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DAuto Newsletter

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Design engineers turn designs into reality. Without them, a great idea but nothing more than, ... well, a great idea.

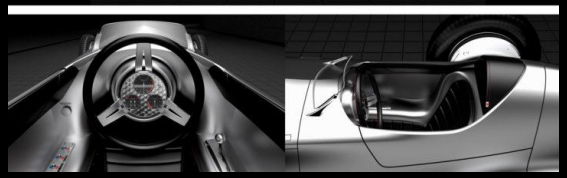
Infiniti Prototype 9 is a retro futuristic 1940s race car

At Pebble Beach Nissan/Infiniti have unveiled a design study that pays homage to the brand's heritage and combines advanced EV technology with traditional construction methods.

Started just from a conceptual sketch by **Alfonso Albaisa**, the project involved many designers in their free time, who tried to answer the question: "*what if Infiniti had created a race car in the 1940s?*", which was the emerging era of Japanese motorsport.

The exterior combines the typical proportions of the open-wheeled race car of the time with the surfacing, details, and aerodynamic elements of today.

The dynamic model features a prototype electric motor and battery, which boldly contrasts with the traditional materials and techniques applied for the vehicle manufacture, which included panels hand-beaten by a team of Takumi – Nissan Motor's master craftspeople.



BMW Concept Z4

At Pebble Beach BMW has revealed the Concept Z4. a compact roadster with a dynamic, sculpted design focused on driving pleasure.

The Concept Z4 revealed by BMW at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance is a roadster focused on the driving pleasure, with a sporty, bare-to-bone character.

As Senior VP BMW Group Design **Adrian van Hooydonk** explains, the sculpted, dynamic look "*expresses the new BMW design language from all perspectives and in all details. From the dynamic-looking front to the striking flanks to the clean-cut tail end.*"

The proportions are typical BMW, with a long, stretched silhouette and a compact rear end. However, compared to other roadsters of the brand, the Concept Z4 has a shorter hood, so the driver sits in a more central position.

The aggressive front end has a shark-nose and a three dimensional interpretation of the kidney grille, which is positioned lower than the headlights reminding of the Z8 face.

Other distinctive design elements include the power domes behind the seats, which also serve as roll-bars and are well integrated with the rear section of the body.






BMW Concept Z4

The sporty, driver-focused interior is trimmed in leather and Alcantara and repeats the black-orange color scheme of the exterior.

The Concept should anticipate the lines of the production Z4 and should share the platform with the upcoming Toyota Supra.

The BMW Group is using the Concours d'Elegance at Pebble Beach to present its exciting new take on a BMW roadster. Dynamic, progressive and an irresistible purveyor of thrills, the BMW Concept Z4 boasts lithe and compact proportions, a dynamic silhouette and an emotionally appealing use of forms. The attention-grabbing design study offers a look ahead to the series-production version of the car set to be unveiled over the course of next year.

"The BMW Concept Z4 in an all-out driving machine," said Adrian van Hooydonk, Senior Vice President BMW Group Design. "Stripping the car back to the bare essentials allows the driver to experience all the ingredients of motoring pleasure with supreme directness. This is total freedom on four wheels."

Aston Martin reveals Vanquish Zagato Speedster and Shooting Brake

At the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance Aston Martin has presented two additional models of the Vanquish Zagato family of limited edition models.

The Vanquish Zagato Speedster and Shooting Brake are joining the Coupe and Volante, thus completing the family of exclusive, limited edition cars – all already sold.

Vanquish Zagato Speedster

The Vanquish Zagato Speedster is the most extreme and rarest model in the family, with a production run of just 28 cars, and deliveries scheduled for 2018.

The roofless design expresses *"the raw excitement of an open-top ultra-high performance sports car."*

The main design feature is the Speed Humps that rise up to form streamlined cowls that flow back from the seats, representing Zagato's signature 'double-bubble' roof.

Vanquish Zagato Shooting Brake

Compared to the sister models, the Shooting Brake was conceived as an exceptionally practical GT.

