

AUTOMOTIVE

## Porsche, Paralympics champion Oliver Lam-Watson tackle disability misconceptions

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*Oliver Lam-Watson has driven a Porsche 911 GT3 for the last two years. Image credit: Porsche*

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Oliver Lam-Watson, a fencing Paralympics medalist with Klippel-Trenaunay syndrome, enjoys the further agility and freedom his Porsche offers him.

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The champion, winning a silver medal at the Tokyo Paralympics in 2021 and already guaranteeing a bronze for Team pe, has driven a Porsche 911 GT3 for the last two years.

"I can drive an automatic car," said Oliver Lam-Watson, in a statement. "That's why my GT3 has a PDK transmission. But you can also have a sports car fitted with hand controls.

"The GT3 gives me the ability to do things I can't always do with my own body to go fast, to be nimble and agile," he said. "It feels like an extension of me."

The idea of a differently abled person owning and operating a luxury vehicle tends to surprise people, but the truth is that cars do have the capabilities to support disabilities.

Driven to prove

Mr. Lam-Watson has faced endless strings of bullying and discrimination both in real life and online.

Those who are differently abled are often told what they cannot do. It is rare that the conversation is instead centered around their capabilities.

Car ownership and driving is a big part of that, being a necessity for consumers worldwide, and especially for those who do not have access to public transit.

Mr. Lam-Watson is using **social media** to get rid of the misconception that those in his position do not have the ability to participate in this and drive.

"I use social media to help break down barriers and change perceptions," Mr. Mr. Lam-Watson said. "When some people see a disabled person, they think of hospitals, crutches, wheelchairs. But it's not true.

"I can dress just as cool as you and I can be just as strong as you or however you measure yourself against society," he said.

"Just because I have a disability, it doesn't make me a different person."

Mr. Lam-Watson's success in the Paralympics, his passion for photography, and his love for driving are all parts of his identity, despite that focus that others put on his disability.

**Porsche** is assisting with this reframing of the differently abled experience, aiming to making cars that are inclusive of all abilities and preferences, and honoring the wholeness that every consumer already has.

This empowerment is the key to inclusive branding and language, as well paving the way for those with disabilities to have agency in how they are perceived.

"I'm not saying that everything's possible," Mr. Lam-Watson said.

"But it's no one else's right to tell you what you can and can't do," he said. "It's for you to find out."

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