ROLLS-ROYCE | MEDIA INFORMATION

SPIRIT OF ECSTASY REDESIGNED FOR

MOST AERODYNAMIC ROLLS-ROYCE EVER

6 February 2022, Goodwood, West Sussex Embargoed until 09:00 GMT

* Iconic Spirit of Ecstasy figurine recreated for Rolls-Royce’s all-electric future
* Forthcoming all-electric Spectre is marque’s most aerodynamic product yet
* Redesign contributes to a drag coefficient (cd) of just 0.26 in early prototypes
* Product of 830 combined hours of design modelling and wind tunnel testing
* Simultaneously, Muse, the Rolls-Royce Art Programme, announces jury for Spirit of Ecstasy Challenge
* Spirit of Ecstasy Challenge sees artists create works in textile, inspired by figurine
* Spirit of Ecstasy officially registered as intellectual property of Rolls-Royce on 6th February 1911, 111 years ago today

*“The Spirit of Ecstasy is the most famous and desirable automotive mascot in the world. More than just a symbol, she is the embodiment of our brand, and a constant source of inspiration and pride for the marque and its clients. Like our brand, she has always moved with the times while staying true to her nature and character. In her new form she is more streamlined and graceful than ever before – the perfect emblem for the most aerodynamic Rolls-Royce ever created, and for gracing the prow of our bold electric future.”* **Torsten Müller-Ötvös, Chief Executive Officer, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars**

*“111 years ago today, the Spirit of Ecstasy became an official part of Rolls-Royce. Yet, she has come to represent a spiritual direction for our brand. Her form perfectly captures the marque – she leans forward, expressing our relentless pursuit of progress, and her dress gracefully flows in the wind, echoing the serenity of our products in motion. For Spectre and beyond, she becomes lower and more focussed; braced for unprecedented speed and the exciting future her presence will define.”*  **Anders Warming, Director of Design, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars**

Rolls-Royce has reimagined its iconic Spirit of Ecstasy figurine to grace the bonnet of its new all-electric motor car, Spectre, 111 years to the day the Spirit of Ecstasy was first registered as intellectual property of Rolls-Royce on 6th February 1911.

The figurine has been remodelled with a lower, more dynamic stance that brings her much closer to the drawings made by her original creator, the illustrator and sculptor Charles Sykes, in the early years of the 20th century. It also sees her physical form represent The Expression, a visual device that forms part of the marque's new visual language.

The new Spirit of Ecstasy stands 82.73mm tall, compared to her predecessor’s 100.01mm. Her robes, which flow behind her in the slipstream – often but erroneously characterised as ‘wings’ – have been subtly reshaped to make them more aerodynamic and realistic.

The most visible change is her stance. Previously, she has stood with her feet together, legs straight and tilting at the waist. Now, she is a true goddess of speed, braced for the wind, one leg forward, body tucked low, her eyes focused eagerly ahead. These changes have both practical and stylistic benefits, contributing to Spectre’s remarkable aerodynamic properties. The earliest Spectre prototypes have a drag coefficient (cd) of just 0.26, making it the most aerodynamic Rolls-Royce ever created. The figure is expected to improve during the product’s exhaustive testing protocols undertaken in 2022.

This new expression captures the essence of Charles Sykes’ original drawings, but rather than simply being ‘redrawn’ or ‘redesigned’, her new shape has been digitally sculpted by a computer modeller working at the Home of Rolls-Royce, who has a passion for life drawing and sculpture. Their experience in this field was invaluable in developing the figurine’s elegant lifelike facial features as well as her expression, which deftly combines focus and serenity. The designers also consulted stylists at Goodwood for their perspective on her hair, clothes, posture, and expression, adding an authentically contemporary aura to her dynamism and commanding presence.

While all figurines are made using one of the oldest known casting techniques, named ‘lost wax casting’ or ‘cire-perdue’, each is individually finished by hand, so will be minutely different from figurine to figurine. As well as continuing a long Rolls-Royce tradition – until 1939, the mascots were made and polished by Charles Sykes himself – this subtle, ephemeral human element creates an intriguing contrast to the precise, highly engineered motor car she sits atop.

Though relatively rare in the modern era, changes to the Spirit of Ecstasy have been made throughout her 111-year lifespan. She has been rendered in various sizes and materials and, briefly, in a kneeling position. The new version created for Spectre will appear on all future models: the current design will still be used on Phantom, Ghost, Wraith, Dawn and Cullinan and their Black Badge alter egos where applicable.

**AN ARTISTIC EXPRESSION OF THE ICON**

Simultaneously, Muse, the Rolls-Royce Art Programme, has announced the jury for the Spirit of Ecstasy Challenge. This inaugural initiative invites the brightest and boldest young creatives to reimagine the icon of the Spirit of Ecstasy in a context beyond her current home on a Rolls-Royce motor car. In doing so, these young artists will create high-concept pieces that surprise, delight and inspire.

For each edition of this prestigious biennial event, a global panel of expert judges will select a medium for the emerging designers from which to create an artistic interpretation of the Spirit of Ecstasy. For this edition, that medium is textiles. The esteemed jury members are: Anders Warming, Director of Design, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars; Yoon Ahn, Creative Director of Ambush and Jewellery Director at Dior Men; Tim Marlow, Director and Chief Executive of the Design Museum in London; and Sumayya Vally, Principal of South African architectural practice, Counterspace. Together, they will select three finalists to participate in this extraordinary artistic initiative.

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## FURTHER INFORMATION

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## EDITORS’ NOTES

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the BMW Group and is a completely separate company from Rolls-Royce plc, the manufacturer of aircraft engines and propulsion systems. Over 2,000 skilled men and women are employed at the Rolls-Royce Motor Cars’ head office and manufacturing plant at Goodwood, West Sussex, the only place in the world where the company’s super-luxury motor cars are hand-built.

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