

Mad Reader **MOD**



Tribal Eclipse—Color Us Impressed

We've seen mod submissions that run the gamut of PC modding. Some modders add little more than fancy cable management to their computers, while others design rigs that don't even resemble PCs. Many submissions favor form over function and make upgrading difficult. Tom "SuAsDu" Khowdee, an IT manager from Southern California, took a different tack in creating Tribal Eclipse, a functional but attractive rig that features some great gaming guts: It's also his main home-use computer.

Believe it or not, Khowdee has only been modding for two years. "Working with computers for so long, I have gained a good deal of experience with building and fixing PCs," says Khowdee. "What makes case modding so exciting for me is that I have no practical or professional experience in this area, other than with the actual computer parts. So most everything I learned about case modding is from reading online and learning from other modders."

Khowdee employed some standard modding equipment to turn a Cooler Master Centurion 5 PC case into the Tribal Eclipse. He cut the flowing tribal designs with a Dremel and applied the system's heat-sensitive paint with a pressure gun. Despite the PC's detailed mods—which include doors that swing upward and an extendable front-panel display—SuAsDu says he spent only three months working on the system at nights and on weekends in his garage.

Of the Tribal Eclipse's many cool features, the paint job really stands out. "Since the candy apple red is a clear-red paint, when you look at the case when it is cold, the case looks like a deep blood-red color," Khowdee says. "As the case warms up, the black middle coat will start changing to white. As the Eclipse [paint additive] changes to white, the case starts changing color to a light candy apple red." Now that's an attention getter. ▲

by Joshua Gulick

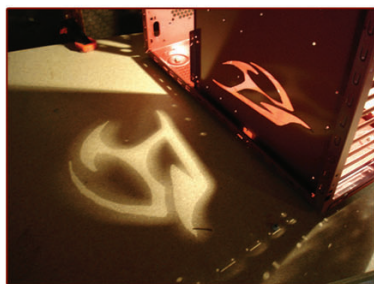
Rivets hold the nameplates to either side panel. "The nameplate was designed on the computer and cut using a flatbed 2D CNC machine," says Khowdee.



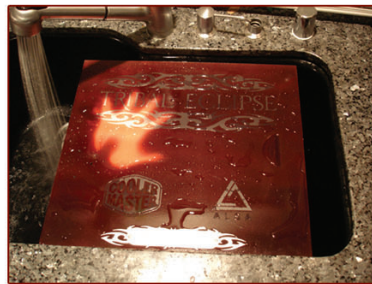


Masking tape covers the entire top panel, which is awaiting Dremel surgery. "Since the top panel is made of steel, I had to score the entire design a couple of times before the Dremel cut completely through," says Khowdee.

The rig has a transparent red ceiling that provides all the colored light the case needs. The case doesn't have any cold-cathode lights.



Khowdee snapped this shot of the mobo tray's cutout before installing the system's components, otherwise the light shining through wouldn't be visible.



Khowdee used four paint layers to create the Tribal Eclipse's unique coloring. He started with gray primer and then applied a white base coat. Next, he used Alsa Corp.'s Eclipse heat-sensitive additive and followed it with a coat of red paint.



A Sony PlayStation One LCD lives on in the Tribal Eclipse's front panel. It displays visualizations for music, as well as computer health-related statistics.



Although the Tribal Eclipse has its fair share of vanity mods, it also boasts some functional customizations, such as side panels that tilt open and a front-panel display.

Give Us Your Mod



Have a computer mod that will bring tears to our eyes? Email photos and a description to madreadermod@cpumag.com. If we include your system in our "Mad Reader Mod" section, we'll send you a \$1,500 Newegg.com gift certificate and a one-year subscription to *CPU*.