoms car was first shown (and stole the show) at the 66th annual Grand National Roadster Show in Pomona, California.



Rick Dore Kustoms cars are drivable works of art and the culmination of more than 30 years of legendary success in the custom car world. With that success, Dore decided to give something back and launched a

From Rick Dore's Discovery Channel Profile...

Rick Dore, originally from New York, has been at the forefront of the custom car scene since the early 1990s. A member of numerous automotive halls of fame, Dore's one-of-a-kind creations are regularly featured on the covers of Hot Rod, Street Rodder, Rodder's Journal, Custom Rodder, and Rod & Custom Magazine. An uncanny eye for style and a flair for the dramatic have made Dore a top choice for high-end custom car aficionados. As Metallica's James Hetfield puts it, "When it comes to building a Kustom car, Rick Dore is in a league of his own."

Dore's passion for finding and rebuilding American roadsters from the 1930s through '60s turned his attention to car hoarders: people sitting on huge stashes of neglected vintage autos. In 2013, Rick teamed up with ex-WWE wrestler and master mechanic Chuck Palumbo to form SLAM. Based out of San Diego, CA, SLAM turns hoards into cash by giving hoarders their customized dream cars in exchange for the rights to their hoards.

Rick Dore customs are highly sought after at auction, and a line of toys has been modeled after several of his designs. Rick says, "I eat, drink, and sleep cars. ...For me, it's really not the hall of fame inductions, the magazine covers, the trophies...it's more about the art of the car. My cars have to have great lines, great styling, elegance...but most of all, they have to have attitude."



Discovery Channel reality show called Lords of the Car Hoards (called Rusted Development beginning with the show's second season).

The show features Dore and co-star Chuck Palumbo, a retired WWE wrestler and master mechanic, helping car hoarders by offering them a deal: pick one dream car from their overcrowded car collection to rebuild and cover the costs of the remake by parting with and selling other cars and car parts from their massive hoard. Every hoard is a surprise, a treasure hunt, and Dore and Palumbo don't always know what they're getting into.

Atlas Copco recently talked with Rick Dore about his passion for custom cars, the set of his hit TV show and his own shop.

Atlas Copco: *How can someone tell they're looking at a Rick Dore Kustoms car? Or if they're lucky enough to be driving one, how can they tell?*

Rick Dore: Over 20 years, I've had strangers come up to me, whether at the Cow Palace or in Santa Rosa or any big show, and they've said to me, "When I walk in and there are 30 or 40 cars on the main floor, I can always tell your car." A Rick Dore Kustoms car always has three ingredients: it has an attitude so it looks aggressive, it has elegance, and it has color. Color is what pulls you in. I've always liked pastels. Everything else is details, whether it's the top being chopped or the lights being worked into the design.

Atlas Copco: *When did you get into building custom cars?*



Rick Dore: I was born in the 50s and raised in the 60s. Where I grew up in the Bronx and the Lower East Side of Manhattan, I didn't know anyone who had cars. I lived in a poor neighborhood and really the only people who had cars were guys who came back from Vietnam and bought a car with a GI Bill loan. Most of them were factory muscle cars, like Chevelles and Mustangs. I didn't get into cars until the mid-80s when my kids were born and in school. Then I saw a chopped '50 Merc drive by on a Sunday morning in Phoenix. I went after the guy but never did catch him. The car was a pale green, and on the rear quarters, in a darker shade of green, it said Memories in script. I loved that car.

Atlas Copco: *We know you love building custom cars, but what made you decide to do a show about building custom cars? How did you come up with the hoards angle?*

Rick Dore: The idea was hatched over a cocktail in a bar. I had met with Chuck and he had some ideas. I had some ideas. I was in a position, having been in the car business so long and especially over the past 10 or 15 years, where hey, I'm not starving. This show is a way to give back by helping someone, some car guy who's had a crisis. We find cars we'd otherwise never see, we help someone, and make a little money. The show was originally called Lords of the Car Hoards but starting with the second season and going forward, Rusted Development is the new name.

Atlas Copco: *Do you have a favorite hoarding story or a favorite dream custom that you built in exchange for someone's hoard?*

Rick Dore: I've been involved with lots of people and lots of characters like rock stars, but I think my favorite of the shows was when we got a kid in a wheelchair back to driving again. The hoarder was a guy named Ed who'd built a '40 Ford. While negotiating with him about what he was going to give up so we could build his dream car, his son came along in a wheelchair. He had a nurse aid with him. He'd been in a bad accident years ago and was paralyzed from the waist down. When we learned his story, we offered to build the Deuce Coupe of the dad's dreams and also to restore the son's '59 Chevy Impala.



We worked with GoldenBoy Mobility in San Diego, and even though we had no background building cars for paraplegics, cars with special controls for throttle and steering, we built him a great car that he could drive. Seeing him drive that car was the best I've felt about building a car and doing the show.

Atlas Copco: *Do you have a daily driver?*

Rick Dore: Yes, a '32 Ford sedan, chopped, with slicks on the back, radials on the front, and white walls all around. It's painted black satin, for now anyway. I also have a chopped '50 Merc that's also black satin but going off soon to be painted a soft blue. They're both good drivers and reliable. I trust them locally. My cars, and all Rick Dore Kustoms, are coach built cars. They're built from scratch with no pattern so they're truly one-offs. They're at the very high end of

customs and really meant for show, although some guys like James drive them hard. [That's James Hetfield, Metallica frontman and Dore's creative partner.]

Atlas Copco: *You have an Atlas Copco GA VSD+ compressor on the set of your show. Now that you've had a chance to use this new compressor technology, what do you think?*

Rick Dore: It's incredible. We installed that compressor toward the end of putting together the Aquarius. Not only was it was efficient, it was quiet. I could be in the same room with it running and take a call from a car show promotor or James himself and be able to talk no problem. It also looks great. It looks like something NASA would have built.

We use a lot of air and it never ran out. And then there's the quiet part again. When you're filming a show and a plane flies over at 10,000 feet so the





sound gets wrecked, the sound guys have to stop until the noise is gone. But we have six guys in the shop working, using air, and never once had an issue with noise from the compressor. The sound guys didn't have to stop. Which is to say, it's a quiet compressor.

For the Discovery Channel studio or for the Rick Dore Kustoms shop, I couldn't find anything that was more efficient or more quiet. You cannot have that with any other compressor I'm aware of, period. Look, I have a complete shop with some of the best guys on the planet. When you go into a shop and it's clean and the cars are filled with style and attitude and elegance, and you look over in the corner and you see the Atlas Copco? Yeah, it belongs there.

Atlas Copco: *You have another Atlas Copco compressor in your own shop. How is your own shop different from the shop we see on the set?*

Rick Dore: My own shop is smaller, but there's no shop like it in the world. The difference with my cars, with all Rick Dore Kustoms, is they're coach built. They're built from scratch. We take a rolling chassis and an LS motor and we build the bodies by hand. People aren't kicking in my door because these cars are one of a kind, mostly for people who can afford to drop the kind of money it takes to build a coach built car.

Atlas Copco: *Any plans to customize the cabinet on the VSD+ compressor to add some Rick Dore attitude, elegance and color?*

Rick Dore: [laughs] Yeah, I'm thinking a nice platinum with blue pearl. That's coming.

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