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AUTOBUZZ

THE CREATIVE WORKSHOP GETS READY FOR SHOW SEASON

By Ric Green and Joe Castello

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At The Creative Workshop in Dania Beach, Jason Wenig and his staff of automotive artists are working overtime. January 22 is the Palm Beach International Concorso d'Eleganza, one of the finest showcases for antique, classic and custom automobiles. Wenig is putting the finishing touches on a gray 1955 Cadillac Eldorado convertible, but they are behind on the silver 1965 E-type 4.2 Jaguar convertible. The owners of these two works of art have entrusted Wenig's Creative Workshop team to have them ready for some of the upcoming seasons of automotive shows and auctions. Joe and I toured the shop and spent three hours speaking with Wenig and checking out the 20 or so projects that they have in various stages of restoration.

The shows they are preparing for are not like the great Friday night gatherings at the Tower Shops. They take place at money-soaked locations like Palm Beach's Breakers Resort, Boca Raton's Royal Palm Polo Grounds and Amelia Islands Ritz-Carlton.

"The people that own these cars have the means to enjoy something special," says Wenig from his desk which is cleverly constructed with car doors as legs. "It's rare to find a new vehicle with the soul and character of a classic automobile. So many of today's cars are Wal-Mart'd, mass produced with their style and design for the masses, not the individual."

To recapture the individuality and excitement that the 30 year-old plus vehicles once had, Wenig spent countless hours researching even when a manual is available. He looks for information on the manufacturer, the era and in some cases he tracks down individuals who may have pictures. For a recently restored MG TD that had not seen the light of day since it finished 11th at Sebring in 1954, he came across the retired race car driver.

Then Wenig and his staff begin a tedious process that requires patience, mechanical skill, experience and intuition that only accomplished craftsmen have acquired. They are challenged by the complexities of each project to produce results in which details are never compromised.

"It's the little things. Attention to detail is what makes a restored classic car a trophy winner," states Wenig. "You want to know how good a restoration job is, look where they don't want you to look." To learn more about their work check out their website at www.thecreativeworkshop.com