ROLLS-ROYCE | MEDIA INFORMATION

ROLLS-ROYCE UNVEILS AMETHYST DROPTAIL:

AN EXPRESSION OF purity, clarity and resilience

24 August 2023, Goodwood, West Sussex **(Embargo: 18.00 BST)**

* Rolls-Royce Motor Cars presents Rolls-Royce Amethyst Droptail
* Extraordinary coachbuilt project is inspired by the birthstone of the patron’s son
* Incorporates exquisite celebration of painstaking craft and focussed minimalism
* Veneer aft deck is the largest wood surface ever produced by Rolls-Royce
* Rear section is the only aerodynamically functional wood surface on a new motor car
* Precious amethyst gems are incorporated into interior and exterior
* First time both brushed and polished finish have been applied to Pantheon grille
* Finish inspired by *haute horlogerie*, referencing client’s Vacheron Constantin timepiece
* Unveiled to commissioning client at private event in Gstaad, Switzerland

*“This stunning expression of Rolls-Royce Droptail truly captures the soul of its commissioning client. This distinguished and international individual exemplifies connoisseurship, and their global outlook, refined tastes and deep-rooted heritage were a broadening pleasure to explore. The extraordinary projection of their spirit, captured in Rolls-Royce Amethyst Droptail, is a clear statement of Rolls-Royce Coachbuild’s intent: to collaborate profoundly as a means to produce an historic expression of applied art. It is the client’s personal involvement that gives Coachbuild motor cars their unparalleled strength of character. These products reflect an exceptional clarity of vision, executed with absolute conviction. Amethyst Droptail captures these virtues in extremis.”***Torsten Müller-Ötvös, Chief Executive Officer, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars**

*“A Coachbuilt Rolls-Royce derives its identity and legend from the accomplishments, sensibilities and character of its owner. It is this human dimension, combined with highly progressive design, that makes it entirely unique and irreplaceable. This specificity gives every Coachbuild commission a sense of timelessness and artistic endurance. Within Rolls-Royce design, Amethyst Droptail will stand in our history as a representation of how accurate our creative response can be in projecting the soul of an individual commissioning client through both literal and highly conceptual expressions of personal luxury.”***Anders Warming, Design Director, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars**

*“Rolls-Royce Amethyst Droptail is the epitome of quiet artistry and its significance lies in its depth of detail. Together with a discerning patron whose character resonates throughout the commission, we explored their sensibilities, cherished pursuits and values through masterfully curated details, each imbued with profound symbolic significance. Created for an individual with a passion for modern design, the minutia of haute horlogerie techniques and whose family has a special connection to gemstones, Amethyst Droptail is a remarkable projection of connoisseurship, contemporary design and personal heritage.”***Alex Innes, Head of Coachbuild Design, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars**

**AMETHYST DROPTAIL**

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars is honoured to present Rolls-Royce Amethyst Droptail – a breathtaking coachbuilt masterpiece that celebrates its commissioning client’s cultural heritage, family legacy and personal passions.

One of four unique expressions of the Rolls-Royce Droptail, Amethyst Droptail is a truly elevated expression of applied art, commissioned by a patron whose family business has grown from a gemstone boutique to a multinational corporation with diversified interests. Exceptionally well-travelled, internationally educated and truly global in their inspirations, the client is an established patron of the arts, whose collection of precious jewels, significant motor cars and contemporary artworks are housed in a specially commissioned private museum.

The patron tasked Coachbuild designers to create an elegant expression of Droptail inspired by the amethyst gem – the birthstone of their son and an enduring symbol of purity, clarity and resilience; themes that are explored throughout this exceptional motor car in extraordinary depth. The client’s passion for quiet artistry and subtle flourishes is what defines Amethyst Droptail – a projection of true connoisseurship that rewards those who study it with beguiling details.

Rolls-Royce Amethyst Droptail was unveiled to the commissioning client, their family and friends at a private event in Gstaad, Switzerland – a region of particular significance for the patron.