The extended roof on the concept sketch bears the iconic Zagato 'double-bubble' surfacing complete with glass inlays to let light flood into the cockpit. The sculptural roof culminates in a powered tailgate that opens onto a luxurious rear cabin area, complete with a tailored luggage set.

Aston Martin reveals Vanquish Zagato Speedster and Shooting Brake

The Vanquish Zagato Family

All the Vanquisgh Zagato models feature body panels made from carbon fiber, Aston Martin Vulcan-inspired 'Blade' tail lights and repeated 3D Zagato 'Z' motifs in the front grille and rear vent meshes, which create an unbroken stylistic thread that connects these otherwise individual creations.

All four cars are based upon the Vanquish S, and are equipped with a 600PS naturally-aspirated V12 coupled with a Touchtronic III transmission. Each model features a specifically-tuned adaptive damping system.

The Vanquish Zagato family will see a maximum of 325 cars built, with numbers split among 99 Coupes, 99 Volantes, 28 Speedsters and 99 Shooting Brakes.

The production of the Vanquish Zagato Coupes commenced in late 2016. Next to enter production was the Vanquish Zagato Volante, with deliveries to be completed through 2018.

McLaren reveals its most extreme road car ever

Codenamed P15, the upcoming McLaren hypercar will feature a 800PS engine, a minimal interior and a total weight under 1,300 kg.

Designed to be the most extreme, track-ready but still road legal car in the line-up, McLaren's engineers have reportedly been given the freedom to prioritize performance over everything else and the P15 is said to be faster on a racing circuit than any McLaren, bar the track-only P1 GTR.

However, the car's weight has been reduced thanks to the use of McLaren's latest Monocage II one-piece carbonfibre tub (which now includes the roof structure), and when combined with a race-inspired two-seater interior and no P1-style electrical powertrain, that should result in an overall weight of less than 1,300kg.

The car is powered by a tweaked version of McLaren's 3.8-liter twin turbo V8 said to produce around 800PS (789bhp) – making it more powerful than the 727bhp produced by the road-going P1's engine, but below the 903bhp peak achieved when the P1's electric motor is also in operation.

Against the 1,547kg P1, that would give the P15 an even better power-to-weight ratio. Straight-line performance is expected to match, if not beat, the P1's figures of 0-60mph in 2.7 secs and a quarter mile time of 10.2 seconds.

McLaren reveals its most extreme road car ever

The car's brutal styling is said to be the ultimate distillation of form following function with carbon bodywork used only where it delivers a performance, rather than aesthetic, benefit. Active aerodynamics, with self-adjusting spoilers (knowledge gleaned from McLaren's F1 experience), not to mention a huge diffuser are also expected to dominate.

The official reveal will take place later this year, restricted to existing McLaren customers and potential buyers, followed by an official public debut at March 2018's Geneva Motor Show. A price tag of around £700,000 plus tax (£840,000 in the UK) is mooted with production set to be limited to just 500 cars.

The P15 will be also joined by a three-seat, F1-inspired hyper-GT, codenamed BP23, that will be revealed next year and arrive in 2019.

While other McLaren models such as the 675 have spawned Longtail (LT) and Spider open-top variants, the track focused natured of the P15 has ruled these out. However, as it will be a road car, there is the potential for a track-only GTR version as McLaren did with the P1 and P1 GTR.

"McLaren has always been relentless in the pursuit of performance – but with Aston Martin's upcoming Valkyrie and the Mercedes-AMG Project One set to redefine the rules of the hypercar market, it has to keep ahead of the game. Hence the P15. said the sources.

Delphi pitches an alternative to diesel
Combining mild hybrid system with cylinder deactivation

Delphi is pitching automakers on a fuel-saving technology that it reckons could solve a brewing crisis for European manufacturers' diesel-heavy product portfolios.

The powertrain and electronics giant believes combining two emerging technologies can boost the efficiency of traditional gasoline-engine vehicles by as much as 19 percent.

If so, the solution could help some automakers disentangle themselves from relying on diesel engines to meet global fuel economy regulations.

Some European automakers have banked on diesels to meet environmental standards because they offer better fuel efficiency than gasoline engines. But diesel engines are now in doubt because of tightening global CO2 standards.

