

Press release  
17 November 2020

## MINI VISION URBANAUT. Make it your space.

**Munich.** The MINI brand is using #NEXTGen to present, in a world exclusive, the MINI Vision Urbanaut – an all-new interpretation of a vision of space. This digital vision vehicle offers more interior space and versatility than ever before, but still on a minimal footprint.

"The MINI brand has always stood for 'Clever Use of Space'. In the MINI Vision Urbanaut, we extend private space far into the public realm, creating completely new and enriching experiences," explains Adrian van Hooydonk, Head of BMW Group Design.

### **The MINI moments.**

"MINI sees its future self primarily as an enabler of and companion for unforgettable times – what we might call 'MINI moments'. The MINI Vision Urbanaut uses three curated MINI moments – "Chill", "Wanderlust" and "Vibe" – to present a wide range of possible usage scenarios. The Chill moment invites you to catch a breath and pause in the here and now. The car becomes a kind of retreat, a haven where you can relax – or work with full concentration – during a journey. Wanderlust is the only MINI moment where the MINI Vision Urbanaut is being driven or driving with automated driving functions. The moment Vibe puts time with other people at centre stage – in every way", adds Oliver Heilmer, Head of MINI Design.

The exterior and interior change to reflect the MINI moment at hand and give the experience the best possible stage. An all-encompassing user experience design, sustainable materials and a purely electric drive system are additional ingredients of the overall concept.

### **The interior design – More Creative Use of Space.**

As an innovative space concept, the MINI Vision Urbanaut was designed from the inside out. The designers created the spacious interior experience before developing the exterior, using floor plans, pieces of furniture plus wooden scale models to provide an indication of size. Over the course of the project, augmented reality was employed to create a digital model, which was then systematically optimised. Unusually tall for a MINI, but only 4.46 m in length, the MINI Vision Urbanaut provides an interior space that can be used in many different ways and offers a whole new ease of movement inside the car.

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## **Electric drive system and automated driving functions also create new ways to use the interior.**

Having been conceived from the outset as an electrically powered vehicle with automated driving functions, the MINI Vision Urbanaut has afforded the designers a greater level of freedom when creating both the exterior and interior.

“In 1959, the very first Mini ushered in a small-scale revolution in vehicle construction with its transversely mounted engine,” recalls Oliver Heilmer, Head of MINI Design. “With the MINI Vision Urbanaut we have been able to rethink and increase the usable surface area inside the car even further in relation to its footprint.”

## **One space, a multitude of possibilities.**

The interior of the MINI Vision Urbanaut provides the ideal environment in which to go on a journey, but is also the aim of the journey. Having arrived at the chosen destination, it can transform into a living room in just a few simple steps. Occupants enter the innovative cabin through a large sliding door in the side of the car. The cutting-edge slide and swivel mechanism is the ideal design for urban driving conditions where space is at a premium. There are no other doors on the driver's side or front passenger side.

## **Driver's area with “Daybed” and “Street Balcony”; “Cosy Corner” in the rear.**

An extremely flexible four-seat layout provides the basis for the bright interior. The two front seats are designed to rotate, while the backrests for the generously sized seat surface in the rear can be folded manually (left rear seat) and turned around (right rear seat). When the car is stationary, the dashboard lowers and the driver's area becomes a comfortable seating corner – the “daybed”. Added to which, the windscreen can be opened upwards when stationary to create a kind of Street Balcony. This enhances interaction with the car's surroundings and creates an even more generous spatial experience.

The darker environs of the cabin's rear section provide a quieter space – the Cosy Corner. This area invites passengers to enjoy some time to themselves. A textile-covered “Loop” extends over the seat bench and features the option of LED backlighting. Between Cosy Corner and the driver's area is the open and airy central section of the car, which offers quick access to all seating areas. With the door open, it is even possible to sit on the floor. On the side of the car opposite the entry door, a small integrated table with a plant adds a finishing touch to the interior fittings. The

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table signifies the car's new centre point – the place where passengers meet, face and engage with one another.

