

AUTOMOTIVE

In nod to past, Mercedes-Benz looks ahead with latest concept car

June 20, 2023



The vehicle is modeled after the company's series of experimental "C 111" automobiles that were produced throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Image credit: Mercedes-Benz

By ZACH JAMES

German automaker Mercedes-Benz is stepping into the future by gazing back into its past.

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The luxury automaker has unveiled the "Vision One-Eleven," a retro-futuristic concept car modeled after the company's series of experimental "C 111" automobiles produced throughout the 1960s and 1970s. In a presentation spanning physical and digital spaces, the new creation will be presented to the world using augmented reality (AR), immersively showcasing the potential impact of Mercedes-Benz's latest idea.

"Leveraging a bold design from its past makes sense as Mercedes-Benz pushes into the electric future," said Karl Brauer, executive analyst at [iSeeCars.com](https://www.iseecars.com), Woburn.

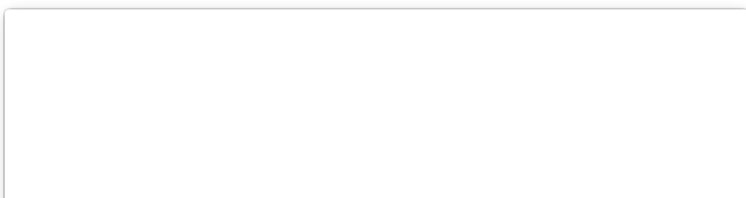
"The C 111 was an iconic, forward-looking vehicle when it debuted over 50 years ago, and the automaker successfully leveraged that car's experimental philosophy in the new Vision One-Eleven," Mr. Brauer said. "Details like the black-and-orange color scheme and gullwing doors are as impactful in 2023 as they were in 1969."

Mr. Brauer is not affiliated with Mercedes-Benz, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Back to the future

Going back in time, Vision One-Eleven is rooted in history.

The brand's C 111 models of the late 1960s and 1970s were used as testbeds for automotive innovations of that time, from turbochargers to Wankel engines. This update looks to do much of the same, embracing a fast-approaching future.



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Just like its predecessor's 16 available units, extremely limited numbers of the One-Eleven will be produced.

In line with the luxury automaker's electric future ([see story](#)), the concept will feature an entirely new axial flux motor produced by British electric motor specialist YASA, an asset of the German company. The new motor is said to be extremely powerful, efficient and potentially game-changing for high-performance luxury sports cars.

Ready to take off into a new era of sportive luxury, the extraordinary Vision One-Eleven showcases a highly dynamic design language and all-electric drive technology, powered by axial flux motors from YASA. Learn more: <https://t.co/JLvraAhRY3#mercedesbenz#VisionOneEleven #C111 pic.twitter.com/k5gP0ROgpZ>

Mercedes-Benz (@MercedesBenz) [June 15, 2023](#)

"Mercedes-Benz will focus the bulk of its engineering resources on future electric vehicle development while maintaining the competitiveness of its current and near-term internal combustion and hybrid models," Mr. Brauer said.

"Innovations, like the axial flux electric motor, will be critical as Mercedes-Benz transitions into a global electric vehicle company, but advancements in the areas of user interface and autonomous driving will also be important," he said. "The luxury car market is arguably the most demanding segment in the industry, putting increasing pressure on luxury brands over the next 10 years."

A vehicle for more

While serving as a showcase for what is to come from the automaker, this latest concept also carries on to present efforts. Two exclusive limited collections, one physical and one digital, will release later in the year.

The tangible assortment, titled "Limited Edition 1 of 111," is headlined by leather weekender bags, orange and gray hoodies, hats, sunglasses and other apparel. Selection will go live in August 2023.

Mercedes-Benz's digital capsule, called the "Maschine" collection, will slot in under the automaker's recently launched Web 3 platform ([see story](#)), kicking off a string of related digital activations.

1/ Next, we would like to introduce you to these four unique "Maschine" outputs: #894, #37, #901, and #463 collected by 50F27C, [@way2collector](#), 33FFA7, and [@tijndijkstra77](#). <pic.twitter.com/u9XdTODIx>

Mercedes-Benz NXT (@MercedesBenzNXT) [June 16, 2023](#)

One such project involves NFTs (non-fungible tokens) created in collaboration with one of the world's leading digital artists, Harm van den Dorpel. Drops will feature 1,000 unique pieces, all themed around motion.

"At Mercedes-Benz, there is a constant interaction between art and design, each influencing and being influenced by the other," said Gordon Wagener, chief design officer at Mercedes-Benz Group AG, in a statement.

"As our cars become more and more digital, the idea of Mercedes-Benz creating its own unique NFTs is an area of particular interest to the design team," Mr. Wagener said. "Harm van den Dorpel is an excellent partner for the first NFT collection under our new brand Mercedes-Benz NXT.

"Harm has explored the intersection of technology, art and design, and he understands how to bring together the NFT community with Mercedes-Benz enthusiasts."

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