Delphi officials say they can make gasoline engines hit comparable numbers while still preserving the low-end torque that diesel drivers are accustomed to.

Delphi's proposal combines its 48-volt mild hybrid system with a new type of cylinder deactivation it calls Dynamic Skip Fire. When paired, the technologies can increase fuel economy by as much as 19 percent on the EPA's city cycle test and 14 percent on the highway, said Harry Husted, Delphi's director of powertrain engineering.

Delphi pitches an alternative to diesel

Combining mild hybrid system with cylinder deactivation

Both systems are ready for production, Delphi says, though neither is likely to arrive before 2020.

The 48-volt system and Dynamic Skip Fire can be used separately but complement each other by increasing engine efficiency at both low and high speeds.

AutoPacific analyst Dave Sullivan says the combination could offer a credible alternative to diesel engines.

"The 48-volt mild hybrid system does not yield much benefit on the EPA test cycle," Sullivan said, "but combining these two technologies sounds like the methadone Europe needs to get off its diesel addiction."

General Motors is likely to embrace one of the two systems when it introduces the next-generation Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra late next year with Dynamic Skip Fire, Sullivan forecasts.

It would replace GM's current cylinder deactivation system, which boosts fuel efficiency by cutting off four cylinders of a V-8 engine and two cylinders of a V-6 when not needed.

GM and Delphi have invested in Tula Technology, the Silicon Valley firm that developed the software that operates Dynamic Skip Fire. Delphi makes the engine parts for the system.

But the technology would be more critical in Europe and China, where Delphi is now focusing its marketing efforts.

Tenneco to build $23 million customer center west of Detroit

Auto supplier Tenneco Inc. plans to build a $23 million sales center in Northville Township, about 30 miles west of Detroit.

The Lake Forest, Ill.-based company said in a statement Thursday that the 100,000-square-foot location will be home to the company's Clear Air and Ride Control North American sales operations and other support function. The company plans to add about 100 jobs there over three to five years.

The project has been awarded a $750,000 performance-based grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corp., the state's development arm said in a news release.

The company plans to break ground next month and open the center late next year. It will be located at 15701 Technology Drive near Five Mile and Beck roads.

Tenneco's Michigan presence has grown. The company said it has more than doubled employment at its Grass Lake engineering and technical center over the past decade, alongside employment growth at its Ride Performance North American headquarters in Monroe.

Tenneco, which makes a wide variety of emission control systems, shock absorbers and suspension products, has about 31,000 employees worldwide. The company ranks No. 31 on the *Automotive News* list of the top 100 global suppliers with worldwide sales to automakers of $7.36 billion in 2016.

Best seat in the house? The Audi A3

The seats in the 2017 Audi A3, supplied by Magna International, received a perfect score in J.D. Power's latest Seat Quality and Satisfaction Study, underscoring the steady overall improvement in automotive seating systems.

According to the study, A3 owners expressed 0.0 problems per 100 cars sold with the seat. And as automakers lavish more time and attention on their interiors, seats are making consumers happier. That's the way things are going, says Brent Gruber, senior director of global automotive at J.D. Power. "When we go back the last four years, we see a trend going upwards with satisfaction," Gruber said, noting that J.D. Power believes that trend will continue with seats.

Power, one of the industry's leading conduits of consumer gripes about their vehicles, said there is still a variety of problems that owners encounter with their seats. Some of the more common problems this year were blue dye transfer, cracking and peeling leather or vinyl, as well as squeaks and rattles.

The study asks individual owners to rate the quality of their vehicle's seats and seat belts based on whether they experienced defects, malfunctions or design problems during the first 90 days of ownership. The second-best rating this year went to a fellow Volkswagen Group product, the Porsche Cayenne, for which consumers reported only 0.8 problems per 100 vehicles. Those seats are supplied by Adient.

