**Rolls-Royce**

## Media Information

**‘THE GREAT EIGHT PHANTOMS’**

**A ROLLS-ROYCE EXHIBITION**

**ROLLS-ROYCE ANNOUNCES A GATHERING OF THE**

**GREATEST PHANTOMS IN HISTORY**

**1 June 2017, Goodwood**

**#GreatPhantoms**

At the end of July, ‘The Great Eight Phantoms’, a Rolls-Royce Exhibition, will gather together the greatest Phantoms from the last 92 years in Mayfair, London. The Exhibition will welcome the next generation of this most celebrated luxury item. Over the next eight weeks, Rolls-Royce will announce which great Phantoms will journey to London from around the world, telling the stories of these motor cars and the historical events they witnessed. The first story will chronicle ‘The Fred Astaire Phantom I’.

**‘The Great Eight Phantoms’**

From its debut in 1925, a Rolls-Royce Phantom has stood as witness to history’s most defining moments, from treaty signings to occasions of state and the events that have defined the world we live in today.

The conveyance of choice for the world’s most influential and powerful men and women for 92 years, Phantom has stood as a sentinel, silently witnessing moments as significant as The Beatles collecting their honours at Buckingham Palace, Field-Marshal Montgomery driving Churchill and Eisenhower, and numerous global superstars collecting their Oscars.

Its standing as the longest existing nameplate in the world of motoring is testament to Phantom’s enduring importance to every generation’s leaders, from heads of state to generals, royalty to rock stars, stars of the silver screen to titans of industry.

To celebrate this unprecedented legacy – a history still very much being written – Rolls-Royce will bring together the most famous examples of all seven previous generations of Phantom at ‘The Great Eight Phantoms’ Exhibition from 27 July of this year.

Phantoms that have been owned by the great and the good will return from around the globe to
Rolls-Royce’s spiritual home in Mayfair, London – the global home of luxury – for this never to be repeated event, which will welcome the arrival of the eighth and most modern generation of ‘The Best Car in the World’, the new Phantom.

In a series of updates over the next eight weeks, Rolls-Royce will reveal which famous Phantoms will travel to London for the Exhibition, an occasion that promises to write yet another chapter in Phantom’s remarkable history.

The first of these iconic stories is about ‘The Fred Astaire Phantom I’, which is loaned to the Exhibition by its owner, the Petersen Museum in Los Angeles.

**Rolls-Royce Phantom – ‘The Best Car in the World’**

Rolls-Royce began producing the Phantom I in 1925. The car was developed in great secrecy, with the project code-named Eastern Armoured Car. This suggested Rolls-Royce was intent on producing the kind of military vehicles used in the First World War, most famously by Lawrence of Arabia. Sections of armour plate were left lying around the factory to confuse curious competitors eager to glean the secret of making the ‘best cars in the world’.

The Phantom I was an instant success. The new 7.668-litre straight-six engine gave the car a fresh spring in its step. When General Motors opened a testing ground in Michigan, it was discovered that no cars could manage even two laps of the 4-mile circuit at full throttle without damaging their engines big ends – where the piston attaches to the crankshaft. However, Phantom I performed with consummate imperiousness and managed that, and more, at a steady 80mph without failure.

Sir Henry Royce’s restless desire to, in his own words, “take the best that exists and make it better” quickly led to the creation of the Phantom II in 1929, this time with a totally new chassis, which significantly improved the handling, as well as a re-designed engine.

The next Phantom, the third in the line, was to be Sir Henry Royce’s last project. He passed away in 1933, aged 70, about 12 months into the development of this next Phantom. The finished model, with its peerless 12 cylinder engine, was unveiled two years later and production lasted from 1936 until the Second World War. The final chassis was produced in 1941, although the war meant it did not receive its coachwork until 1947. No announcement came about a replacement and it looked as if the Phantom was another victim of the war.

In 1950, Phantom IV appeared. The car was originally intended to be a one-off for Prince Philip and the then Princess Elizabeth. However, once seen, a further 17 were exclusively commissioned at the request of other royal families and heads of state around the world. Fitted with a straight-eight engine, it performed superbly at low speeds – essential for taking part in ceremonial parades – and featured the kneeling version of the famous Spirit of Ecstasy bonnet mascot.

The Phantom V was produced between 1959 and 1968 and 516 of this hugely successful model were made for clients including the Queen Mother, governors of Hong Kong, King Olav of Norway and John Lennon.

The long-running Phantom VI (1968-90) carried on the royal connection, notably with the Silver Jubilee Car, a raised-roof version presented to Queen Elizabeth II in 1977 by the British motor industry to celebrate her 25 years on the throne, and later famously used at the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

In 2003, a watching world was greeted with Phantom VII, a glowing affirmation of the start of Rolls-Royce’s renaissance at his new home in Goodwood, West Sussex. It was sharply contemporary yet timeless in the manner in which it deftly retained Phantom’s characteristic aesthetic. Built at the Home of Rolls-Royce. an all-new, state-of-the-art centre of excellence, it arrived with a 453bhp 6.75-litre V12 – enough to propel it from 0-62mph in 5.9 seconds – and every possible comfort a new breed of discerning luxury consumer could desire. Exquisite detail right down to the car's Teflon-coated umbrellas and self-righting wheel-centres, left a curious public in no doubt the marque was in safe hands.

Production of the Phantom VII ceased thirteen years later at the end of 2016.

‘The Great Eight Phantoms’, a Rolls-Royce Exhibition, will be the first time that this exceptional group of truly iconic luxury motoring pieces will be gathered under one roof. Every Rolls-Royce Phantom is an exceptional car, but thanks to their pedigree, this particular collection will include some very singular cars indeed, all owned at some point by famous individuals, and having played their part in witnessing the making of world history.

This is such an uncommon pageant, it is no exaggeration to say we might never see the likes of it again.

‘The Great Eight Phantoms’, a Rolls-Royce Exhibition, will take place in Mayfair, London, at the end of July this year.

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**Further information:**

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