



Media Information
5 September 2016

BMW Individual 7 Series by Esther Mahlangu. South African artist designs unique interior of the BMW luxury sedan.

Munich/Mpumalanga. 25 years ago, Esther Mahlangu, a South African artist, was the first woman to create artwork on a BMW 525i Sedan. Its bodywork was adorned with the bright colours and unique ornamental shapes, typical of Ndebele art, thus turning it into a BMW Art Car. Esther Mahlangu has now, for the second time, joined forces with BMW and refined a BMW 7 Series. In collaboration with the BMW Individual Manufaktur, Mahlangu transformed a luxury sedan into a dynamic work of art by painting her characteristic motifs on the real wood interior trims.

To facilitate this the specialists at BMW Individual Manufaktur oversaw the full manufacturing process. They developed a special white-coloured fine-wood trim to be painted with Esther's images before sealing them to ensure their longevity and installing them within the equally remarkable vehicle. The one-of-a-kind automobile will be shown to the public for the first time at this year's Frieze Art Fair (5- 9 October) in Regent's Park, London. The vehicle will be offered for silent auction. Proceeds from the sale of the vehicle will be donated to a good cause.

The 81-year-old artist said: "To paint is in my heart and it's in my blood. The way I paint was taught to me by my mother and my grandmother. The images and colours have changed and I have painted on many different surfaces and objects but I still love to paint. The patterns I have used on the BMW parts marry tradition to the essence of BMW. When BMW sent me the panels to paint, I could see the design in my head and I just wanted to get started! I start by painting the small ones first to get the feel of the surface and then it was easy as the design follows the lines of the panels.

My art has taken me all over the world and I have seen many places, I have painted many walls and objects and my work is in many museums but I am still Esther Mahlangu from Mpumalanga in South Africa. My heart was full of joy when BMW asked me again to paint for them."

Dr Ian Robertson, Member of the Board of the BMW AG, explained:

"Within the framework of the long-term partnership with Frieze and Frieze Masters, we are combining our cultural engagement with BMW Individual for the very first time. I am delighted that we have been able to work again with Esther

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Mahlangu, an exceptional artist and someone I remember well from my time in South Africa. Together with experts from BMW Individual Manufaktur and BMW Group Design, Esther has created a unique work of art – a BMW Individual 7 Series that forms an extraordinary relationship between craftsmanship and Ndebele art.”

The BMW Individual 7 Series by Esther Mahlangu is a right-hand drive vehicle, boasting an array of equipment from the comprehensive BMW Individual Collection in addition to the unique features incorporated by the BMW Individual Manufaktur. 20-inch BMW Individual light alloy wheels in V-spoke styling 649 I underscore the elegant appearance of the BMW 7 Series while the exterior bodywork is coated in BMW Individual Pure metal Silver.

The interior features BMW Individual full fine-grain Merino leather in Smoke White/Black, the highest quality leather available for a BMW, including seats with weave-look stitching and hand-woven piping. The leather’s natural smoothness and its fine structure offers a unique look and feel. The full leather trim also includes the rear panelling of the seats, the upper and lower instrument panel as well as the door panels, including B pillars finished in fine-grain Merino leather. A BMW Individual leather steering wheel with applications in Piano finish Black and an Alcantara headliner in Smoke White complete the exclusive ambience of the interior.

The prestigious BMW 740Li is powered by a high-performing in-line six-cylinder petrol engine with BMW TwinPower Turbo technology, 240 kW/326 hp (combined fuel consumption: 7.0–6.8 l/100 km; combined CO₂ emissions: 164–159 g/km)* and a powerful maximum torque of 450 Nm. The dynamic sedan sprints from 0 to 100 km/h in just 5.6 seconds; top speed is limited to 250 km/h. The BMW 740Li features an 8-speed Steptronic transmission and has the lowest vehicle weight in its segment. It is ECE registered and therefore unable to be registered in the United States.

Premiere at the Frieze Art Fair in London.

The BMW Individual 7 Series by Esther Mahlangu will be unveiled at the BMW Lounge at Frieze in London, located directly next to the “Frieze Auditorium”.

* Fuel consumption based on results of EU test cycle, depending on tyre size.

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Further artwork by the South African artist will also be on display providing an insight into her creative work.

The vehicle will be auctioned in a silent sale starting September 5th where bidders can submit their bids online at <https://www.bmw.co.uk/7seriesauction> or register their bid during the fair at the BMW 7 Series Lounge after having experienced the unveiling of the car. After the fair has ended, the person with the highest bid will become the vehicle owner, facilitated through BMW Retail Online. Proceeds will go to the charitable art project “The Art Room”, a project jointly chosen by Frieze and BMW. Using art as a medium, “The Art Room” supports five to sixteen year old children and youths in their development. At an Art Talk event being held during Frieze week in London, Esther Mahlangu will also speak on the topic of South African art together with Christopher Spring, curator of contemporary, Eastern and Southern Africa at the British Museum, and provide further insight into her creative work.

For Esther Mahlangu, art is created from tradition.

Esther Mahlangu was born a member of the Ndebele tribe in 1935 in Middelburg, a small town in the north-eastern province of Mpumalanga. At the early age of 10, she began to paint under the guidance of her mother and grandmother.

Traditionally, Ndebele women decorate the exterior walls of houses with elaborately painted patterns and graphic elements, symbolising important events such as weddings or other celebrations, thus the walls are used as active communicative media within the community. Esther Mahlangu has separated these decorations and patterns from her people’s traditional art of painting. In the form of pictures, vessels or carpets, she has constantly brought it into new contexts, thereby combining her artwork with items used in everyday life.

Experience personal style with BMW Individual.

Products from the BMW Individual Collection offer the customer unique equipment options. They comprise equipment features that are perfectly aligned to each BMW model, including exclusive paint finishes (such as silky matt BMW Individual Frozen paint finishes), high quality leather, special interior trims and other equipment options. If a customer should desire even greater

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individuality, the BMW Individual Manufaktur will find a solution and implement it with meticulousness, precision and masterful craftsmanship. The results are personalized one-of-a-kind vehicles that uniquely reflect the owner's unmistakable character. In order to achieve this, the BMW Individual Manufaktur offers a virtually inexhaustible spectrum of possibilities. These include more than 100 special paint finishes, including uni and metallic paint, finishes or a choachline.

BMW Individual Manufaktur offers countless possibilities to design the interior according to personal preference. Initials or logos on the interior trim, door sill finishers, headrests or sun protection blinds are just a few ways of personalising a vehicle. The BMW Individual Manufaktur is even able to incorporate a customer's own materials into the design of the vehicle. Experts at the BMW Individual Manufaktur have both the experience and the know-how to implement virtually any desired equipment option. The vehicles created in this way are not simply unique, but also impressively demonstrate the outstanding craftsmanship and the nature of the BMW Individual Manufaktur – customer orientation of the highest degree.

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The BMW Group

With its three brands BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 31 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

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In 2015, the BMW Group sold approximately 2.247 million cars and nearly 137,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2015 was approximately €9.22 billion on revenues amounting to €92.18 billion. As of 31 December 2015, the BMW Group had a workforce of 122,244 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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