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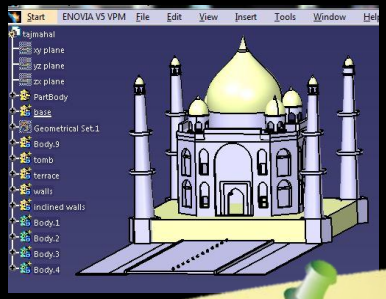

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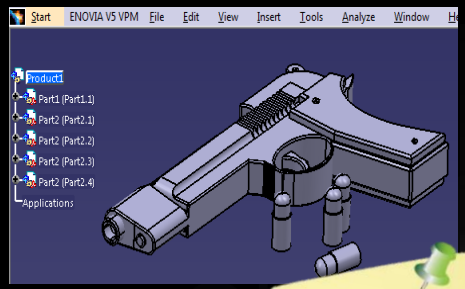

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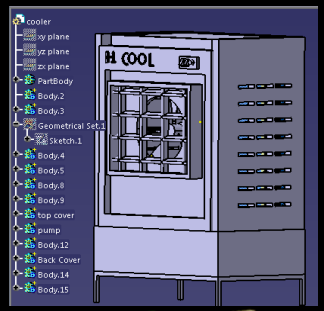

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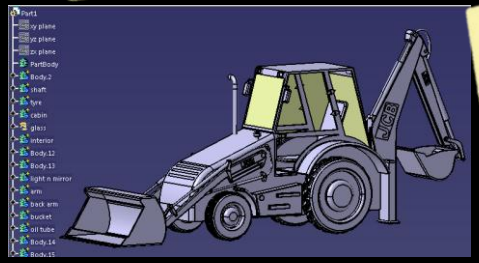

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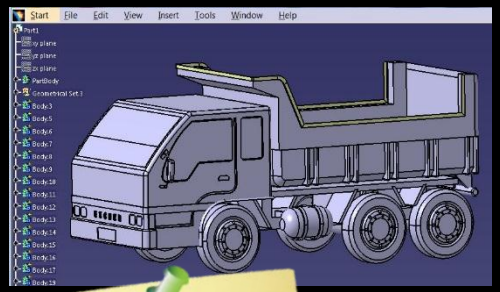

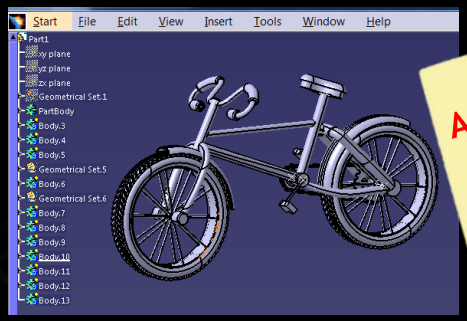

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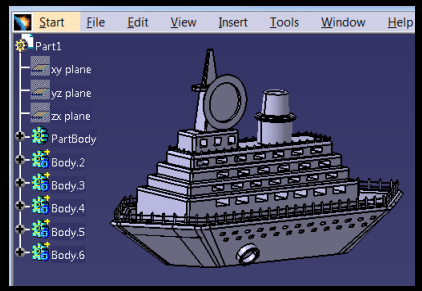

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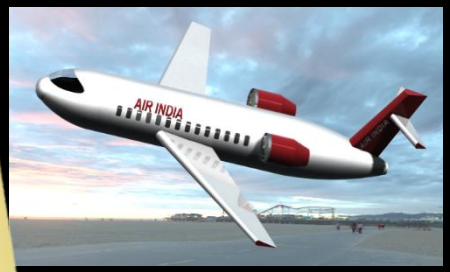

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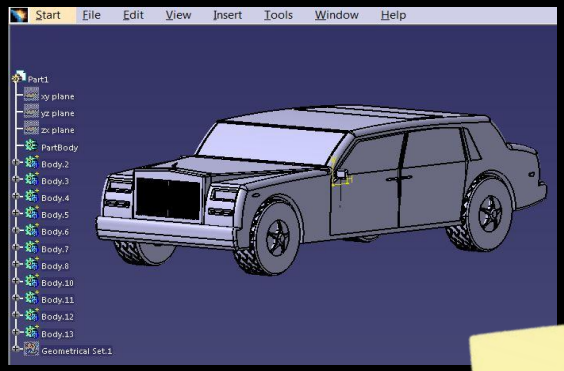

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