

## **Marc Lichte: “Aesthetics arise from efficiency”**

- **Interview with the Head of Audi Design in the run-up to the presentation of the e-tron GT**
- **Pioneer for the design of future electric models**
- **World premiere of the fully electric gran turismo on February 9**

**Ingolstadt, January 21, 2021 – “The most beautiful car I have ever drawn.”**

**Marc Lichte, Head of Audi Design, chose these words in the fall of 2018, when the brand presented the Audi e-tron GT concept as a show car in Los Angeles. Two years later, the first fully electric gran turismo from Audi is about to celebrate its premiere as a series production model. This is the perfect time to talk to Marc Lichte about the importance of the e-tron GT.**

**Question: Mr. Lichte, the wait will soon be over. Audi will introduce the e-tron GT on February 9. Is the presentation of such a model still exciting even after seven years of being the brand’s Head of Design?**

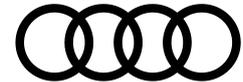
**Marc Lichte:** The world premiere is a magic moment. That applies to the entire Audi Design team as well as to me personally. The presentation of a new car is the culmination of a development process that usually takes four years. It is a long road that involves a great deal of work, many discussions, and difficult decisions at times. However, in the end, we are all proud to present the result of our joint efforts.

**Proud is the keyword here. With your assessment of the show car, you really set the bar high for the e-tron GT. What distinguishes the design of the car?**

**Lichte:** Good design is achieved when a product is aesthetic and functional at the same time, and when it becomes part of a seamless overall experience. The foundation for aesthetics lies in the proportions: short overhangs and a long wheelbase combined with a lean cabin on a powerful body. The e-tron GT features all of the above.

**Would it be presumptuous to refer to this car as the new design icon from Audi?**

**Lichte:** Yes, without a doubt. After all, you cannot create a design icon on the drawing board. A car must acquire this reputation on the road – in an overstimulated environment that creates the will to strive for orientation. True design icons have something that is unmistakably clear: For example, it takes only three lines to characterize a VW Beetle or a Porsche 911. They stand for a clear attitude.



**And what attitude does Audi want to convey with the e-tron GT?**

**Lichte:** That is definitely “Vorsprung durch Technik” – or to quote our new brand strategy: “Living Progress.” Over the course of our history, certain models have shaped this claim in a special way: The A2 represented ruthless efficiency, the TT stood for formalistic design, and the R8 for uncompromising performance. The question with regard to the e-tron GT is therefore not whether it is a design icon but how exactly it expresses our attitude. In other words, the question is how it reinterprets “Vorsprung durch Technik.”

**What course are you setting now?**

**Lichte:** The e-tron GT is a gran turismo. This term originally stood for sports cars that were suited for long-distance races. GT models thus differ from pure sports cars in that they offer greater comfort and a larger interior. As a fully electric gran turismo, the e-tron GT reinterprets this balancing act by not reducing performance to the sheer output but by attributing a special creative importance to efficiency as well.

**Efficiency as the basic idea for the design. What exactly does that mean?**

**Lichte:** Lower air resistance translates into greater range: We have turned this basic law of physics of electric mobility into the design principle for the e-tron GT. Form follows function, aesthetics arise from efficiency. The new design language creates a stronger flow and thereby creates refined aerodynamics. The design of the e-tron GT thus forms the basis for the design of future electric models.

**That’s all for the exterior. But how can you express efficiency in the design of the interior?**

**Lichte:** Electric mobility adds to the lightness and functionality of the interior – with as much space as in the next-higher segment. Compact on the outside, spacious on the inside. We therefore gave the e-tron GT a sculptural basic architecture that emphasizes not only the typical sportiness of a GT with its clear driver focus but also its sustainability. The show car from 2018 served as the prototype for the series production model. It features its own equipment line that uses no leather whatsoever but instead makes a point of relying on recycled materials.

**A sporty gran turismo that positions itself based on efficiency and sustainability. Is this the new attitude you mentioned earlier?**

**Lichte:** That puts it in a nutshell. Sustainability begins with the initial idea and is expressed through the design. The e-tron GT is thereby pushing an idea that will characterize our understanding of luxury in the course of electric mobility.



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