



Telly Woo Sze-wing and her two partners often have animated discussions about finding effective ways to maximize the artistic values of auto parts.

Geared up for the high-performance living room

A coffee table hewn out of a BMW crankshaft. A CRG kart car clutch disc turned into a clock. Don't believe us? Go check out Telly Woo's office. **Wang Yuke** did.

Telly Woo Sze-wing sits at a shiny silver coffee table, flanked by two comfortable looking well-padded chairs, in her office. A glittering floor lamp illuminates the setting. The coffee table was made from an automobile crankshaft and automotive roller bearings. The padded seats were fashioned from a set of brake discs. The lamp, another nearby table, and the ornate-looking wall clocks, similarly are made from discarded auto parts.

More discarded auto parts lie scattered in Woo's office, still awaiting their turn at entering the world of chic-modern furniture design.

"This crankshaft in use is not ordinary at all," Woo says with a suggestive tone, pointing toward the coffee table. "It comes from a BMW M3 racing car."

Woo is the mastermind behind ATB Autoarts, a company that produces furniture and household accessories from salvaged bits of old cars.

"The most dramatic twist in it is this," she grins as she twirls the table top. "Did you see? Rows of cylindrical rollers (on the bearing) are dancing up and down in sequence!" Woo says her customers are captivated by such subtleties.

She and her two partners spend hours brainstorming, looking for ideas like this to advance their design concepts.

"Fitting our furniture into Hong Kong's notoriously cramped rooms is a priority, of course," Woo hastens to add. "But our most essential design concept is to liberate the artistic potentials hidden in the auto parts." In her words, let the end products speak to their artistry.

All that junk

Woo got the idea for starting the company after reading a government research document back in 2009, stating that 1.88 million tons of metal wastes from automobiles were annually discarded in Hong Kong. Melting those solid wastes could generate 540,000 tons of air emissions, taking its toll on the environment.

She felt inspired by the quality of some of the discarded automotive materials that had all the same attributes needed for producing fine furniture: durability, high quality workmanship, and capable of being shaped into pieces of art, Woo explains. The ATB studio took

shape in 2011.

Woo points at a number carved on the back of the brake disc-turned coffee chair and explains, "Manufacturers of luxury cars number every single component or mark them in some way during production. It serves as a signature, showing that each component is one-of-a-kind. Every piece of furniture we produce is made from a unique auto part."

Uniqueness is a quality highly prized by consumers. Often, well-to-do clients ask Woo to find components from their favorite automobile brands. "Many clients parade their personalized furniture to their friends and brag, 'See, I own a coffee table made out of Ghost Car (a classic range of Rolls-Royce), even though I can't afford a real Ghost car.'"

Cherry and Jacky Lin are Woo's customers. Jacky is a kart racing aficionado. He won the 2009 Hong Kong Kart Club Championship, but his beloved CRG kart car was badly damaged.

"The car meant too much to him, just like a trophy. He treasured it so much that we sought a way to keep the car parts for good memory. Luckily, we found Telly."

"She (Woo) retrieved all the valuable parts. The clutch disc served for a clock face, and a built-in roller bearing became the dial (given that needles on the bear-

ing perfectly resemble a clock dial needles)." Cherry Lin gets excited.

"The auto art furniture incorporates my husband's abiding love for his kart car," she says affectionately. "They have characters and souls."

Woo too sees a certain personality in auto parts. "Men have attachments to cars, which are an expression of their machismo and status," she continues. "Automobile art furniture has the same effect."

Despite the studio's growing popularity in Hong Kong, Woo has an ambitious plan to extend her business to Europe. She says she hopes to join international trade exhibitions in the coming years.

"Hong Kong remains a niche market, whereas the mainland is the promising market. We've attracted a large number of mainland customers."

"However," Woo says with a little regret, "Some of their demands were hard to satisfy because they often required conspicuous and pretentious automobile logos imprinted on the furniture in order to flaunt their high taste and status. But we're not entitled to fake a hood ornament or logo, or we'll risk violating car producers' copyright."

Contact the writer at jenny@chinadailyhk.com



Auto parts salvaged from discarded cars are sand-papered, chromium-plated and polished before put in use.



Knick-knacks made from components of BMW cars are popular with many customers.



The coffee table merges vintage and modern design. The top and metallic pedestal are made from a discarded crankshaft. The double-layered glass table tops are rotatable.



The distinctive shape of exhaust pipes has been cleverly manipulated to resemble a seated human being in this high table.

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WOO SZE-WING
FURNITURE DESIGNER



Double cylinders of a crankshaft from a mini racing car are used to prop up this table lamp, while fragments of wasted leather are sewn together to make the shade.



The floor lamp, whose base is made of knobs and bolts, makes a great pair with the high table.