

# MAD COBRA

Text by Dave Pankew // Photos by Fred Lynch



## HOUSE OF BOOM

The master amp is an Arc Audio 4200SE configured front stage in stereo 4 ohms for the front stage drivers compartment speakers and the rear outputs bridge to the dual 8-inch 8D2 Arc Subwoofers in the trunk. This single amplifier setup was critical for this application for its simplicity and ease of installation.

If you're like me nothing is better than the real thing. There are no substitutes for authenticity, as copies and knockoffs often wreck the spirit of innovation and competition. However, when it comes to the legendary AC Cobra, I have to make an exception, as it's a classic, ageless shape that needs to be prolonged. Demitrios Karabinis owner of Arc Audio in Modesto, CA wanted to add something with a classic feel to his impressive fleet and contacted the experts at Factory Five to build him a custom Cobra. Factory Five knows a thing or two about making a dazzling performing Cobra replica, but what they aren't familiar with is how to accommodate an audio system, so Karabinis did what it took to correct all that and build the dream car he sought after.

The effort put forth by Karabinis amounted to two years and an untold amount of funds. The creative installers at Car Audio Innovations in Roseville, CA were entrusted to build this clever audio install which was designed to bring together the very best audio components and materials around. Since the factory Five Cobra did not have any provision for a stereo to be part of the vehicle, a compact center console was custom fabricated from MDF and body filler. The highly functional U-shaped console fits snugly between the bottom of the dashboard and on top of the transmission tunnel seamlessly. Openings were cut for both the head unit and the meter unit. The assembly was then wrapped in matching vinyl to blend seamlessly with the dash and the carpet.

The headunit is a pure audiophile unit, as the McIntosh MX406 plays CDs with no MP3 capabilities. Any true audiophile will balk at the mere mention of compressed music. This deck has no equals and resides in a class with only Denon and Nakamichi for sound fidelity. Underneath the single DIN unit is the trademark McIntosh power meter with the familiar blue glow. The outgoing signals are processed with an Arc Audio XEQ 7-band EQ with line driver headed to some serious Arc Audio gear. The Arc Audio 7-band parametric EQ was chosen for this application for multiple purposes. First, because of the low voltage output of the McIntosh head unit, the XEQ was used to boost the signal level into the amplifier as well as offer a minimal amount of tuning of the system to give the best

integration to the limited acoustics in the Cobra. The equalizer was mounted to the passenger underside dash area tucked neatly up and out of sight, which still allows ease-of-use but does not get in the way during 'spirited driving.'

With the signal processing out of the way, the tuned signals head to the amplification stage, an area where Arc excels. The master amp is an Arc Audio 4200SE configured in stereo 4 ohms for the front stage drivers compartment speakers and the rear outputs bridge to the dual 8-inch Arc Subwoofers in the trunk. This single amplifier setup was critical for this application for its simplicity and ease of installation. Also by running this single amp configuration, it reduces the amount of wiring, labor and overall accessories to install the sys-

tem into the vehicle, not to mention weight. The Arc 4200SE was installed in the trunk of the vehicle using an offset support system built off the side sub enclosure. Car Audio Innovations made the custom rack from twin metal side bridges attached to the sides of the enclosure and bolted up with all stainless hardware. The application allowed the amplifier to be removed easily and open access to the Cobra's Halon bottle located in the forward area of the trunk cavity above the rear axle. The enclosure itself is a true work of art. Housing twin Arc Audio 8D2 8-inch subs the physical limitations of space left few options to get the desired bass without sacrificing the entire trunk.

