

COMMERCE

Jaguar conjures ghosts of its past for exclusive supercar

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Jaguar XKSS

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British automaker Jaguar is bringing a model back from the dead to spotlight its innovative tendencies.

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Nine Jaguar XKSS models, touted as the "world's first supercar" are being produced nearly 60 years after being lost in a fire. The new vehicles will reflect a heritage of creativity and advancement and also serve as signifiers of the brand's exclusivity.

"The XKSS occupies a unique place in Jaguar's history and is a car coveted by collectors the world over for its exclusivity and unmistakable design," said Tim Hannig, director of **Jaguar Land Rover** Classic. "Our continuation XKSS reaffirms our commitment to nurture the passion and enthusiasm for Jaguar's illustrious past by offering exceptional cars, services, parts and experiences."

New and improved

In 1955, 1956, and 1957 Jaguar won the Le Mans 24-hour endurance race with its Jaguar D-Type. Afterward, the brand outfitted 25 unfinished D-Types with a second seat, passenger door, windows and other features to convert it for the road as what would become known as the Jaguar XKSS, which the brand calls the world's first supercar.



Original Jaguar XKSS

However, a fire broke out at the Browns Lane plant where the vehicles were being converted, destroying nine of the

vehicles. While the other 16 were finished, nine were lost.

Now, 59 years later, Jaguar is replacing those nine vehicles with cars constructed to the exact specifications of the 16 finished in 1957. Each will be hand built by Jaguar's new Experimental Shop in Warwick, Britain, with the expertise gained from the lightweight E-type being transferred to the construction.

Delivery will commence early in 2017, with vehicles priced at least 1 million, or around \$1.41 million.

The new XKSS models will offer an extremely limited group of Jaguar customers and collectors access to a piece of Jaguar's heritage. More broadly, however, it exemplifies the brand's commitment to honoring its own history as an example of the way in which the past can inform the present.



New XKSS rendering

By bringing attention to one aspect in which it was ahead the world's first supercar Jaguar is also bringing attention to current innovations across its product line. With the automotive sector undergoing a transformation due to increasing demands for electric vehicles, autonomous driving technology and connectivity in the emerging Internet of Things, positioning oneself as an innovator is likely to resonate with consumers who can sense the changes coming.

The ghost of luxury past

The XKSS announcement comes on the heels of parent company Jaguar Land Rover rebranding its heritage division.

Last week, Jaguar Land Rover announced the rebranding of its Heritage business to better reflect the brand's capabilities and expertise.

Jaguar Land Rover Heritage will be renamed to Jaguar Land Rover Classic with the division maintaining its dealings to provide cars, services, parts and experiences to the owners of classic models designed by the automaker. As the division has increased its business globally, Jaguar Land Rover has emphasized celebrating and nurturing its classic cars ([see story](#)).

Across the luxury industry, updating the past for a present initiative is a common strategy, with others also focusing on a lost or unattainable piece of heritage.

In the jewelry sector, Italian jeweler Bulgari is reinforcing the timelessness of craftsmanship and design with a new B.zero1 collection.

Back in 1999, Bulgari designed three different prototypes to usher in the new millennium, with the uniform gold design ultimately being revealed to the world under the name B.zero1. Reviving a design from the same period as a continuation of the line embodies Bulgari's ethos of fusing the past and present in its products ([see story](#)).