The W16 Mistral 'Blanc Éternel': Celebrating PERPETUAL BEAUTY

Through Bugatti Sur Mesure, the sculptural form of the Bugatti W16 Mistral roadster becomes an exquisite canvas, shaped around the finest expressions of artistry and craftsmanship. A one-of-one creation uniting the precision of digital design with painstaking handcraft and the centuries-old porcelain expertise of Königliche Porzellan-Manufaktur Berlin, the W16 Mistral 'Blanc Éternel' embodies that philosophy across its unique, exceptionally delicate design.

The story of 'Blanc Éternel' reaches back 15 years to a poignant bookmark in Bugatti's modern history. In collaboration with Königliche Porzellan-Manufaktur Berlin, KPM, Bugatti created 'L'Or Blanc'; a porcelain-inspired interpretation of the Veyron Grand Sport and one of the earliest expressions of the marque's highly individualized approach to the art of automotive design.

'L'Or Blanc' stood out for its unwavering commitment to uncompromising quality and handcraft of exceptional materials. Frank Heyl, today Bugatti Design Director, was personally involved in the development of this first creation, working meticulously across its surfaces and applying the fluid lines of its distinctive design directly onto the car by hand.

The aesthetic found its starting point in an exquisite vase designed for KPM by the celebrated Italian designer Enzo Mari. Finished in white porcelain and decorated with flowing blue lines, the vase was characterized by the apparent simplicity and confidence of its brushwork. Its continuous royal-blue strokes thus inspired Bugatti's designers to consider how a similarly pure graphic language could be translated onto the complex, sculptural volumes of a hyper sports car.

The answer came from the lines of light used by automotive designers and quality specialists to examine a vehicle's surfaces. Reflected across the body, these lines reveal every curvature and otherwise imperceptible imperfection. On 'L'Or Blanc', they were

transformed into an expressive composition, fastidiously applied to trace and celebrate the car's form.

Fifteen years later, Bugatti and KPM return to this shared story at the closing of the W16 era. Yet rather than recreate the celebrated reflection-line aesthetic, the design teams sought to move the idea forward, honoring its origins while expressing how the process of designing a Bugatti has evolved.

The W16 Mistral was developed through an entirely digital design process, as clay models are no longer needed to form and refine a vehicle. Within the digital environment, the Mistral's sculptural form was constructed from a network of precisely controlled surfaces, called NURBS (Non-Uniform Rational B-Splines).

Together, these individual digital elements create the seamless volumes that come together to create the finished roadster. For 'Blanc Éternel', this normally invisible patch layout becomes the foundation of the exterior artwork.

Fine black lines map the underlying digital surface layout of the W16 Mistral, flowing across the bodywork and revealing the geometric logic behind its seemingly effortless form. In this beautiful dance of design and duality, the definitive contrast of black against white reflects the clear visual language of digital modeling, while the name 'Blanc Éternel' evokes both the perpetual beauty of pure-white porcelain, and the enduring place of the W16 within Bugatti history.

The result forms a fitting bookend to an incomparable engineering era. The Veyron established the W16 as an automotive icon; the W16 Mistral represents its final roadgoing expression. Through 'Blanc Éternel', the beginning and culmination of that journey are united by a shared celebration of design, craftsmanship and porcelain.

Despite the digital origins of its graphic composition, the execution of 'Blanc Éternel' is unmistakably human. Although there was no clay model upon which to position and refine the graphic, the finished vehicle still had to be meticulously taped in preparation for painting. The lines were therefore applied directly to the body of the actual W16 Mistral, transforming the digitally outlined concept into a lovingly handcrafted reality.

The body is first finished in pure white before its surfaces are carefully sanded and prepared. Every black line is then positioned by hand using precisely applied tape, before the surrounding areas are counter-masked, the original lengths of tape are removed to expose the intended design, and the resulting channels are sprayed in black.

It is thus an intricately painted composition requiring measured patience and an instinctive understanding of how each line must travel across the car's three-dimensional form. The digital origins of the design may have transformed the way the vehicle was conceived, but its physical realization continued to rely upon the dexterity and judgment of Bugatti's craftspeople.

