

IN STYLE

TWO DETROIT DESIGNERS PROVE YOU CAN GIVE SOMEONE YOU LOVE A CAR—ONE PIECE AT A TIME

In designer outfits and Gucci shoes, Brenda Rosenberg and Lynn Welsh scour junkyards around Detroit, picking through the heaps with polished fingernails. "The guys at these places get hysterical," says Rosenberg. "When they ask what we're doing, we say we're just looking."

They're shopping, too. Rosenberg and Welsh have discovered that there's gold in them thar mountains of discarded auto bodies.

As designers of a hot new collection of "garage" jewelry, they offer roller bearing bracelets (\$250), hexagon nut rings (\$15) and Zerk

bow grease fitting cufflinks (\$60).

Each of these tiny parts is copied in sterling silver (for gold, prices are higher), and every item comes with an owner's manual "describing how each art functions in a car. (A Zerk, for example, is a tiny lubrication check valve.) The *pièce de résistance* of their collection is a self-adjusting brake cable ecklace, which is done in gold and avé diamonds for \$1,400.

The idea was born in April when the Michigan branch of Saks Fifth Avenue began planning its salute to "Detroit's Beautiful Bodies," a swimsuit promo-

tion with an automotive backdrop.

Brenda, 29, Saks's Michigan fashion director, and Lynn, 26, a Saks illustrator and sometime model, decided to create a special line of jewelry to fit the show.

They proved an ideal pair. Rosenberg had a flair for fashion, and Welsh, a car nut since infancy, contributed her

auto savvy. She is the niece of a General Motors executive vice-president, and remembers playing with a piston ring for a bracelet at the age of 3.

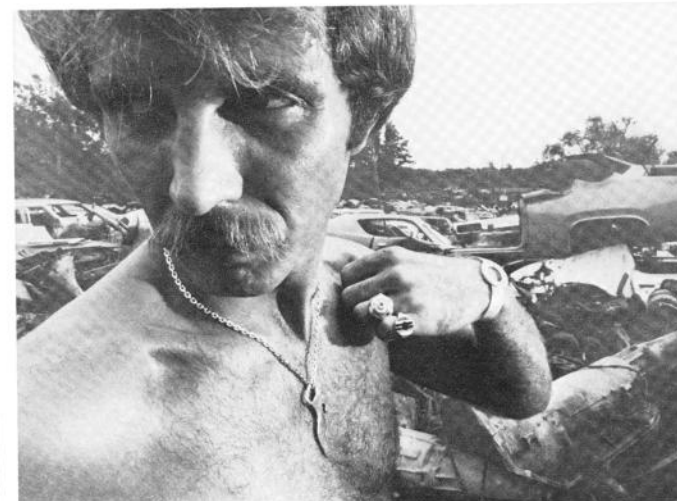
Working with the speed of a Detroit assembly line, they unveiled the collection last month at Saks, displayed in a miniature Lucite garage and surrounded by tiny cars. "Our timing was right," says Rosenberg. "The reaction has been sensational." Their biggest single order so far is for \$40,000 from—who else?—an auto supplier.

JULIE GREENWALT

The ring at left is a sheet metal fastener (\$55), while the other is a \$45 cutting die. Most of the jewelry is in authentic scale.



A model wears a pendant made from a wheel cylinder hydraulic bleed fitting. It sells for \$45.



Jewelry designers Welsh (left) and Rosenberg look for inspiration and new material in a Detroit junkyard.

Proving the style is unisex, Steve Szabo displays auto rings, a \$60 ball bearing bracelet and a \$60 brake lever pendant.

Photographs by John M. Collier