**A FLOWER IN THE DESERT**

The patron and co-creator of Rolls-Royce Amethyst Droptail expressed a profound desire to celebrate the cultural heritage of their home region. Rolls-Royce Coachbuild designers responded with an inspiration point that would define this Droptail’s exterior treatment: the Globe Amaranth wildflower, which blooms in the desert near one of the client’s homes.

The duotone exterior paint finish captures multiple stages of the flower’s bloom. The main body colour is a soft purple hue with a delicate silver undertone, named Globe Amaranth in tribute to the flower, and is enhanced with fine flecks of powdered aluminium that reflect the light and create a captivating iridescent finish. A deep purple Amethyst contrast paint, which is used on the motor car’s upper coachwork, contains a blend of red, blue and violet mica flakes that together create a unique mauve colour with a subtle metallic sheen.

In sunlight, the motor car also reveals a gentle hint of mauve paint on the inside of the 22-inch wheels, providing a subtle but elegant contrast to the mirror-polished aluminium surface; a touch that the client compared to the colourful lining of their favourite bespoke jacket.

The exterior is finished with a subtle but highly complex treatment to the carbon fibre used to construct the lower sections of the motor car. The result of two years of development, the marque’s craftspeople created a chevron pattern book-matched along two axes, which adds geometric decoration to Rolls-Royce Amethyst Droptail’s technical exterior surfaces. The carbon fibre itself is finished with a fine layer of lacquer tinted with Amethyst pigment, which in most lights reads as body colour. This intricate and technically demanding detail is hidden until the motor car is closely scrutinised, speaking of the client’s passion for subtlety and restraint.

**DEPTH OF DETAIL**

The client’s trust in Rolls-Royce’s artisans to execute the most challenging flourishes is expressed in the Pantheon grille treatment. The exterior grille surround and ‘kinked’ vane pieces are partially hand-brushed and partially hand-polished with a precise line demarking each finish – a surface treatment that had never been attempted on this scale before. The concept was suggested by the commissioning client’s son, a collector of *haute horlogerie* who was inspired by the brushed hands of an historically significant piece in his archive. Achieving the perfect uniformity in the finishes, as well as the sharpness of contrast between the finish types, was the result of more than 50 hours of collective work.

Beneath this extraordinary expression of contemporary craftsmanship is an intricate lower front air intake. This highly detailed piece was digitally designed and ‘printed’ in a lightweight composite and incorporates 202 hand-polished stainless-steel ingots, each of which has been painstakingly painted by hand in the Globe Amaranth hue.

The front end is resolved with a Spirit of Ecstasy figurine surrounded by amethyst cabochons. The cabochon treatment, whereby a gemstone is shaped and polished into a rounded form rather than faceted, was requested by the client in order to avoid a conspicuous sparkle. This subtle detail recalls the client’s early enterprise in the precious gemstone business.

**CELEBRATION OF MATERIALS**

Rolls-Royce Amethyst Droptail celebrates the materials and crafts personally curated by the commissioning client and his family. The material selection began with a sample of wood offered by the client – a stunning Calamander Light open-pore wood, which has a complex texture and long bands of colour.

The colours of the client’s initial wood sample served as the inspiration for the motor car’s leather treatment – the gently contrasting leather, in the aptly named Sand Dunes hue, was developed to perfectly match the caramel strands on the Calamander Light open-pore wood. Following this, wood specialists were challenged to source material with bands in precisely the same colour as the leather, a task that took more than six months to resolve, requiring specialists to review more than 100 logs before the perfect piece was discovered.

The primary leather hue, named Amethyst, complements the exterior surface and is finished with a subtle pearlescent lacquer, reminiscent of the brilliance of the precious gemstone after which the motor car is named.

For Amethyst Droptail, Rolls-Royce has created the most extensive wooden surface area in its history, with the material extending from the motor car’s fascia and doors to the shawl panel, cantilevered ‘plinth’ centre armrest and onto the aft deck.

