Media Information

November 2018

Opel Concept Cars – From Experimental GT to GT X Experimental

- Earliest ancestor: 1965 Experimental GT paves way for all Opel concept cars
- Brand concept: 1969 Opel CD shows the way forward for the brand
- Opel Design 2.0: Monza Concept sows the seeds for emotional and rational choice
- Lightweight, avant-garde, pure: GT Concept showcases new level of efficiency
- Glimpse of the future: GT X Experimental gives insight into Opel's future

Rüsselsheim. From the Experimental GT that wowed the automotive world in 1965 to the GT X Experimental – Opel concept cars and brand concepts have always grabbed the headlines while bringing something new to the table. They have defined the immediate and long-term future of the company with the technical innovations or design elements used to bring these cars that are not always intended for series production to life. Four stand-out concepts, the 1965 Experimental GT, the 1969 Opel CD, the 2013 Monza Concept and the 2016 GT Concept, presented over the course of the last 53 years have directly influenced and resulted in the latest brainchild of the Rüsselsheim Design Studio – the GT X Experimental.

Trendsetting Experimental GT and Opel CD

The first in the line of highly successful and headline-grabbing concept cars from Rüsselsheim and the first ancestor of the GT X Experimental is the Experimental GT of 1965. When looking at this icon of automotive design, it immediately becomes clear that this vehicle already embodied the design credo "German precision meets sculptural artistry" to contemporary perfection. In 1965, the heart of every Frankfurt Motor Show IAA visitor beat faster at the sight of the Experimental GT's breath-taking lines, while journalists and industry experts were impressed with the unique, front mid-engine concept and the sporty two-seater's novel, pop-up headlamps. The Opel Experimental GT was the first concept car of a European carmaker.

The history of the Experimental GT is inseparable from that of the Opel Styling Studio in Rüsselsheim because this innovative institution also cements Opel position as a pioneer in the 1960s. Opel is the first manufacturer in Europe with a modern design organisation thanks to the Styling Studio inaugurated in 1964 and a pioneer for automotive design outside of the United States. The Experimental GT is the first product of this new set-up and the Rüsselsheim design department quickly becomes a magnet and a platform for international designers.

Encouraged by the positive public response to the Experimental GT and the great market success of the series production GT, Opel designers in Research and Advanced Design concentrated on designing visionary coupés and sports cars. In 1969, the Opel Design Team hit its next bull's eye at the IAA in Frankfurt with the Opel CD. This luxury, two-seat coupé with a V8 engine was based on the Diplomat (CD = Coupé Diplomat) and conceived from the outset – as people say today – as a concept car not intended for series production. It was, instead, intended to provide a look ahead to the development of cars in the 1970s, and to clearly indicate the future path of Opel design much like the GT X Experimental does now. Even back then, the Opel designers managed to appeal to people's hearts and minds with the elegant CD, measuring just 1.11 metres in height. Its clean styling, with a "wraparound" windshield without A-pillars whetted people's appetite. Or in other words: Exciting and sheer purism.

Opel Design 2.0 – Sowing the seeds

Fast forward almost 50 years and two further important ancestors of the GT X Experimental take the automotive world by storm. The Monza Concept made more than just a splash when making its debut at the 2013 Frankfurt Motor Show. A new level of efficiency and connectivity are the main focus of development, and the Monza Concept offers a fascinating preview of what's in store. To visually express Opel's quest for increased efficiency, the Monza Concept presents an evolution of the design philosophy "Sculptural artistry meets German precision", with body contours conveying a sense of lithe athleticism rather than sheer muscle power. The most innovative ideas, however, are in the area of infotainment, connectivity and HMI (Human Machine Interface). Fixed instrument displays and screens have been replaced by LED projection technology and 3D imagery.

The wide, sculpted multi-function panel, sweeping from door to door, is used as a single projection surface. Information, and even decorative elements, are displayed across the panel – and drivers can customise everything by using voice control.

“The Monza Concept shows how we imagined the next step,” Vice President Design Mark Adams explained. “At the time, I called it Opel Design 2.0, like a new computer program generation. It is about beautiful shapes and forms that make an emotional connection to the customer. At the same time, we have to appeal to the head, our more rational side. This ties in with the fact that Opel is a German brand, and Germany is widely respected for the quality, precision and robustness of its engineering. Opel is part of this cultural identity, so if you bring both sides together – the emotional and the rational – in a design philosophy, it gives Opel a unique positioning as a mainstream brand. We have strong emotional appeal and the substance of being German,” added Adams.

New level of efficiency

In 2016, Opel added a new level of efficiency to its design philosophy with the visionary GT Concept. As the name already indicates it is a direct descendant of the Experimental GT. And just like its forebear it impresses with both its pure and breath-taking exterior and interior values. The thoroughbred athlete with a front mid-engine and rear-wheel drive is avant-garde yet puristic, renounces everything that disturbs the pure form. The GT Concept has no door handles or exterior door mirrors. Beyond its stunning exterior, the Opel designers have also created an interior that perfectly blends typical cues from a sports coupé and futuristic solutions for the human/machine interface. Everything in the GT Concept is ready for the pleasure of an exciting drive. The two sports seats fit like a tailor-made suit, the steering wheel and the pedals can be adjusted electrically down to the last millimetre, the low beltline of the doors enables a casual arm position, colours and shapes create a perfect spatial feeling and the sky above the panorama roof races by. Human and machine become one.

Overall, the GT Concept once again showcases Opel’s pioneering spirit. A dynamic driving machine something that is already symbolised by the red signature line that splits the vehicle body horizontally and proportions it. The distinctive red front tires – mounted on rims with a cheeky roller skates design – are reminiscent of the Opel motorbike

Motoclub 500 that was also avant-garde at its time and was the proud owner of two red tires in 1928. Apart from that, the GT Concept does not have many links to the past. The long bonnet, the absence of a trunk lid, the central dual exhaust and of course, the name all refer to the original GT. Apart from that the Opel GT Concept is independent with no sign of retro-design.

Back to the future

The GT X Experimental is the next Concept Car in this line of trendsetting visions and takes the Opel design philosophy to the next step of its evolution. While not shying its apparent links to Opel's concept cars of the past, as demonstrated by the yellow signature line or by presenting the next step in interactivity first shown in the Monza Concept and GT Concept, it is confident enough to stand alone and convey a clear message: The Opel GT X Experimental gives a first impression of what the future holds and what Opel models will look like by the mid-2020s while staying true to the specific "Opel way". This unique approach can be summarised with three core values: German, approachable and exciting.

As for its future, the brand wants to remain anchored in the most modern and positive expression of its German roots: Opel's "New Germanness" takes the best of Germany's traditional values – engineering excellence, a genuine fascination for well-executed machines, an intense focus on functionality, quality and reliability – and enriches them with warmth and open-mindedness. Inspired by Opel's innovative spirit, the new GT X Experimental captures the essence of the company's rich heritage and promises an exciting future. It blends German engineering, precision and quality with visionary innovations to give a preview of what Opel cars will be in the mid-2020s: bold, pure in appearance yet extremely approachable and customer-centric.

Contact:

Martin Golka +49 (0) 6142-7-55215 martin.golka@opel.com