ROLLS-ROYCE | MEDIA INFORMATION

ROLLS-ROYCE UNVEILS LA ROSE NOIRE:

THE FIRST DROPTAIL COACHBUILD COMMISSION

20 August 2023, Goodwood, West Sussex **(Embargo: 03.00 BST)**

* First of four unique Rolls-Royce Droptail commissions, named ‘La Rose Noire’
* Inspired by romance and the allure of the Black Baccara rose
* Incorporates most complex expression of parquetry in Rolls-Royce history
* 1,603 wood pieces hand-finished and hand-placed over almost two-year period
* New exterior paint process required 150 iterations to perfect
* Matching Champagne Chest commissioned to stage client’s exclusive vintage
* Features wearable Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Concept timepiece

*“Rolls-Royce La Rose Noire Droptail is a love story, thoughtfully captured and stunningly projected onto the canvas of a Rolls-Royce motor car. It is an expression of the deep and passionate partnership between a husband and wife who are the heads of a prominent international family – to be part of their remarkable story is a privilege. Furthermore, La Rose Noire Droptail stands as a testament to our brand’s relentless pursuit of perfection, where artistry and the vision of a single client truly harmonise. In every detail of this historic commission, there are echoes of both Rolls-Royce’s rich heritage and the commissioning clients’ character, from its captivating yet formidable form to its flawless and elegant romantic gestures. La Rose Noire Droptail, like the remarkable clients who dared to make such a potent and contemporary statement, will be written into Rolls-Royce history forever.”***Torsten Müller-Ötvös, Chief Executive Officer, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars**

*“Rolls-Royce La Rose Noire Droptail stands as one of the most progressive expressions of Rolls-Royce Coachbuild ever conceived. In capturing the romantic and glamorous spirit of the commissioning clients, our design team explored bold new artisanal processes and highly complex creative gestures in their pursuit of a deeply personal language of luxury. The remarkable execution of the wood elements of La Rose Noire Droptail in particular are a clear statement that time-honoured exquisite crafts have a place at the pinnacle of modern design. Indeed, the ambition of the marque’s clients, and the peerless capabilities of its designers signal a long and exciting future for Rolls-Royce Coachbuild and its standing as the leading creative force in applied art at its highest level.”***Anders Warming, Design Director, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars**

*“Rolls-Royce La Rose Noire Droptail is glamour distilled. The guiding inspiration for this dark, bold and powerful commission was the Black Baccara rose, which was a significant point of affection for the client and a source of fascination for the design team. Its rich and complex character informed our creative exploration, influencing the palette, composition, and intricate detailing of the motor car. It led us to blend radically modern design concepts with age-old exquisite craft techniques, while using materials that subtly reinforce the clients’ deep connection to France. Our shared commitment to shaping a meaningful and progressive design statement have culminated in a deeply significant expression of the patron’s character and a new pinnacle for contemporary craftsmanship.”***Alex Innes, Head of Coachbuild Design, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars**

**LA ROSE NOIRE: THE FIRST DROPTAIL**

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars is privileged to present Rolls-Royce La Rose Noire Droptail, a dark, daring and dramatic coachbuilt masterpiece. This extraordinary motor car, presented to the clients who commissioned it at a private event close to Pebble Beach in California today, symbolises the distillation of experiences, significant moments and *objets d’art* cherished by its owners – an international family that exemplifies connoisseurship and luxury of the very highest order. Indeed, Coachbuild designers described the family’s talent for sensitive and informed curation in their homes and within their notable collection of motor cars and fashion icons, as an art form unto itself.

Rolls-Royce La Rose Noire Droptail is inspired by the allure of the Black Baccara rose, an intense, velvet-like flower that originates in France and is beloved by the mother of the commissioning family. The dark pomegranate colour of its petals appears almost black in shade, but in direct light, a red, pearlescent shimmer is revealed on the dark surface. These two colours form the primary palette of La Rose Noire Droptail. The first red shade is named ‘True Love’ in recognition of the romance the client wished to capture in this commission. The darker tone is named ‘Mystery’, inspired by the mysterious nature of the rose, which appears to change colour when viewed from different angles. Indeed, it was the essence of true love and the mystery of exploration and travel that captivated the clients throughout the commissioning process.

