



WORLD CAR AWARDS

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AND NOW THERE IS ONE...

MAZDA MX-5 - 2016 WORLD CAR OF THE YEAR

NEW YORK – March 24, 2016 - For Immediate Release

The Road to World Car journey ended today with the declaration of the **MAZDA MX-5** as the 2016 World Car of the Year. The winner was announced during a press conference hosted by the New York International Auto Show, Bridgestone Corporation and Autoneum.

2016 marks the 10th anniversary of the partnership between World Car and the New York show, and the third consecutive year that the World Car Awards have retained their ranking as the number one automotive awards program in the world in terms of media reach.

Mazda Motor Corporation is no stranger to the World Car Awards program – now in its 12th year. The Mazda2/Mazda Demio was the 2008 World Car of the Year. While the Mazda3 (2014), Mazda6 (2013) and Mazda MX-5 have all earned “Top Three in the World” status as voted by our 70 plus international automotive journalists that make up the jury.

The **MAZDA MX-5** was chosen from an initial entry list of 23 vehicles from all over the world, then a short list of ten, then three finalists: the Audi A4 Sedan/Audi A4 Avant, the Mazda MX-5, and the Mercedes-Benz GLC.

“What a wonderful honor, to have the Mazda MX-5 named World Car of the Year,” said Masahiro Moro, president and CEO, Mazda North American Operations, and Managing Executive Officer, Mazda Motor Corporation. “As our iconic MX-5 roadster approaches one-million units of production, this award is proof that it is as young, vibrant, fun and relevant as ever. While I accept this award on behalf of the company, I do so representing every Mazda employee, retail partner and customer around the world who has ever felt the joy of driving a pure roadster. We say ‘Driving Matters’ in our advertising, and we prove it in our cars.”

The World Car Awards jurors observed that, “With the launch of its all-new MX-5, Mazda has thrown out the blueprint and gone back to basics – back to 1989 basics. Shorter, lower, wider and – most importantly – lighter, the new MX-5 comes with a choice of either 1.5 or 2.0-litre naturally aspirated petrol engines and the promise of unparalleled ‘Jinba ittai’ – a term meaning oneness between car and driver. And yes, it’s still one of the best driver’s cars around.”

To be eligible for the overall World Car award, the candidates must become available for sale on at least two continents during the period beginning January 1, 2015 and ending May 31, 2016.

This year, vehicles were selected and voted on by an international jury panel comprised of 73 top-level automotive journalists from 23 countries around the world. Each juror was appointed by the World Car Steering Committee on the basis of his or her expertise, experience, credibility, and influence. Each juror typically drives and evaluates new vehicles on a regular basis as part of their professional work. Through their respective outlets they collectively reach an audience of many millions world-wide. The international accounting firm KPMG tabulates the jurors’ ballots.

Previous World Car of the Year winners were the Mercedes-Benz C-Class (2015), the Audi A3 (2014), the Volkswagen Golf (2013), the Volkswagen Up! (2012), the Nissan Leaf (2011), the Volkswagen Polo (2010), the Volkswagen Golf (2009), the Mazda2 / Mazda Demio (2008), the Lexus LS460 (2007), the BMW 3-Series (2006), and the Audi A6 (2005).

The **Road to World Car** began in Frankfurt on September 15, was followed by a four and a half day stop in Los Angeles for test-drives of the North American, Japanese and Swedish contenders in November, continued in Geneva with the Top Three in the World announcement, and finally ended today with the declaration of the winners in five categories at the New York International Auto Show.

The **Global Trends Report**, co-presented by Prime Research and Autoneum, was presented just before the winners' press conference. Autoneum CEO Martin Hirzel said, "The findings of the *Global Trends Report* show clearly that sound inside the driver cabin has major influence on the overall evaluation of a car. Since decades, we from Autoneum are experts in the field of noise reduction for vehicles. Our lightweight and multifunctional products support the car manufacturers to reduce emission, noise and heat and thereby lead to an enhanced driving comfort for the end-customer. The global need for our products confirms us in further focusing on driving innovation in acoustic and thermal management solutions."

The World Car Awards media breakfast and winners' press conference at the New York International Auto Show is presented by Bridgestone Corporation, the world's largest tire and rubber company. This is the 8th year Bridgestone has sponsored World Car of the Year. "The future of the auto industry will be built on innovation, performance and sustainability – from automakers and also their suppliers," said Mike Martini, president, original equipment tire sales, U.S. and Canada, Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations. "Bridgestone invests heavily in research and product development to ensure that we continue to deliver world-class products in collaboration and partnership with automakers around the world."

As the global nature of the industry continues to strengthen, and the pace of innovation continues to accelerate, World Car is proud to be a part of this amazing journey along with the New York International Auto Show, Prime Research, Bridgestone, Autoneum, KPMG and Newspress.

For additional information either visit our web site (www.wcoty.com) or please contact Beth Rhind, Executive Manager, E: beth@wcoty.com

About World Car Awards

The World Car Awards (WCA) are more than just an awards program. The WCA's judging panel is made up of 73 prominent automotive journalists from around the world that form a global community of experts. The jurors ensure the integrity and credibility of the awards but also serve as an important resource for the industry with a focus on excellence and innovation on a global scale.

About Autoneum

Autoneum, with its headquarters in Winterthur, Switzerland, is the globally leading producer of vehicle acoustics and thermal management systems. The company develops and manufactures components, modules and complete systems for interior and engine bay as well as heatshields and underbody shields. Customers include leading automobile producers in the key markets of Europe, North America, South America and Asia. Autoneum is represented at around 50 locations in over 20 countries and employs more than 11,000 people worldwide, of whom about 5% are in Switzerland. The company is listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange (ticker symbol AUTN).

About the New York International Auto Show

Owned and operated by the Greater New York Automobile Dealers Association, the New York Auto Show is an awesome combination of new ideas, technological innovation, exceptional concept cars and nearly 1,000 of the latest new cars and trucks. Over one million visitors are expected to visit the show this year to see what is truly possible from the automotive industry.

Important 2016 Auto Show Dates

Automotive Forum: March 22

Press Preview, March 23 & March 24(credentials required)

Public Sneak Preview, Friday, March 25

Public Show Dates, Friday, March 25 – Sunday, April 3

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS WITH THE NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL AUTO SHOW

**THE ROAD TO WORLD CAR:
BEGAN IN FRANKFURT SEPT. 15, 2015. ENDS IN NEW YORK MARCH 24, 2016.**

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