

# Divine Designs Send the 7X Soaring

By Christina Bohnstengel

BMW GROUP DESIGNWORKSUSA PROVED THAT THEIR DELIVERY IS AS GOOD AS THEIR REPUTATION WITH THE LATEST GLOBAL UNVEILING OF THE INTERIOR CABIN OF THE DASSAULT FALCON 7X.

**T**he Falcon 7X is collecting quite the list of revered fingerprints to grace its interiors. While Lord Norman Foster designed the space of the model for the NetJets fleet, BMW Group DesignworksUSA recently marked the inside of the business jet for the maker of the 7X, Dassault Aviation. The global design consultancy firm, which is a subsidiary of the BMW Group, debuted their design at the 2009 edition of EBACE in Geneva this past May, and their artistic yet simplistic visions for the interior cabin of the aircraft earned a plethora of nods from industry experts.

Dassault Aviation first approached DesignworksUSA for the project in 2005. Armed with a 37-year history in designing for crème de la crème clients, including such names as Embraer and Bavaria Yachts, the firm welcomed the challenge. "We were very excited that a premium brand like Dassault was looking to partner with us," said Thomas Ward, DesignworksUSA principal designer for the 7X project. "It was clear from the beginning that this was a very good match." In fact, since the start of the collaboration, more projects between the two luxury leaders have hit the drawing boards.

Ward shared that in the initial phases of conceptualizing, the team contemplated a new definition of luxury. "The meaning of luxury and wealth in people's lives is now changing and has been redefined with new values of space, time, connectivity, simplicity, knowledge, and authenticity. Opulence, hierarchy, and



DASSAULT AVIATION'S  
FALCON 7X



INTERIOR CABIN DETAILS BY BMW GROUP DESIGNWORKSUSA



HORIZONTALLY GRAINED WALNUT VENEER FINISHED IN A SEMI-GLOSS IS PREVALENT THROUGHOUT THE CABIN



DARK WALNUT SIDE LEDGES CREATE SPACIAL DEFINITION



THE DARK HUES OF THE CARPET AND LOWER SIDE WALLS STABILIZE THE DESIGN



THE MAIN CONCEPT FOR THE DESIGN THEME WAS "CLEAN, CALM AND CRAFTED"

symbolism have been replaced. From these attributes, we have created a design that is 'clean, calm and crafted' and will hopefully enhance the traveling experience to its highest level."

The main concept for the design theme of "Clean, Calm and Crafted" was based on a space that would blend a non-ornamental approach with intense attention to detail. "The clean and calm attributes stem from the unpretentious execution of the overall design language and refined use of color and material," Ward explained. A dedicated focus to the sensual qualities of the flying experience, based on the idea that form follows feeling, was also adhered to. "For me, the inspiration for the interior, which features a curved design, was the design language of the BMW Z4 exterior and interior. The pure, honest forms on the car give it a very elegant yet strong direction. Applying subtle curvature to the interior architecture and select elements of the plane creates an integrated flow."

**W**ard explained that one of the main expressions of the concepts that demonstrate the design brief was to give the galley more room between the cabinetry and monuments, thereby improving functionality and spaciousness. "We created a subtle, vertical surface arch on both sides of the galley which gives a wider dimension between cabinets and the perception of more space in the overall galley area. The flow of the subtle surface arch continues smoothly into the main cabin easing the transition between the two areas," he said.

The master plan of the design was drafted with the idea that the first detail to catch the eye would be the rich, dark, horizontally grained walnut veneer throughout the cabin, finished in a semi-gloss. "The contrasting dark walnut side ledge and bulkheads create spatial definition and rhythm, and the horizon-

tal wood grain adds an element of modern freshness," he said. From the galley, the single dark arch of the floor coverings visually carries the eye throughout the length of the cabin while connecting the separate spaces. The dark hues of the carpet and lower side walls stabilize the design while the contrast of the lighter upper side walls, valance panels, and ceiling create an environment that is sizable and comfortable. The design and trim of the club seats, in nu-buck and smooth leather, result in a bespoke aesthetic richness with textural differences and a seat that appears much larger than its 21 inches.

BMW Group DesignworksUSA addressed the aspects of cabin lighting through several methods. Larger windows allow for natural lighting to enhance the serenity of the atmosphere, while technical lighting features include soft up-wash and down-wash ambient lighting as well as the distinctive Lunule lights in the valance panels.

According to the designer, fusing functionality and style was the creative way to express the performance and emotional aspects of Dassault Aviation and the 7X, which, at its core is about the passion of flying. "With this interior we have created a design with a functional, modern elegance that gives the business executive an environment that inspires all the different expressions within the travel experience: intuitive functionality for increased business performance, a clean and calm environment that allows the traveler to focus easily on tasks at hand or to rest during travel, spaciousness and comfort for better wellbeing, and subtle curvature which eases moving through the plane."

With the objectives to capture Dassault's rich heritage, and to design a high quality aircraft that will cater to the customer and enhance the flying experience, BMW Group DesignworksUSA can successfully add the Dassault Falcon 7X to its list of impressive design achievements. 🌐