The exterior coachwork is finished in the lustrous and complex True Love red. Like the Black Baccara rose, the motor car also appears to change colour depending on the point it is examined from. To achieve this rich variation, surface finish specialists developed a completely new paint process, which was perfected over 150 careful iterations. A base coat, the colour of which is a closely guarded secret, was followed by five layers of clear lacquer, each blended with a slightly different tone of red.

The duotone theme extends into La Rose Noire Droptail’s brightwork. The dark finish, named Hydroshade due to its liquid quality, was developed specifically for this project. These pieces are not painted; rather, a specific chrome electrolyte is introduced in the chrome plating process and co-deposited on each stainless-steel substrate in a layer just one micron thick – roughly the same width as a strand of spider-web silk. This dark but reflective finish is continued on select metal details throughout the interior, each of which have been precision-polished by hand to achieve a high-gloss finish.

A removable hard top has been designed to give Droptail two distinct characters: without its roof Droptail is a lithe, open-top roadster; with the roof installed, it becomes a formidable and dramatic coupé. Exclusively for La Rose Noire, the roof is uniquely low-slung, which is further exaggerated with a faster and longer rake to underpin its assertive, glamourous character. Behind it, an ingot with the motor car’s name is included – a first for Rolls-Royce. The completely Bespoke roof also features an electrochromic glass section, which instantly transitions to a near-translucent shade at the touch of a button, inviting patrons to explore the world above.

The commissioning clients’ passion for detail is exemplified on La Rose Noire Droptail’s Pantheon grille vanes. In a discreet embellishment, True Love paint is hand-applied as an accent on the reverse surface of the vanes themselves – a refined detail that is only visible by way of indirect reflection.

This subtle flourish continues into the intricate lower front air intake. This highly detailed piece was digitally designed and 3D printed in a lightweight composite and incorporates 202 hand-polished stainless-steel ingots, each hand-painted in the True Love hue.

A significant exterior element is the treatment of the striking alloy wheels, which feature the dark Mystery paint finish. Like the flower itself, from afar the finish appears to be black, but upon closer examination, the sunlight reveals shimmering dark red undertones. The Mystery paint is applied to the entire surface of the rim and then, through a high-precision diamond milling process, areas of the paint are removed to expose accents of the base alloy material that are then polished. This treatment emphasises the directional nature of the wheel and its bold 22-inch size, underpinning this Droptail’s formidable personality.

**LA ROSE NOIRE: GLAMOUR DISTILLED**

The most remarkable element of this extraordinary motor car is its cocooning interior. This reveals the most complex expression of parquetry ever created at Rolls-Royce – the product of nearly two years of development, intense experimentation and hand craftsmanship.

The artwork represents an abstract expression of falling rose petals, formed using 1,603 pieces of black wood veneer triangles. The highly complex pattern is formed with 1,070 perfectly symmetrical elements forming the background, and 533 asymmetrically positioned red pieces representing the rose petals. The asymmetry was requested by the clients to represent a natural, organic ‘scattering’ of petals.

Made from Black Sycamore wood sourced in France as a subtle tribute to the French provenance of La Rose Noire, each triangle is cut, sanded and precisely positioned by hand. The pieces that appear to be stained light and dark grey are in fact presented in their natural hue; the colour difference is achieved by using veneer from several logs with different ‘figures’ – the natural pattern on the veneer. Paint was used only to create the red pieces – to avoid the colour fading over time, the marque’s artisans spent a year developing a new lacquer formula to protect this extraordinary projection of contemporary craft.

This intricately detailed and embracing piece envelopes the motor car’s occupants, stretching from the rear shawl panel through the doors and onto the expansive fascia. Its assembly required such intense concentration that the single craftsperson tasked with creating it could only work in one-hour sessions for no more than five hours total per day, to ensure they maintained the focus required for perfect execution. The artisan, who has been with Rolls-Royce since their apprenticeship, spent weeks working in absolute silence in a sound-insulated space to mitigate against any potential distractions. To create what is unquestionably a work of art in its own right took more than nine months in total.

