

THE BMW CENTURY

THE ULTIMATE PERFORMANCE MACHINES



TONY LEWIN

The Power of Six



The year 1933 was a turning point for German industry and, though much more darkly, for the German nation. For that matter, it was a turning point for the whole world: Adolf Hitler's seizure of power at the beginning of the year would have catastrophic consequences for humanity as the decade unfolded. It is also an uncomfortable truth that in the early days of Nazi rule, the country's business leaders gave a guarded welcome—if only through gritted teeth—to many of the measures announced by the outspoken new Reichskanzler (chancellor).

Mass mobility and popular car ownership had always been prominent among Hitler's pet projects. Within two weeks of installing himself in office, he opened the Berlin Motor Show, where the shiny new creations perfectly fitted his vision of a glorious, technologically driven future with German industry secure in the driving seat. Days later, he summoned the leaders of the country's five surviving carmakers—times had indeed been hard—to announce his four-point plan for national car ownership. Among those leaders was Franz Josef Popp of BMW.

What those industry leaders heard must have been music to their ears, even if the tone was strident and intimidating. With car sales stagnant after several years of national austerity, economic decision making in paralysis, and the industrial outlook uncertain, the lifting of



^ German's Autobahns offered the first opportunity for sustained high-speed driving.

< Setting a style: models such as this 1937 327 coupe established BMW cars as elegant and desirable.

FLIGHTS OF FANCY

BMW's Concept Cars



As a company confident of its identity and its direction, BMW has rarely had to resort to concept cars to broadcast engineering achievements or to test public opinion. Yet highlights such as the 1972 Turbo and 2009 Vision EfficientDynamics have signaled the start of whole new ways of thinking for the automotive business, and the Hommage series of design studies pay exquisite tribute to the historic models that made BMW what it is today.

Turbo, 1972

With the announcement that the 1972 Summer Olympic Games would be staged in its home city of Munich, BMW knew it would have the attention of the whole world for a few precious weeks. A high-profile new vehicle was prescribed, and chief designer Paul Braaq duly delivered the goods with the stunning Turbo, a two-seater mini-supercar that established a design language for extreme sports cars that would prove highly influential for many years to come. It would also directly spawn Giorgio Giugiaro's equally stunning Mi1 in 1978.

The Turbo also revived the idea of gullwing doors, citing an English patent of 1938, and the feature would become a must-have for every supercar. Yet surprisingly, despite its breathtakingly modern, low, wide, and flat proportions and the then-impressive 280-hp potency of its 2-liter, eight-valve engine, the Turbo was billed by BMW at the time as a rolling research laboratory. Its proclaimed role was to test out active



The Power to Fly

BMW IIIa, 1917: BMW Prepares for Takeoff

BMW's first aero engine was remarkable not only because it was arguably the highest-performing aircraft engine of the First World War but because it gave rise to the founding of the BMW company itself.

In 1913 Rapp Motorenwerke was established in Munich by chief designer Karl Friedrich Rapp, however, his engines proved unremarkable, and in 1917 designer Max Friz was brought in to draw up a new engine. Friz's design used the same six-cylinder inline configuration as the Rapp III, but the result proved infinitely superior. Rapp left the company, which was subsequently renamed Bayerische Motoren-Werke GmbH, the Friz design was designated BMW IIIa, and volume production started early in 1918.

The smooth-running, 201-hp, 191-liter, water-cooled inline six-cylinder engine was light, with an aluminum crankcase and pistons. One-piece cylinder heads and cylinders did away with the need for head gaskets—the valves were opened by a single overhead camshaft driven from the crankshaft by a vertical shaft.

The breakthrough IIIa was a high-altitude design successfully running a relatively high compression ratio of 6.4 to 1 and fueled by a "high-altitude carburetor." This comprised three mixing chambers, three air and fuel jets, and five throttle butterflies. Two levers in the cockpit allowed the pilot to set the engine for low and high altitude. High

altitudes were crucial to gaining an advantage in air combat, and when the IIIa was fitted to a Fokker D VII, it could outclimb all Allied opposition.

BMW IV, 1917: BMW Flies High and Ramps Up the Volume

The BMW IIIa was easily the best and highest-performing aero engine of World War I, but, luckily for the Allies, it arrived too late. In September 1919 BMW's second aero engine set a world record for a passenger aircraft when Franz Zeno Diemer flew eight people to an altitude of 6,750m in a Ju F13 monoplane powered by this engine.

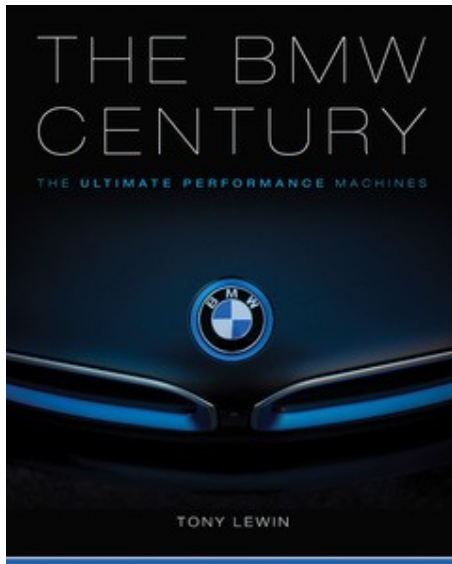




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By Tony Lewin, Foreword by Tom Purves

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**BICs: WG - TRANSPORT:
GENERAL INTEREST**

Relive the first one hundred years of Germany's best two- and four-wheeled rides.

Established in 1916, BMW is one of the auto and motorcycle industry's oldest and most-respected car and motorcycle manufacturers. Over the past century, the company went through myriad developments. *The BMW Century* chronicles this remarkable transportation company through images of the cars and motorcycles it manufactured, from the 1923 R32 motorcycle to sleek electric cars of today. This handsome volume is filled with images, history, and in-depth looks at the incredible machines BMW created year after year.

The BMW Century showcases how the company's new visionary team systematically rebuilt BMW in the post-World War II years into the spectacular success we know today - that is, a company with sales projected to be upwards of two million cars annually by 2016, led by its 3-series, the best-selling luxury-performance car in the world.

BMW's motorcycle division is no less legendary. It began with the 1923 avant-garde R32, which featured a 180-degree, horizontally opposed twin, the engine configuration that would become BMW's hallmark. Along the way, BMW would use that configuration to power groundbreaking machines like the R90S, R100RS, and R80GS. Beginning in 1983, they would add three- and four-cylinder machines to their offerings, culminating in today's spectacular S1000RR sport bike.

From the pre-war motorcycles to the iconic R-series twins of the 1970s and 80s to the mighty M-series cars and superbikes of today, *The BMW Century* offers a full review of German engineering at its finest. The book is illustrated with hundreds of historic, contemporary, and racing photographs - many sourced from BMW's archives - and detailed text relating the BMW's full history. This is the one volume no BMW aficionado can be without.

Key Points:

- The only full history of BMW - both cars and motorcycles - in the market.
- BMW is one of the most successful car and motorcycle manufacturers in the world with owners, fans, and dealer networks worldwide. BMW Group operates 28 production and assembly facilities in 13 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.
- BMW enthusiasts gather around dedicated magazines, online sites, and clubs, making them easy to target in our marketing efforts.

Author Information

Tony Lewin has spent most of his working life driving cars, analyzing them and reporting on the ups and downs of the global enterprises that build them. As a writer and editor for Automotive News Europe he has kept a constant watch on the world's top carmakers for many years. Today, Lewin divides his time between journalism and books. He lives in East Sussex, England.

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