### **User interface and interaction design – “Analogue love, digital connection” as a guiding principle.**

Intuitive, discreet user interface solutions allow conventional controls such as switches or buttons to be omitted. This creates a minimalist, cosy spatial experience while maintaining full connectivity. The principle of making things as simple as possible to use (“natural interaction”) is highlighted by the “analogue”, tactile, haptic experience of initiating a feature, e.g. the direct touch operation option in the Loop over the rear seat bench. The circular instrument is now positioned in the middle of the car – the new centre of the action – and brings information to the place where people meet.

### **The “MINI Token” – the digital-analogue interface for MINI moments.**

The MINI Token is the centrepiece of the MINI Vision Urbanaut's experience worlds. It is roughly the same size as a worry stone and activates the three preconfigured MINI moments – Chill, Wanderlust and Vibe – when placed in purpose-designed slots in the table at the centre of the car. Other MINI moments are conceivable, such as “My MINI moment”. Here, the MINI Token can be programmed to provide another kind of personalised experience, in which the user can configure their own preferred scenario of fragrance, ambient lighting, music, etc. and call it up directly at a later time.

### **The exterior design – the spirit of the brand in a new form.**

The purist mono-volume design of the MINI Vision Urbanaut gives new meaning to the “Creative Use of Space” approach. The flush, virtually seamless surface creates a modern baseline mood, with high-quality details adding carefully judged stylistic flourishes. In signature MINI fashion, the wheels are positioned at the outer corners of the body, with short overhangs rounding off a compact and agile appearance.

### **A new MINI face.**

The front end of the MINI Vision Urbanaut represents a clear evolution of two time-honoured MINI design icons – the headlights and radiator grille. Positioned under a milled aluminium structure with slotted openings, the headlights are only visible when switched on. Thanks to their multicolour dynamic matrix design they can display different multi-coloured graphics, which creates a new form of communication between the car and the outside world to suit each moment. The

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lights on the MINI Vision Urbanaut complement the front “grille” with the attractive look distinctive to every MINI. The enclosed grille itself is now octagonal in shape, representing an evolution of the traditional hexagonal form. Since the MINI Vision Urbanaut does not have a combustion engine requiring cooling air, the grille assumes a new function: it now serves as an intelligence panel for automated driving.

As with the headlights, multicolour dynamic matrix rear lights behind milled aluminium covers deliver a fresh aesthetic and present different looks in the various driving modes and MINI moments. On closer inspection, the distinctive, convex surfaces also pay homage to previous MINIs and the classic Mini. One small detail – the contour of the rear windows – references the form of the front grille and underscores the car’s stylistic consistency.

The clear form of the exterior supplies the car’s colours, materials and details with the perfect stage. The matt exterior shade Zero Gravity transitions from a metallic green with blue flip effect to a subtly toned grey. The windows show a pattern in body colour, fading in a gradient from bottom to top. This creates a harmonious transition from the vehicle body to the windows and roof. The pattern also provides a certain amount of privacy without having to darken the windows; the interior remains bright.

### **Illuminated skateboard wheels provide visual flourishes.**

The visual highlight of the MINI Vision Urbanaut when viewed from the side are the wheels, finished in the colour Ocean Wave, a turquoise blue which sparks associations with the beach and the sound of the sea. The abstract Union Jack profile of the wheels is a nod to the car’s British heritage, while their shape recalls skateboards – thereby further highlighting the car’s nimbleness and non-conformist MINI twist. The wheels also represent another way in which the car communicates with its surroundings. Transparent and illuminated from the inside, their appearance changes according to the selected MINI moment.

### **MINI charms – tactile loveables.**

Occupying an exposed position in the C-pillar on the driver’s side are the “charms”. They offer reminders of places travelled, festivals or other events in the form of pins or stickers, and are presented as graphic collector’s items behind glass, as if in a display cabinet. The MINI charms are also an expression of wanderlust and show what the owner has experienced with the MINI Vision Urbanaut – like the stickers on camper vans or badges on walking poles in days gone by. One charm is dedicated to

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the #Next Gen platform on which the MINI Vision Urbanaut will celebrate its world premiere. Another has a QR code which, when scanned, takes you to MINI.com. In this way, the analogue and digital worlds come together in the car's exterior as well.

### **Expressing the MINI moments in the interior and exterior.**

If one of the three MINI moments is activated by placing the MINI Token in the slots in the table, this is signalled on the outside of the car through the front and rear surfaces and wheel rims. In the interior, the whole geometry – including the seats, the form of the dashboard/daybed and the backrest positions – can be adjusted manually according to the MINI moment selected. The circular instrument display also changes. Fragrance, sound and ambient lighting continue to enrich the baseline mood initiated by the chosen MINI moment.