"Considering that the trunk had such detailed assembly and overall use of materials

such as stainless and polished aluminum, it was extremely important that this look and feel was left intact." Admits Karabinis "To accomplish this, the subwoofers were incorporated into the rear side cavities of the trunk area by using multiple layers of fiberglass to make a mold of the outer shell of the vehicle and then wood rings were cut and set in place," he added. The fabric was then coated with Polyester resin and then layered on the back side with additional layers of 2oz fiberglass matting. Then Car Audio Innovations sealed both enclosures (totaling .40 cubic feet per sub), sanded, primed and then covered them with matching vinyl that accompanied the interior theme of the rest of the vehicle. For components, Karabinis turned to Scandinavian speaker

# MAD COBRA



## WESTSIDE CONNECT

**Under the hood, you'll find Ford's legendary 5.0L V8 powerplant along with some Ford Racing goodies all ready for action. Weighing in at just 1,975 lbs. this quick roadster effortlessly pulls away, leaving others in its dust.**

manufacturers Dyn Audio. The superb Dyn Audio MW170s were selected for the midrange and along with a crossover allowing the Dyn Audio MW130 tweeters to produce the crystal clear highs. Again this performance based kit Cobra made no accommodations for any audio system. With such narrow cavities in the floor foot well area there was no room to build in kick panel enclosures. The next best location was to do modular housing enclosures on the insides of the door panels. Since the lightweight doors on Factory Five kit are 100% fiberglass with some basic metal reinforcement they would have to get creative. The first step in giving the pods a place to attach to the door was to remove a significant amount of the paint from the inside of the door panel leaving only a 3-inch ring around the outside of the desired area intact. With raw fiberglass exposed strips of MDF were fiberglassed to the door. Then with some body filler and sanding the pod was covered in matching

vinyl, installed and secured to the door. The net result Karabinis boasts is not only better than anything Factory Five could have attempted, but easily exceeds the quality any OEMs could offer as well.

The high end sound system was lit up with a pair of twin Bat Cap 400s mounted in the trunk to compliment the main Bat Cap 2000 under the hood. The importance of sound deadening was trusted to Dynamat's finest products and the install utilizes trusted Stinger products for all of the wiring and distribution needs. Power is provided with a Powermaster 1600 alternator.

With a ground pounding system now in place, this already solid 5.0L powered performer is guaranteed to turn heads. Weighing in at just 1,975 lbs. this quick roadster effortlessly pulls away, leaving others in its dust. This classic Cobra is certainly ready to rumble, as we can't wait to see Karabinis cranking up the tunes and tearing down the streets in sunny California! **PBS**

## AUDIO ASSAULT

**The Arc Audio 7-band parametric EQ was chosen for this application for multiple purposes. First, because of the low voltage output of the McIntosh head unit the XEQ was used to boost the signal level into the amplifier as well as offer a minimal amount of tuning of the system to give the best integration to the limited acoustics in the Cobra.**



**OWNER:**  
**DIMITRIOS KARABINIS**  
**LOCATION:**  
**MODEST, CA**  
**VEHICLE:**  
**2006 FACTORY FIVE COBRA**

### ENGINE & PERFORMANCE

Ford Racing 190/160 cams  
K&N Typhoon intake  
MSD Billet distributor  
MSD coil pack  
MSD wires

### EXTERIOR

Ait Racing k1 10 piece wide body kit  
\*\*front and rear bumper has been customized\*\*  
APR Front splitter  
APR Rear splitter  
Ait Racing CF Vented hood  
Custom Sparco gas cap relocated to finish off flare  
Molded One piece rear windows  
Rotora dry CF wing

### WHEELS, TIRES, BRAKES

Team Three alloy wheels with  
BFGoodrich CompT/A tires  
(f) 17x9-inch with 245/40R17  
(r) 17x10-inch with 275/35R17

### AUDIO / MULTIMEDIA

Install by Car Audio Innovations  
McIntosh MX406 am/fm/cd player  
McIntosh MPM4000 power meter  
Arc Audio XEQ 7-band EQ  
Arc Audio 4200SE 4-channel amp  
Arc Audio 8D2 8-inch subs x2  
Dynaudio MW170 components  
Dynaudio MW130 tweeters  
BatCap 400 battery x2  
Stinger wiring and fusing  
Power Master 160 amp  
Dynamat

THE ESSENTIALS