

## New line of tables engineered with help from auto-related companies

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Furniture designer Glen D. Fuller, shown here with his Ava coffee table (\$9,500) and a race car at Aerodine Composites Group, is getting rave reviews for his new line of tables inspired by race cars and crafted of carbon fiber with a high-gloss automotive finish.

Cars in the Izod IndyCar Series and at the Brickyard 400 on July 31 use carbon fiber made by such companies as Aerodine Composites Group on Indy's Westside.

Aerodine also is doing a wing for the top fuel dragsters that will compete Labor Day weekend at the Mac Tools U.S. Nationals at Lucas Oil Raceway, where racers top 300 miles per hour.

And Aerodine is one of six race-related companies creating Fuller's new Ava line of tables crafted of carbon fiber with anodized aluminum feet and a high-gloss automotive finish.

The idea came to Fuller during the European Design Symposium in 2009 at the Indianapolis Museum of Art. A designer at the international event talked about F-1 and designing carbon-fiber furniture. Fuller thought of Indianapolis and the racing fabricators here.

Indianapolis has the No. 1 motorsport economy in the world, he said. Since then, Fuller has worked on designing tables using Indianapolis know-how to show off the strength of carbon fiber.

"Carbon fiber is truly one of the most impactful design materials of the past 50-plus years, and it has opened design opportunities with its unique characteristics," said Fuller, who is the head of Fuller Design Associates and has more than 30 years' experience in industrial design in furniture, consumer products, exhibit design and architecture.

"The Ava Furniture Series," he said, "reflects this extensive experience of working with truly unique materials, finishes and detailing."

The cantilevered design, available as a coffee table, desk or gathering table, showcases the lightweight strength of carbon fiber through elegant lines and high-quality detailing.

Part of the story is Fuller's desire to pay homage to Indianapolis' racing heritage.

"The craftsmanship originates in our backyard, our history," he said. "I want this made in America by people who are proud of what they do every day."

"The six companies that worked on this represent 100-plus years of working with the local racing community," said Fuller. They include:

**Aerodine Composites Group.**

**Victory Lane Concepts.**

**Indy Custom Machine.**

**LaserScribe.**

**Carbonix USA.**

**Colors Inc.**

Fuller foresees making coffee tables, desks, chairs and gathering tables from the same carbon-fiber design, which can be seen at [www.fullerdesignassociates.com](http://www.fullerdesignassociates.com).

The name Ava comes from the Latin word *avis*, which means birdlike and is the root word for aviation, he said. "When you look at the line, straight on, it is truly minimal. I tried to achieve that."

The table is not screwed together. Instead, it is glued.

"Once it's all together, it's like the exoskeleton of an insect," he said.

The cantilever design reflects carbon fiber's stiffness-to-strength ratio. Fuller used a honeycomb core, which minimizes the layers of actual carbon fiber, so it is an efficient and cost-effective way to create the design.

The table is black, Fuller explains, as the result of the heating process, which gives carbon fiber its strength.

He debuted the table at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair in New York City in May and said the reception was positive. (The artisan furniture is available by contacting Fuller through his website.)

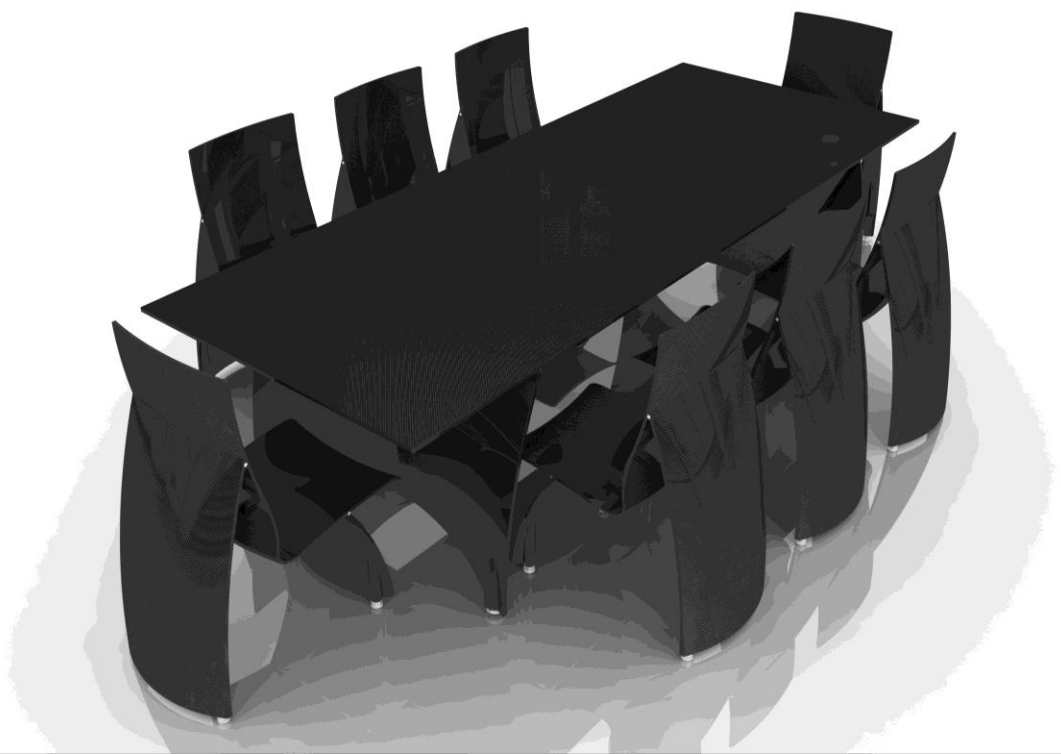
He said the design showcases carbon fiber's suitability as a material.

Carbon fiber is an exclusive high-tech material used on the Boeing 787 Dreamliner airliner and for the proposed frame of the BMW i3 battery-electric and i8 hybrid sports cars, to be released in 2013.

"It can be eight to 10 times stronger than steel," he said, "and extremely light. My coffee table weighs 13 pounds. You can pick it up and sweep under."

The black carbon-fiber top features a reverse diamond matched design.

"It adds a unique, high-end furniture look to it," said Fuller. "Carbon fiber by nature is very male visually, and the wood-type design reminds us that it is furniture. I wanted to have a connection to the heritage of furniture."



The table is finished with a high-build top coat with an automotive finish by Scott Turner of Victory Lane Concepts, an award-winning automotive finish company on Indy's Westside. The mirror finish includes seven to eight coats, block-sanded between coats, then buffed and polished to a high gloss.

"It's as durable as anything you have on furniture," said Fuller, especially when you consider what a car goes through in terms of environment and abrasion. "Car finishes have gotten so much better over the last five or six years.

"I designed this product to be an heirloom product. If you ever happen to have a problem with the finish, you can take it to a good automotive repair shop anywhere in the world. The finish used is accepted globally," he said.

"These are pieces of art," he said. "You have to have some sensibility about them."

As for price, Fuller said, "This furniture is Robb Report (referring to the exclusive magazine). It is expensive. I looked at the competitors. A 9-foot carbon-fiber table was \$49,000 on the showroom floor. I would like to have something more credible.

"I'm anticipating an 8- to 9-foot gathering table to be around the \$20,000 range." The Ava coffee table that was shown at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair is priced at \$9,500.

These are precision companies that produce very expensive and very fast cars, so this is not cheap furniture.

Fuller's hope is that race-car drivers and motorsports fans will be interested in having a piece of furniture made by the same people who build the race cars they love to watch.