### **MINI moment Chill – an oasis amid the hustle and bustle of the city.**

In the MINI moment Chill, the MINI Vision Urbanaut becomes a private retreat, an urban oasis. While the rear seat bench (Cosy Corner) invites various seating and lying positions, the backlit Loop above it takes on an appearance inspired by a green forest canopy and can also be dimmed. Ambient music and atmospheric sounds from nature are added to the mix. In the central area, the circular instrument folds down to become a table lamp, eliminating displays or switches that might remind the customer of their automotive surroundings. From the outside, the MINI moment Chill is revealed in the abstract representation of a forest canopy around the headlights, rear lights and wheels.

### **MINI moment Wanderlust – the joy of travelling together.**

Wanderlust is the only one of the three MINI moments where the MINI Vision Urbanaut is actually moving. In this moment, the interior becomes the ideal place for driving the car, or being driven by it, and enables customers to rediscover the romance of travel. The user interface on the central circular instrument adapts its visuals to reflect a world of travel inspired by tourism posters of the 1950s and 60s. Alongside an animation of the route, additional journey information – such as visitor attractions and arrival time – is displayed here for those on board. The Loop above the rear seat bench visualises the feeling of movement with a simulated blur of passing scenery in a mix of orange and turquoise. When the customer wants to drive themselves, a tap of a finger on the MINI logo brings out the steering wheel and pedals. A minimalist parallax display in the dashboard provides route instructions or hazard alerts. There are no other driving-related displays in the dashboard. When automated driving mode is activated, the steering wheel and pedals retract and the driving display disappears from the dashboard. On the exterior of the car, the light

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graphics in the LED matrix surfaces at the front and rear ends signal whether automated mode has been engaged or the customer is driving themselves.

### **MINI moment Vibe – celebrating community, sharing moments.**

In the MINI moment Vibe, the MINI Vision Urbanaut opens up to people and its surroundings, and provides an experience of togetherness and interaction. Opening the side door and folding up the windscreen creates a welcoming scene that blurs the boundaries between the outside and inside. Amid a colour world of magenta and black with turquoise highlights, the MINI Vision Urbanaut provides a central meeting hub; one which can be either quiet or loud. The central circular instrument becomes a media control centre. An animation of graphic equalizers moving with the music is projected onto surfaces of the front, rear, wheels and Loop above the rear seat bench, creating a pleasant club atmosphere. If those on board so desire, the car could even begin to resemble a boombox.

### **Digital services connected with the MINI Vision Urbanaut**

The concept behind the MINI Vision Urbanaut includes services designed to make using the car an enriching and seamless experience. For example, the MINI Vision Urbanaut can be opened using smart devices – so, in keeping with its status as a mobility option of the future, it can be accessed by anyone within a defined circle of family and friends. Playlists, audio books or podcasts to suit the route and the moment can be explored while travelling in the Wanderlust moment. A personal journey planner displays tips and points of interest (POI) tailored to the individual, as well as recommendations from the MINI Community. These can be proposed and selected as desired.

### **Sustainable materials and a responsible mindset.**

The MINI Vision Urbanaut is characterised by the responsible use of resources. As well as maximum space within a small footprint and the all-electric drive system, the MINI Vision Urbanaut is committed to a responsible approach to materials. This is achieved not only by reducing the number of components in the exterior and interior design, but also by enabling dual functions such as the dashboard/daybed. In addition to the use of recyclates, this also means ensuring that the design is free of chrome and leather. Along with the use of recycled materials, this also means avoiding chrome and leather. The dominant material in the interior is knitted textile, which combines cosiness and quality with softness and comfort. The use of cork on the steering wheel and sections of the floor adds a special touch thanks to its natural feel, and ensures an authentically pleasant interior climate.

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## **The BMW Group**

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises 31 production and assembly facilities in 15 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2019, the BMW Group sold over 2.5 million passenger vehicles and more than 175,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2019 was € 7.118 billion on revenues amounting to € 104.210 billion. As of 31 December 2019, the BMW Group had a workforce of 126,016 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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