In applying wood to the aerodynamically functional aft deck, the marque’s aerodynamicists and wood specialists worked closely together to experiment with not just the form of the panel, but with different wood-grain textures and the precise angle of the placement of the veneer itself. The result is both an extraordinarily artistic piece and the world’s only ‘raw’ wooden surface that produces downforce on a new roadgoing motor car.

A completely new veneering process was developed specifically for Amethyst Droptail, with each veneer sheet placed upside down to expose the raw wood texture. Two techniques are combined: ‘bookmatching’ at 55 degrees, in which the sheets of wood mirror each other, and ‘slip-matching’, in which the sheets of wood are aligned side by side in sequence, to create a repeating grain pattern for an organic, natural effect that gives the illusion of a single piece of wood.

To ensure Amethyst Droptail can be enjoyed by its commissioning client in a variety of climates around the word, the interior wood parts were tested to meet the same rigorous endurance standards as the exterior parts. Prior to its final construction, more than 150 samples underwent over 8,000 hours of testing. This included a full sunlight exposure simulation and rainfastness assessment, as well as testing for durability in temperatures ranging from +80°C to -30°C. The deck’s protective coatings, developed specifically for Amethyst Droptail, have been granted their own patent.

To complete the interior treatment, the client requested an elegant addition: the adornment of the rotary dials with rare amethyst gems. As with the gems at the base of the Spirit of Ecstasy figurine, they too are shaped in a convex cabochon style rather than faceted. The stunning depth and clarity of each stone is of a standard usually reserved for fine jewellery. Each stone was examined by experts within the client’s organisation before they were personally and individually approved by the client. The interior suite is resolved with woven leather floormats – a subtle tribute to the traditional weaving crafts found for centuries in the souks of the client’s original home region.

**BESPOKE, ELEVATED**

A removable hard top has been designed to give Rolls-Royce Droptail two distinct characters: without its roof, Droptail is a lithe, open-top roadster; with the roof installed, it is a formidable and dramatic coupé.

The roof incorporates electrochromic glass that allows the surface to change colour and transparency instantly. The client challenged Coachbuild designers to develop a glass that would alter its hue in order to correspond with the colourway of Amethyst Droptail. In response, the Rolls-Royce Bespoke Collective developed a unique chameleon effect for its electrochromic glass: when deactivated, it is completely opaque and has a subtle purple tint, mirroring the motor car’s Amethyst exterior finish. Once the glass is activated at the touch of a button, it becomes translucent with a hue that matches the Sand Dunes leather colour used in the interior suite. The realisation of this extraordinary flourish required specialists to experiment with 60 iterations of glass colouring before a perfect match was found.

**A SINGULAR TIMEPIECE**

Rolls-Royce Amethyst Droptail fascia is graced with a unique timepiece commissioned by the client from the renowned Swiss *haute horlogerie* maison, Vacheron Constantin. Handmade in Geneva, the piece, named ‘Les Cabinotiers Armillary Tourbillon,’ has an intricate hand-wound movement and is securely housed in a specially designed holder, enabling it to be removed and stored separately from the motor car if desired. The timepiece features a bi-retrograde display with instantaneous return of the hours and minutes as well as a bi-axial tourbillon.

Vacheron Constantin and Rolls-Royce Motor Cars worked closely together to ensure the forms, materials and colours of the timepiece were in perfect harmony within the motor car. The instrument dials combine amethyst-coloured inserts with the partially brushed and polished finish of the timepiece’s hands. The timepiece is affixed to a white-gold baseplate with a hand-crafted sunburst *guilloché* pattern.

**AMETHYST DROPTAIL: A PERSONAL PLACE IN ROLLS-ROYCE HISTORY**

This extraordinary expression of Rolls-Royce Droptail is a testament to the commissioning client’s passion for quiet detail, playfully but meticulously incorporated into one of the most historically significant Rolls-Royces ever built. It also represents the marque’s capabilities, not just in realising such a clear vision, but in artfully harmonising heritage, modernity and soul.

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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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