Resolving the interior, La Rose Noire Droptail’s two seats are decorated at the edges with both dark red Mystery leather, and light red True Love leather, each finished with a subtle copper shimmer, evoking the pearlescent texture of the Black Baccara rose petals.

**A SINGULAR TIMEPIECE**

The fascia of Rolls-Royce La Rose Noire Droptail is provisioned with an integrated one-off timepiece by Audemars Piguet, which was specially commissioned by the client. The 43mm Royal Oak Concept Split-Seconds Chronograph GMT Large Date is powered by a unique self-winding Calibre 4407 movement, featuring a flyback chronograph and a split-seconds mechanism. Masterfully matched to La Rose Noire’s colourway, it incorporates red counters and a red inner bezel, providing a bright contrast to the black ‘openworked’ dial highlighted with rhodium-toned bevels.

Integrating the timepiece presented a significant challenge: the clients requested that it should both be mounted in the motor car and also be removable, so that it can be attached to a strap and worn. This was realised with a powered clasp mechanism that gently presents the timepiece at the touch of a button.

Once the timepiece has been removed, the aperture in the fascia is covered with an elegant titanium openworked blank head watch highlighting a white-gold coin displaying a rose engraving, hand-sculpted by Audemars Piguet artisans. Subtle rose engravings on the motor car’s Bespoke Audio speaker frets mirror this motif. Each of the pieces were meticulously crafted by hand in the Swiss brand’s atelier and represent the only literal expressions of the Baccara Rose in the whole motor car.

A slim, soft leather pouch in the door paniers houses the strap and the blank head watch while the timepiece is displayed in the fascia.

**A COMMISSION TO CELEBRATE**

To celebrate their Rolls-Royce La Rose Noire Droptail, the owners commissioned an exclusive vintage of Champagne de Lossy, one of their favourite wine properties. This is of particular significance given the special wine created for La Rose Noire Droptail is one of only a precious handful of vintages produced by the Chateau in its 160-year history.

As the perfect staging point, the commissioning family requested a unique Rolls-Royce Champagne Chest. Appointed with matching rose petal parquetry and coordinated to match the colour palette and materials of the motor car, it is the product of the same meticulous attention to detail as the clients’ coachbuilt Rolls-Royce.

At the press of a button, the Champagne Chest opens, revealing an intricate champagne set replete with hand-blown crystal champagne flutes. The exterior lid converts to a serving tray made of bookmatched open pore Black Sycamore wood with a design of the Chateau central to the brushed and laser-cut stainless-steel inlay.

The sides are adorned with the same intricate parquetry work as La Rose Noire Droptail. Once deployed, they reveal two hammocks cradling the clients’ special edition Champagne de Lossy, designed to match the motor car’s colour scheme. Stored thermal champagne coolers, made from black anodised aluminium and carbon fibre, are finished in the dark Mystery hue and ensure the champagne is maintained at the optimum drinking temperature.

**LA ROSE NOIRE DROPTAIL: TAKING ITS PLACE IN THE ROLLS-ROYCE LEGEND**

This bold and historic motor car is a romantic celebration of the couple who created it, characterised by passion and a restless desire for meaningful experiences. In commissioning this extraordinary expression of Droptail, this remarkable family has not only shaped their own legacy but also participated in the legend of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars.

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## EDITORS’ NOTES

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars is a true luxury house, creating the world’s most recognised, revered and desirable handcrafted Bespoke products for its international clientele.

The company employs more than 2,500 people at the Home of Rolls-Royce at Goodwood, West Sussex. This comprises both its global headquarters and Centre of Luxury Manufacturing Excellence – the only place in the world where Rolls-Royce motor cars are designed, engineered and meticulously built by hand. Its continuous investment in its facilities, products and people has resulted in a series of ‘record years’ for global sales, peaking in 2022 with over 6,000 motor cars sold worldwide.

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars is a wholly owned subsidiary of the BMW Group and is a completely separate, unrelated company from Rolls-Royce plc, the manufacturer of aircraft engines and propulsion systems.

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