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More Than Motors On Show

11-Jan-2018 by [Kannan Chandran](#)



VISITING the Singapore Motorshow at Suntec Convention Centre is like wandering through an air-conditioned car lot. Except it's full of new cars and more organised, and there's free wi-fi.

The main floor of the show, on level 4, is packed end-to-end with gleaming cars, bright lights, and pumping music. This was the media preview, so it was relatively quiet.

When the crowd comes in, it's usually noisier and rowdier, and there will always be the folks who want to get past the cordon and plant their paws on the shiny new car.

The annual show is no longer the highly anticipated event that the advertisements make it out to be, there's very little cutting-edge stuff. While some companies make an effort to launch new products, very few bother to talk about future concepts or what the industry will be like in time to come.

But then, given Singapore government's rather complicated, expensive and painful process of extracting every drop of blood, sweat and tear out of motorists, and then some, it's no wonder people wait for the show. Because that's when the offers come out.



Works of art — the new Arteon and Ricky Tay, MD of Volkswagen Singapore.

To excite visitors further, some companies roll out extensions to their model lines, and generally try and line up the key movers for the brands.

Stripped Bare

New models were stripped of their veils to show off gleaming bonnets and curvy parts. There were more than 20 such launches, which followed a predictable pattern. After some dramatic music and an exciting uptempo video, tall models with smiles pasted on would help disrobe the cars. Then a serious presentation ensued, dampening the mood. But fortunately sparkling drinks and nibbles helped liven things up again.



Crumpled zones galore in the C-HR.

BMW showed its new X3 which tries to figure out its place in the scheme of things; Toyota unveiled another severely dented and folded piece of metal in the form of the C-HR; Lexus showcased the NX and the mysteriously named LC Structural Blue Edition; Hyundai's IONIQ promised to be ahead of the curve with electricity; and MINI had a tent atop a car, giving it the look of a potentially zippy snail.



Jeff Mannering, MD of Audi Singapore blends in with the new A8.

Audi showcased its 25th Hour exhibit to show you how autonomous cars could help claw back some time that you could spend nose in your device playing a driving game, perhaps. The new A8 was proffered, showing how it continues to make cars that look smaller than they are.



Catch the bobbing dancer.

And others put on a show. Volkswagen had a dancer having a ball in a ball on a pole bobbing about like a possessed metronome, threatening to put a dent in one of the new cars on show. The new Arteon was on display showing off its association with art.

There was some good coffee to be had, but by far it was Hyundai's satay and laksa, catered by the folks at Suntec that stole the stomachs.

There are other activities over the weekend, including the return of Russ Swift to show off his stunt driving skills and parallel park it even closer than he did in previous years.

If you're out shopping for new wheels, left with time on your hands, or have \$6 to spare this weekend, this could be a good reason to visit...I reckon.