This interplay of black and white directs the eye across the W16 Mistral's signature features, from its reimagined horseshoe grille and sculpted front profile to the rising

C-line, dramatic air intakes and unmistakable X-shaped taillight architecture. Each surface appears both artistically expressive and technically exposed, as though the digital conception of the car has been rendered permanently upon its physical form.

Porcelain details created with KPM provide punctuations of pristine white within the graphic composition; covering such details across the exterior as the EB emblem, the fuel and oil caps, and two inlays incorporated into the engine cover, featuring the logo of KPM Berlin, the royal scepter.

The conception of such intricate pieces requires extensive specialist knowledge. Porcelain contracts slightly as it is fired in the kiln, meaning its dimensions after curing differ 17% from those of the original unfired component. This shrinkage must therefore be precisely anticipated during the modeling and development process, so that every completed piece fits seamlessly into its designated position on the vehicle.

Inside the cockpit, the exterior's digital linework is translated directly onto white leather - the required definition and durability of which demanded the curation of an entirely new Bugatti process.

The individual leather sections are carefully prepared before the precise line pattern is laid out and masked by hand. Black paint is then applied directly to the white leather, creating the same sharp graphic contrast that characterizes the exterior.

Porcelain is again central to the experience; a material with which the occupants physically interact each time they enter the cockpit. The speaker cover plate, two kneepad inlays, gear-shifter shells, center-console armrest inlay and the window-lifter buttons are crafted from precious porcelain, complemented by the elements of the same material integrated throughout the exterior.

The driver therefore encounters genuine porcelain when selecting a gear, operating a window or resting an arm within the cockpit. Rather than confining the material to purely decorative inserts, Bugatti and KPM have made it a functional and tangible part of the W16 Mistral experience; a deliberate expression of the marque's belief in real materials and purposeful artistry.

"The W16 Mistral 'Blanc Éternel' is exceptionally beautiful because every line and every material has a purpose. Our ambition for this unique commission saw us dive deeply into the essence of the Veyron Grand Sport 'L'Or Blanc', and write its next chapter through the entirely digital design language of the W16 Mistral. Bringing the car to life required an intricate collaboration between our Bugatti design team in Berlin and the experts and leadership at KPM. 'Blanc Éternel' respects Bugatti's history without being constrained by it, fusing our heritage with individual taste in a way that feels wholly new. That is the beauty of Sur Mesure, in creating something authentic and timeless that could belong to no one else."

Frank Heyl, Bugatti Design Director

"The combination of delicate porcelain and uncompromising hypercar performance once again proved to be an extraordinary creative challenge. With the utmost care and precision, the bodywork accents and decorative elements of the 'Blanc Éternel' were meticulously crafted. Refining such a sensitive material for use in a vehicle of this performance class represents a remarkable achievement in craftsmanship."

Thomas Wenzel, Creative Director of KPM

To commemorate the renewed partnership, KPM and Bugatti have also created a limited-edition 'Blanc Éternel' porcelain collection inspired by the unique W16 Mistral. Comprising the To-Drive Cup and KPM's iconic Aviator Cup in two sizes, the collection is limited to 1,000 handmade pieces, each expressing the shared pursuit of precision, purity and enduring design that defines both maisons.

"I am proud and excited that, after 15 years, this collaboration has once again brought together two of my greatest passions: porcelain and automobiles. KPM and Bugatti represent the perfect fusion of master craftsmanship and engineering excellence. Two exceptional maisons, connected by a shared pursuit of perfection, brought to life in an extraordinary automotive work of art."

Jörg Woltmann, Owner of KPM

"With this renewed partnership between Bugatti and KPM, and one of the final expressions of our legendary W16 era that it has yielded, we pay tribute to an intricate and emotional chapter in Bugatti's modern history. Only now, we interpret that tale through an entirely new design language. 'Blanc Éternel' and the accompanying porcelain artworks demonstrate that true luxury is the opportunity to create something deeply meaningful - deeply precious, rooted in heritage and realized without compromise. It is a singular achievement that reflects the identity and the enduring spirit of both KPM Berlin and Bugatti."

Hendrik Malinowski, Managing Director of Bugatti