

New art car: sneaker design meets electric sports car

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01/06/2022 The designer and influencer Sean Wotherspoon is all about fashionable streetwear with a vivid colour palette and unusual materials. The 32-year-old joined forces with Porsche in designing his own personal Taycan 4 Cross Turismo.

The striking exterior painted in a colour block style was one of the highlights of South by Southwest® in Austin, Texas, in March. Now Porsche is revealing the interior of the art car for the first time: the lively colour blocking continues with Nash Blue, Sean Peach, Loretta Purple and Ashley Green. Cork on the dashboard, steering wheel and centre console creates a visual contrast to this, while corduroy adds another distinctive feature. The roof lining, seat centres and sun visors are upholstered with this material in Atacama Beige. The staunch vegan also wanted the interior to be leather-free, an option that other Taycan customers can also choose.

Striking colour block style

The art car is being presented by Wotherspoon himself via the Porsche Instagram channel, where he is also taking part in a live question and answer session. “From Janis Joplin’s psychedelic 356 in the 1960s to the 911 RSR from 2019 designed by Richard Philips – the list of iconic art cars from Porsche is already long,” says Robert Ader, Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) at Porsche. “Art cars suit Porsche very well. Creative design work with artists inspires us and motivates us to keep developing the brand without changing it fundamentally.”

“Creativity thrives on interaction,” continues Michael Mauer, Head of Style Porsche. “As a designer, it’s important to question everything and always aspire to consider ideas in a new light. Working with young designers like Sean helps us to gain new impulses from very different product areas.”

“When I look at something, I examine how I can change it and elevate it to a new level,” says Sean Wotherspoon. “These questions are my personal challenge. It doesn’t matter whether I’m working on a sneaker or car design, a workflow, sustainability topics or a new material. Striving for innovation drives me and I was fascinated from the start by the unusual materials that the Porsche designers in Weissach work with. We inspired each other again and again throughout the project and ultimately created a completely new type of vehicle design.”

About the creation of this art car

The partnership was initiated by a marketing communications team at Porsche. The communications experts brought Wotherspoon together with the Style Porsche designers and worked with him to organise the world premiere of the car on Instagram. Wotherspoon visited the Porsche Design Studio in Weissach several times. He also oversaw the physical creation of his art car onsite, spending time in the shopfloor for concept cars and the trim shop in Weissach, for instance.

Initially, virtual reality technology was used to try out and discuss many of the exterior colour options on a model car. “Inspired by a visit to the Porsche Museum, Sean got the idea for circular elements on the doors,” recalls Volker Müller, Head of Colour and Trim at Style Porsche. “His idea echoes the starting-number roundels on historic racing cars. At the same time, this inverted colour breaks up the large area.”

To ensure the colours were precisely the ones he wanted, Wotherspoon sent the corresponding Pantone reference codes to Porsche. The mixing bench in the paint shop of the shopfloor for concept cars was used to recreate them and the colours were then applied to what are known as ‘paint frogs’ so that the sneakerhead could view them in person and professionally evaluate them under a range of different conditions.The lighting cabin at the Porsche Design Studio can switch between daylight and artificial light at the push of a button.

The unusual names of the paints have a personal background. “After we explained the importance of having unique names, Sean named the paints after members of his family,” says Volker Müller. This is how Nash Blue, Sean Peach, Loretta Purple and Ashley Green came about. The idea is for the interior to continue the colour blocking concept of the exterior. Corduroy and cork, which he also uses for his streetwear, were the materials Wotherspoon wanted. Corduroy has a long tradition at the sports car manufacturer, with the soft, ribbed material adorning the seat centres of the Porsche 356 as early as 1952.

In the new art car, this woven material was added in Atacama Beige, which Porsche used in the 911 Targa 4S Heritage Edition in 2020. “Working with cork, however, presented a number of challenges to our trimmers,” says Müller. Ultimately, the laminated material, which comes on rolls, had to be fitted to complex shapes such as the dashboard.

Sonderwunsch programme enables additional customisation

The Taycan 4 Cross Turismo designed by Wotherspoon is rounded off by elements from Porsche Exclusive Manufaktur. These include the 21-inch Cross Turismo Design wheels and the rear wiper cover – both painted in Black (high-gloss) – as well as the light strip with Porsche lettering in Black. Customers can implement comparable projects within Porsche Exclusive Manufaktur’s Sonderwunsch programme, a reinterpretation of the legendary service of the same name from the late 1970s, which launched in 2021. One example is using the Paint to Sample Plus option to allow the four outside colours of Wotherspoon’s colour blocking exterior to be offered in future.

About the Taycan Cross Turismo

As the all-rounder among electric sports cars, the Taycan Cross Turismo has all the strengths of the Taycan, such as superior power and great range. Added to this are more headroom for rear-seat passengers and a maximum luggage compartment capacity of more than 1,200 litres. The standard all-wheel-drive chassis, with its air suspension, features height adjustment. The off-road design elements include wheel arch covers, distinctive lower sections at the front and rear, and side skirts.

About Sean Wotherspoon

Sean Wotherspoon first made his name with the Nike Air Max 97/1 sneaker he created in 2018. Aside from the design, what was unusual was the use of corduroy as the upper material, and this has become Wotherspoon’s trademark. He has been working with Adidas since 2020. In 2013, he opened the first Round Two Store in the US, a vintage shop for streetwear and sneakers. The designer and influencer has already worked with Porsche on ‘The Art of Drive’. This interactive online mentoring programme invites prominent figures to share how they fulfilled their dreams and inspired other people along the way via a series of short films, articles, interviews and digital events.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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Consumption data

Taycan 4 Cross Turismo (Predecessor model)

*Further information on the official fuel consumption and the official specific CO_2 emissions of new passenger cars can be found in the "Leitfaden über den Kraftstoffverbrauch, die CO_2-Emissionen und den Stromverbrauch neuer Personenkraftwagen" (Fuel Consumption, CO_2Emissions and Electricity Consumption Guide for New Passenger Cars), which is available free of charge at all sales outlets and from DAT (Deutsche Automobil Treuhand GmbH, Helmuth-Hirth-Str. 1, 73760 Ostfildern-Scharnhausen, www.dat.de).

Video

https://newstv.porsche.com/porschevideos/213726_en_3000000.mp4

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https://www.instagram.com/sean_wotherspoon/?hl=de