

918 SPYDER

MODEL OF PERFECTION

The Style Porsche design department is bringing a clay model of the 918 Spyder into production at a high-speed pace.

In the design studios of the Weissach Development Center, the scraping, sanding, adjusting, and modeling work is leaving the otherwise impeccably clean floor covered with earth-colored bits of clay. Right before the design is frozen, the clay model with a scale of 1:1 takes its place as an object of display in its own right, even in this age of computerized design programs. Michael Mauer, who heads the design department, and Johannes Doll, who is coordinating the 918 Spyder design project, have long since been concentrating on details. In large part they are focusing on a fictitious design element known as "touch": Should the front fender show a touch more or less arc? What tiny increments of curve should the door display? Is the rear a touch too broad or too narrow?



Sound machine:
The exhaust system of the 918 Spyder as surround sound



Clean lines:
Michael Mauer (left) and Johannes Doll use the clay model of the 918 Spyder to discuss details

The current “touch” phase confirms that the concept study of the 918 Spyder presented in 2010 already had enough substance then for the processes involved in small-scale series production. With minimal corrections the front headlights, rear lights, spoilers, doors, glass panes, and interior meet the latest regulatory requirements, while the design meets the function-oriented maxims which Porsche Design has been conjuring from inert masses for 63 years. The tiny reversing cameras are being replaced by true rearview mirrors, and the aggressive sidepipes of the concept study are giving way to a development as elegant as it is technically sophisticated, with exhaust pipes ending above the hood. Perhaps recalling Formula One drive systems from 1.5- and 3-liter Formula systems and evoking cutting-edge superbikes, these features simply reflect Porsche’s resolute and pioneering technological approach.

In the carbon-fiber-reinforced monocoque, there is valuable space behind the seats, which is now reserved for the battery and, to its side, the radiator. Function trumps—as shown by a dual exhaust “fanfare” at ear level. Acid green, the most striking green in the color portfolio, represents more than just an accent in the 918 Spyder—for not only is the centrally

placed, high-speed V8 engine in this two-seater based on the assembly in the RS Spyder, it also has impressive environmental credentials. Thanks to independent electric motors on the rear and front axles, the 918 Spyder can be driven both as a parallel and as a serial hybrid.

Expected to provide 160 kW (218 hp), these electric motors can be used either alone or in combination with the V8 engine of at least four liters displacement and an anticipated 368 kW (500 hp), which is expected to generate a dramatic combined fuel consumption level of 3.0 liters per 100 kilometers (78.4 mpg) as well as an environmentally friendly CO₂ emissions level of 70 grams per kilometer based on the New European Driving Cycle (NEDC). Walter Röhrl, it may safely be predicted, will fly faster than ever in the 918 Spyder through the North Loop of the Nürburgring, also known as the “Green Hell.” Production of the 918 is scheduled to start in 2013.

Shortly after the official sales launch of the new 918 Spyder, customer response has been enthusiastic. The special edition 911 Turbo S Edition 918 Spyder will help to bridge the waiting period until delivery. Quite fittingly, its color is a striking acid green. ●



Touch panels provide transparent operability, so that even in the “Green Hell” the cockpit becomes a paradise in acid green. The special edition 911 Turbo S Edition 918 Spyder (above) eases the waiting period.