

AUTOMOTIVE

McLaren promotes Rob Melville to design director

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McLaren 720S

By STAFF REPORTS

As British automaker McLaren's design director Frank Stephenson steps down, the company is hiring from within to fill the role.

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Rob Melville, who was most recently the brand's chief designer, has been appointed the automaker's new design director, effective immediately. Throughout his tenure with McLaren, Mr. Melville has overseen a number of award-winning models.

Automotive appointment

Mr. Melville began his career at Jaguar Land Rover. During his time there, his sketches and clay models became the LRX Concept model, an idea that would eventually go on to become the Evoque.

Following Jaguar Land Rover, Mr. Melville worked on the Cadillac brand at General Motors' U.K. Advanced Design Group. In 2009, he joined McLaren as senior designer.

Along with working on McLaren's P1, 650S and 675LT, Mr. Melville has also overseen the Sports Series, including the recently launched 720S.



McLaren's 650S Spyder

Aside from contributions to single models, the designer also implemented a set of design pillars for the McLaren brand, which is used as the basis for projects. These include "everything for a reason" and "functional jewelry."

"I am thrilled to be given the title of design director for McLaren Automotive," Mr. Melville said in a statement. "I remember when I got the call to come and join McLaren back in 2009 and the joy I felt then is the same today."

"We have developed a fantastic design team and have integrated a design philosophy that I feel passionately about," he said. "I have always believed that great design tells a great story and that is what we do here at McLaren. I'm incredibly proud."

Luxury automotive designers are eyeing the potential opportunities in eco-friendly and autonomous mobility.

The "Luxury Car Design: What the Future Holds" panel at the FT Business of Luxury Summit on May 15 brought together designers from Bentley and McLaren to discuss their respective brand's approach to building cars for affluent, particular clientele. Despite being fellow British automakers catering to similarly wealthy buyers, McLaren and Bentley have considerably different car design approaches and positioning ([see story](#)).

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