

AUTOMOTIVE

BMW mirrors night sky with extraterrestrial car

January 3, 2019



The BMW Individual M850i xDrive Coup Night Sky. Image courtesy of BMW

By STAFF REPORTS

German automaker BMW is leveraging its customization capabilities to turn a vehicle into a representation of the night sky.

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With materials and finishes taken from beyond earth, the BMW Individual M850i xDrive Coupe is a one-off design that includes touches that the brand says are "literally out of this world." Fittingly for the car's celestial inspiration, the vehicle will be revealed during a meteor shower that starts on Jan. 3.

Reach for the stars

Among the materials used to construct the car are pieces of meteors that fell to earth. These rocks were used throughout the cabin, including the center console, door sills and the engine start/stop button.

The center console also includes an LED-illuminated constellation of stars.



The center console is lit with constellations. Image courtesy of BMW

Additionally, BMW incorporated the distinct Widmansttten pattern found on the surface of meteorites into the car's design. This geometric shape is only found naturally in space, formed when metal alloys cool slowly.

To recreate it for the car, BMW used 3D printing to create custom parts, including mirror caps.

The exterior of the custom car features a paint technique that fuses both black and blue. A non-metallic black paint was used as a base, with a metallic blue layered on top in a gradated pattern.

BMW Individual specializes in making bespoke vehicles based on client requests. The specialists that work at the production facility in Garching called upon local researchers at the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics to help make the extraterrestrial vehicle a reality.

As consumers crave the unique and the individual, this also translates to their cars.

Fellow BMW group automaker Rolls-Royce Motor Cars referred to 2017 as the "year of bespoke models" after receiving a significant number of commissions by consumers.

Commissioned Rolls-Royces are handled by the automaker's Bespoke department, which consists of a collective of designers, engineers and craftspeople, who bring discerning clients' most ambitious and personal visions to reality. Today, almost all of the Rolls-Royces to leave the brand's Goodwood, England home have bespoke elements, demonstrating consumer interest in the marque's abilities ([see story](#)).