



Royal College of Art

Postgraduate Art and Design



KARSAN

Karsan to Create Tomorrow's Taxi – By London for London

London - 16 January 2014 - Turkish automotive manufacturer Karsan has revealed its designs for a new, fully inclusive London taxi, based on the iconic Black Cab, at Mayor of London Boris Johnson's Zero Emissions London Taxi launch event.

By London for London...

Karsan and design engineering company Hexagon Studio is working with London's prestigious Royal College of Art to deliver a bespoke taxi design for London.

Immediately recognisable worldwide, the iconic hackney carriage will be updated for a new generation of passengers. Karsan's all-new Concept V1, with unique styling themes, not only builds on a great British design heritage but includes a number of distinct innovations. Three different models were revealed at the event, each capturing key aspects of user research to date:

Zero Emissions

Concept V1 is designed to accommodate a state-of-the-art electric power pack as well as a range extender version to achieve zero emissions for town-based journeys.

Fully Inclusive & Accessible

Concept V1 offers new transportation freedom for those with reduced mobility, and passengers travelling with wheelchairs, prams or heavy items. Wide dual doors that open at 90 degrees and an automated wheelchair ramp that can be deployed from both sides of the vehicle facilitate easy access. Side lighting outlines the doors on each side, helping those with reduced vision.

Safe for Cyclists & Pedestrians

One of the most innovative aspects of the new Concept V1 is its ability to communicate with other road users. A patented signaling system mounted on the rear will ensure that cyclists, pedestrians and other vehicles are alerted when passenger doors are opening.

Driver-tailored

The design research team interviewed taxi drivers in order to discover what was required to enhance the working experience. Based on this research, Concept V1 will include a modern and comfortable workstation with state-of-the-art gadgets, storage compartments and a wide working space. As many London taxi drivers are over 65, and can often spend a whole working day in their vehicles, comfort is essential. Coach-type, self-suspended, fully adjustable driver seat offering support and comfort will be provided as standard.

Concept V1 has been designed to be exceptionally durable against the wear and tear of rugged streets and rough surroundings. Specially crafted bolt-on body panels can be replaced effortlessly, quickly and economically, reducing out-of-work repair time and associated costs.

A Better Passenger Experience

Concept V1's unconventionally large interior will comfortably seat five passengers, or four passengers and a wheelchair. Even with a full complement of passengers, it will offer significant legroom, setting a new standard for passenger comfort. In addition, a panoramic glass roof allows passengers to enjoy the surrounding iconic cityscape.

Advanced connectivity will be integrated for both social and business demands, GPS and internet connections provide entertainment, payment options, location-based maps and navigation systems. A unique 'infotainment' system keeps passengers connected throughout their commute.

The Design Team behind Concept V1

Leading Turkish car manufacturer Karsan and the design engineering company Hexagon Studio have been working with the Royal College of Art's Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design (HHCD) and Vehicle Design programme for over a year.

Murat Selek, CEO of Karsan, said: "Building on the heritage of London, Karsan has developed the vehicle body in cooperation with its experienced R&D company Hexagon Studio and London's prestigious Royal College of Art to meet the aspirations of the driver as well as the needs of the passenger. Karsan's unique engineering and manufacturing expertise is combined with an in-depth design process based on research thoroughness. Environmentally friendly, Concept V1 is designed to 'accommodate' the latest generation electric powertrain to achieve zero emission and is compliant with conditions of fitness including the 25 feet turning circle requirement. Revolution, alongside evolution!"

Professor Dale Harrow, Head of the Vehicle Design programme and co-lead on the design research project said: "Although the current London cab is one of the few

purpose-built taxis in the world, the design is now two decades old and is badly in need of modernisation. As designers, we believe it is crucial that we take into consideration the needs of both taxi drivers and passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as the wider environment. Not only does any new vehicle need to be 'greener', more sustainable than its predecessors, but a London taxi really has to have that iconic look, that one that marks it out as a Black Cab – no matter what colour its paintwork!"

The research builds on Karsan and Hexagon Studio's Concept V1 prototype vehicle, which made the shortlist for the 2011 New York Taxi of Tomorrow competition. In June 2013, Karsan presented a revised prototype at the London Motor Expo in Canary Wharf to scope opportunities and gauge reaction to a more London-specific design.

ENDS

For further information, interviews or images please contact:

Royal College of Art

Aine Duffy

Head of Communications

aine.duffy@rca.ac.uk or +44(0)2075904127

Sue Bradburn

Media Relations & Marketing Manager

sue.bradburn@rca.ac.uk or +44(0)2075904114

Bound Communication Consultancy

Burcu Özkutan

Corporate Communication Manager

burcu.ozkutan@bound-pr.com

w: 009 0212 385 2493 m: 009 0530 975 6566

Gülşah Güneç

Communication Specialist

gulsah.gunenc@bound-pr.com

w: 009 0212 385 2477

NOTES FOR EDITORS:

Karsan

Turkish automotive manufacturer Karsan was established in 1966 and produces vehicles for other global brands alongside its own. Since 2009, Karsan has provided both domestic and international marketing, sales and after-sales services. In line with its 'Limitless Transportation Solutions' vision, it offers turnkey solutions including design, engineering, manufacturing, sales and after-sales services.

<http://en.karsan.com.tr/>

Hexagon Studio

Hexagon Studio acts as a Research and Development center of Karsan. Until now Hexagon Studio designed many concepts and products for Karsan such as; CONCEPT V1, JEST, MPXL, CXL etc. Turkey's largest independent Engineering & Design center with its prototyping facility. Provides turnkey solutions throughout the entire cycle of product development. Has been endorsed as a Research and Development Center by the Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology of the Republic of Turkey.

<http://www.hexagonstudio.com.tr/EN>

Royal College of Art

The Royal College of Art is the world's most influential postgraduate university of art and design. Specialising in teaching and research, the RCA offers the degrees of MA, MPhil and PhD across the disciplines of fine art, applied art, design, communications and humanities. There are over 1,300 masters and doctoral students and more than 1,000 professionals interacting with them – including scholars, leading art and design practitioners, along with specialists, advisors and distinguished visitors. Graduates from the RCA's Vehicle Design programme are at the helm of every major vehicle design company in the world. Founded over 40 years ago, the RCA's proven reputation in driving automotive design innovation forward is unparalleled.

The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design at the RCA is an internationally recognised centre for design research with a track record of over 160 projects and a key focus on improving mobility for people of all ages and abilities.

www.rca.ac.uk