

COMMERCE

Bugatti honors sculptor of brand logo in legends series

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By JOE MCCARTHY

French automaker Bugatti is unveiling the fourth model in its Legendes de Bugatti series at the Geneva Motor Show March 6-16 that honors the founder's brother, Rembrandt Bugatti.

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Mr. Bugatti's sculpting earned him praise in the 20th century and led him to design Bugatti's dancing elephant logo. The high price tags and ultra exclusive production lines have attracted the notice of collectors so far, since all nine cars from the three previous lines have been sold for around \$3 million each.

"Consumers are buying racing history here with these vehicles," said George Magda, interactive marketing automotive expert in North Miami Beach, FL. "They're paying homage to the lineage of Bugatti's founders."

"A Bugatti, in general, is something magnificent," he said. "They're all hand-assembled and an art form to begin with."

"The more limited the number, the more these vehicles retain that truly exclusive feeling."

Mr. Magda is not affiliated with Bugatti, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Bugatti did not respond by press deadline.

Family of artists

Similar to the other cars in the series, the Rembrandt model is based on the Veyron 16.4 Grand Sport Vitesse. Only three will be manufactured.

The vehicle costs \$3 million.

The multi-month gaps between each car's arrival ensures that the vehicles get enough exposure to reach prospective consumers.

Mr. Bugatti carried on the artistic heritage of the Bugatti family. His father sent him to the Brera Art Academy in Milan after he showed sculpting promise at an early age.

During his 31-year life, cut short by World War I, he was recognized for his animal sculptures that were often cast in bronze. Mr. Bugatti created more than 300 bronzes, paintings and drawings throughout his life.



Sketch of Rembrandt Bugatti

Mr. Bugatti's first animal sculptures were of cows, horses and dogs and evolved to include more exotic animals seen in zoos.

In 2012, a cast of his 1909-1910 bronze, Babouin Sacré Hamadryas auctioned for \$2.56 million at Sotheby's.



Rembrandt Bugatti's Babouin Sacré Hamadryas

"Rembrandt Bugatti" aims to capture some of the sensibilities of the sculptor.

The horizontal-split exterior features bronze-colored clear-coated carbon fiber to suggest the artist's preferred material. Mr. Bugatti's signature has been lasered onto the oil cap.



"Rembrandt Bugatti" model

The interior's light brown interior meshes with the bronze and a bronze-cast dancing elephant is stationed on the rear center box that has a bronze clear-coated carbon fiber cover. The center console also features the elephant, and the door sill plates display Mr. Bugatti's portrait and signature.



"Rembrant Bugatti" model

The stable

The Bugatti legend Jean-Pierre Wimille began the celebration in August. Mr. Wimille's story is intertwined with the 24 Heures de Mans race where he won in 1937 and 1939. The Bugatti 57G Tank driven by Mr. Wimille during his 1937 victory was the inspiration behind the commemorative vehicle's design and its blue shades. ([see story](#)).

Bugatti unveiled its second "Bugatti Legend" at the Frankfurt International Motor Show to honor the founder's eldest son who played a pivotal role in the brand's early development.

Jean Bugatti is known for his pioneering engine, chassis designs and concepts for vehicle bodies. The Type 57SC Atlantic is one of his most celebrated designs and acts as the inspiration for the commemorative model. The Legend vehicle unveiled at the Frankfurt Motor show recalls an Atlantic "La Voiture Noire" model that was driven by Jean Bugatti himself ([see story](#)).

The brand unveiled its third model Nov. 5-9 in its "Les Legendes de Bugatti" series that honors former Bugatti race factory head Bartolomeo Costantini at the Dubai International Motor Show ([see story](#)).

Such an exclusive production line likely called, and still calls, for a rigorous vetting process to determine then right owners.

"The cars should go to someone who really cares about the history and lineage of the brand," Mr. Magda said. "It should go to someone who owns a Bugatti, so the brand knows it will be cared for and it will be displayed at appropriate events."

Final Take

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