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Top designers select Chris Bangle for Lifetime Design Achievement Award

November 10, 2011, Detroit, MI - A prestigious group of top automotive designers has chosen Chris Bangle as the winner of the 2012 Lifetime Design Achievement Award for his career in vehicle design.

The award, given annually by EyesOn Design, is unique in that only vehicle designers who have previously won the award are allowed to vote. Previous winners include such designers as Walter de'Silva, Tom Gale, Giorgetto Giugiaro, Chuck Jordan, Robert Lutz, Shiro Nakamura, Sergio Pininfarina and Jack Telnack.

Bangle, who currently directs his own design studio in Turin, Italy, has had a distinguished career at Opel, Fiat and at BMW from 1992 to 2009.

Born in Ohio and raised in Wisconsin, Bangle earned a bachelor's and a master's degree from Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California. His first notable work was the modular interior of the Opel Junior show car and the 1993 Fiat Coupe.

He became the first American Chief of Design for BMW Group in October, 1992. There, he designed the Z9 Gran Turismo concept car, the redesigns of the BMW 3 Series and 7 Series as well as both generations of Z4s and X5s, the X6, the Mille Migna concept car and the striking, fabric-bodied GINA concept car among others.

As BMW's design leader, his team was also responsible for the designs of the MINI, the MINI Clubman and Countryman as well as the Rolls Royce Phantom, the Rolls Royce Ghost and others.

In his time at BMW, his styling themes, in particular the "bustle-back" look of the 7 Series, generated much controversy. Nonetheless, the car became the best-selling 7 Series of all time and during Bangle's tenure, BMW overtook Mercedes as the global leader in premium car sales. The visual cues of his designs have also influenced the look of several automobiles later developed by other manufacturers.

The 2012 Lifetime Design Achievement Award will be presented to Bangle next June at a black tie event during the DIO's EyesOn Design week of activities, which culminate in the annual automobile design show, held every Father's Day on the grounds of the lakefront Eleanor & Edsel Ford House, in Grosse Pointe Shores, Michigan.

Other auto-related DIO events include the EyesOn Design awards each year at the North American International Auto Show and The Eye & The Auto International Conference, held at the General Motors Global Learning Center in Detroit, Michigan.

EyesOn Design is a major fundraiser for the Detroit Institute of Ophthalmology (DIO) in Grosse Pointe Park. The DIO is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization whose mission is to assist and educate the visually impaired, help preserve vision by public and professional education and support research related to the eye. For more information, visit www.eyeson.org

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