



Press release  
June 2012

## **Material girl. A portrait of Martina Starke.**



In her role as Head of Colour and Trim Design BMW Individual, Martina Starke has since 2008 been responsible for the design of the Individual portfolio as well as exclusive optional extras and limited-edition models. The collection of exquisite materials and colour-coordinated paint finishes, leathers and interior trim strips enables customers to tailor their car to their personal preferences. Martina Starke and her five-strong team are even able to turn more unusual customer requests into reality. She is furthermore in charge of the BMW Group's collaborations with world-famous designers, including Patricia Urquiola, Paul Cockside and designer duo Scholten & Baijings. Martina Starke considers job to be highly rewarding and particularly enjoys the broad spectrum of assignments she carries out.

### **The fabric of a designer's career.**

Martina Starke began her training as an apprentice textile pattern designer, during which time her passion for materials and textiles was able to really flourish. This was followed by studies in textile design at Hanover University of Applied Sciences and Arts. Prior to joining BMW as a colour and material designer in 2001, she worked as a freelance textile designer specialising in interior carpeting and textiles. While she was still studying, a project Martina Starke worked on for the British interior design label Designer's Guild gave her a taste of what it is like to work in an international team. It was here that

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she saw how a constructive exchange of ideas can be used to the advantage of both her work and her personal development. Another formative influence during the early years of her apprenticeship was the world-renowned trend forecaster Lidewij Edelkoort, whose holistic view of design in general and materials in particular continues to have an impact on Martina Starke's work today. Her positive, level-headed manner and her ability to bring different viewpoints to the table are qualities that are highly appreciated by her staff. She is always at pains to look at things from different angles, making her the archetypal open-minded team player. Whether she's collaborating with big-name designers or working together with her team, Martina Starke finds this integrative approach to be an important asset for her work. And that work revolves around one constant: people.

### **Design is about understanding people.**

Besides special exterior paint finishes, there is one key aspect of automotive design that falls within Martina Starke's remit: affective perception in the vehicle cabin. The design of a BMW automobile's interior is a continuation of everything suggested by the exterior: sheer driving pleasure. As a result, a BMW is about far more than pure functionality for Martina Starke; it is only made complete by the emotions that are triggered when people come into contact with it. That is why Martina Starke focuses on two fundamental factors: the person and the material. She perceives design as a challenge to be resolved from the user's standpoint: what is needed? What are the customer's requirements? A deep understanding of people is the key here, since aesthetics alone cannot provide the answer. Material is the second intrinsic element in Martina Starke's field of work: it is of overriding importance to her, as the materials used in a car form the primary means of contact with it – whether it be leather, wood or, more exclusive still, lambskin. A vehicle occupant's sense of well-being is also influenced by his or her perception of the materials, so Martina Starke ultimately allows herself to be guided by their composition and properties in order to produce an authentic feel when styling an object.



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### **On the personal side.**

Martina Starke enjoys the luxury of being able to visit exhibitions. She is fascinated by the painting of contemporary artists such as Wolfgang Kessler and Tobias Vetter. Contemplating the works of Olafur Eliasson, Pipilotti Rist, Rosemarie Trockel or the legendary fabric books of Louise Bourgeois helps to give her a new perspective on things. Martina Starke also admires the creativeness of well-known designers like Patricia Urquiola, Stefan Sagmeister and Jonathan Ive. Works by architects such as Norman Foster or from the offices of Herzog & de Meuron likewise keep providing her with fresh impetus for her work. White is the dominant theme at home, where she blends design icons like the Arco lamp and La Chaise furniture with family heirlooms and modern accessories. Martina Starke lives in Munich and is married with one daughter.

### **About BMW Individual.**

BMW Individual is synonymous with exclusive special options and limited-edition BMW models. Customers looking for particular exclusivity and individuality can make a highly personal choice from a range of premium materials, with specially selected paints, leathers and interior trims in matching colours enabling the ultimate customisation of their BMW. BMW Individual can also implement unusual customer specifications in tailor-made one-off models. By blending every detail into a perfect whole, BMW Individual ensures that each of its creations lives up to its tagline: the most exclusive way to drive a BMW.



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### **The BMW M GmbH**

The BMW M GmbH is a one hundred percent subsidiary of the BMW AG. With products and services in the four business areas BMW M Automobiles, BMW Individual, M Sport Packages and Options as well as BMW Group Driving Experience, it addresses customers with particularly high demands on the performance, exclusivity and individuality of their vehicle. The Munich-based company was founded in 1972 as the BMW Motorsport GmbH. Since then, the letter M has been internationally synonymous with success in motor sports and with the fascination of high-performance sports cars for use in everyday road traffic. Production of BMW M automobiles is integrated into the manufacturing processes of BMW plants. The BMW M GmbH possesses the status of an independently operating automobile manufacturer.

In the business year 2009, the BMW M GmbH achieved worldwide sales of more than 15,000 vehicles. The BMW M GmbH currently employs around 500 people in the areas of development, administration and marketing.

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