

Press release
February 2013

In his element at the top of his game. A portrait of Marcus Syring.



Marcus Syring has been Head of Exterior Design at MINI since 2002. Born in Westphalia in northwest Germany, he deems automotive design to be the toughest and yet also the most stimulating of the product design disciplines. There is no other area he finds so appealing with so many intriguing challenges to offer. His job as Head of Exterior Design MINI is full of excitement and variety. The interaction between his many different duties – ranging from creative input to dialogue-based work to managerial tasks – inspires him anew every day. He puts the fascination of the whole design process down to the unique nature of each new job: guidelines and framework conditions that are in a constant state of flux, a sense of aesthetic perception that keeps evolving, plus the ever-changing desires of society and customers all combine to create an inimitable environment – one in which Marcus Syring thrives and is able to unleash his creative flair to enthralling effect time and time again.

Design as a vocation.

Marcus Syring opted for BMW Group Design as soon as he had completed his studies in product design at the University of Wuppertal, first joining the design specialists at BMW Motorsport GmbH BMW in 1991 before moving on to the Design Department of BMW Technik GmbH in 1997. Since the relaunch of the

Company
Bayerische
Motoren Werke
Aktiengesellschaft

Postal Address
BMW AG
80788 München

Telephone
+49-89-382-24360

Internet
www.bmwgroup.com



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MINI brand under the aegis of the BMW Group in 2000 he has been part of the Exterior Design team at MINI. The avid thinker and tinkerer considers what he does to be a vocation. A pivotal moment came when a girlfriend made him see the potential of product design as a profession, and he immediately knew that was the only thing he really wanted to do. The designer describes the time he first laid eyes on a clay model during a work placement as a watershed moment for his career path. What's more, it was the culmination of a childhood dream: even before he was old enough to go to school, Marcus Syring amused himself by using play dough to transform conventional notchback toy cars into sensational sports machines!

An eye for detail.

Recent models whose exterior design Marcus Syring was ultimately responsible for and which can be seen out on the road today include the MINI Coupé and the MINI Roadster. He refers to the BMW Z3 Coupé – already revered as a classic – and the MINI Clubman as career milestones. Both models are brimming with character, and their design and functionality give them an unmistakable personality. For Marcus Syring, good design can be measured by its functional perspectives in three different ways. Besides the physical technical function, encompassing aspects such as ergonomics and all types of technical demands, design must always fulfil an aesthetic function, too. And at the same time, good design also has to meet various requirements in terms of its symbolic function. At MINI this means, among other things, that a MINI instantly stands out as a premium car.

Marcus Syring sees himself as a commissioned artist in the classical sense. The creative scope he is granted by a brief that gives an exact description of what is required without specifying the solution is of crucial importance for his creative output. In Marcus Syring's view, the characteristically unbiased approach at BMW Group Design is essential for achieving a successful result and for enabling all concerned to work together constructively. It's an approach that chimes in exactly with the open-minded Marcus Syring and one that he endeavours to instil in his team.



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On the personal side.

Besides architecture, fashion and product and consumer design, Marcus Syring finds art a great source of inspiration – though the artistic movement or genres are by no means the decisive factor. What is important is that the piece is able to captivate the observer with an emotive appeal expressed, for example, through its wealth of contrasts. He believes the works by architects Herzog & deMeuron are prime examples of this, as they are not confined by any notion of continually recurring formalism – rather, it is the very uniqueness of their edifices, tailored to their surroundings, purpose and client, that makes them stand out. In his free time, the designer enjoys visiting museums, reading and listening to music ranging from Jamie Cullum to Paul Weller. He keeps himself fit with jogging, swimming and yoga. Marcus Syring lives in Munich, is married and has a young daughter.



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In the event of enquiries please contact:

Corporate Communications

Nadja Horn, MINI Design and Lifestyle Communication
Tel.: +49-89-382-24360, Fax: +49-89-382-20626

Susanne Giuliani, BMW Group Design and Lifestyle Communication
Tel.: +49-89-382-20961, Fax: +49-89-382-20626

Media Website: www.press.bmwgroup.de
E-mail: presse@bmw.de

The BMW Group

The BMW Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI, Husqvarna Motorcycles and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 29 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2012, the BMW Group sold about 1.85 million cars and more than 117,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2011 was euro 7.38 billion on revenues amounting to euro 68.82 billion. At 31 December 2011, the BMW Group had a workforce of approximately 100,000 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been built 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. As a result of its efforts, the BMW Group has been ranked industry leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes for the last eight years.

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