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FULL ART ATTACK

A hunky riot of red metal and black carbon: that'll be TechArt's latest toy, the compactly-named GTStreetRS. We go gaga at Goodwood

If you've got it, flaunt it! TechArt are past masters at that, and now they've hiked the horsepower and decked the ducting, everyone knows this rampant red roustabout is something a bit special. It's labelled the GTStreetRS: at first glance, a 911 on steroids; but precisely what sort of uppers we're dealing with isn't totally clear. And, of course, that's half the point. The reason you buy into any of the pumped-up Porsches put out there by the satellite tuners orbiting the Stuttgart solar system is because you wish to differentiate yourself as overtly as possible from the mainstream. And this beastie is the very latest manacled fist to emerge from TechArt's Leonberg lair.

It's Festival of Speed weekend, and I'm with TechArt PR Marc Herdtle, discussing their latest GTStreetRS in the lee of Goodwood Race Course. First, the look of it. Those of a nervous disposition avert your gaze. The black detailing that highlights the

various scoops and aero has a curious mottled effect, rather than the more conventional criss-cross weave normally manifest in carbon and Kevlar components. As Marc explains, 'We call it the Forged Design car. The black, random-mottled material is similar to the Lamborghini-Calloway composite; it's carbon-fibre, with strands randomly aligned, so they're not like a mesh, and this gives two things: stability to the components, but, more importantly, it provides another styling finish, which means that the body-kit is different from the GTStreetR.' And, if you remember, we featured that particular creature a couple of years back in these hallowed pages – the vivid lime-green machine with similar black detailing. Colours? There's nowhere to hide! Starting with the 996, there have been three generations of GTStreet models. 'We have a number of customers who prefer not to take their car to the race track, or just store it in their garage: we have those who like to drive

it every day, simply because it's fun. And it's not like a race car, which, after a few kilometres will become too demanding.'

The GTStreetR was no shrinking violet, but the RS model has gone a step further. 'Another intention was to give the car a more aggressive look. This Forged Design composite material is fairly well known and it's been used in this market for the past three years or so. Lamborghini-Calloway actually invented it, and as far as I know Forged Composite is actually a brand name they gave to the material. But we wanted to give the car the optical appearance of this material because it really makes it a bit more radical, even more so than the GTStreetR, where one of the prominent features was the carbon-fibre mesh used for the bodykit.' As a further sophistication, the GTStreetRS is also fitted with high-tensile lightweight glass made by Corning Gorilla Glass.

Like its lurid lime-green stablemate, the GTStreetRS is also based on a 991 Turbo





S, but in addition to the new elements of bodykit, it also has a stronger TechArt power kit, incorporating new variable turbine geometry turbochargers, lifting power output in Sport mode to 770bhp and 920Nm of

We do the workaround. It's a lesson in the whys and wherefores of bodykit-enhanced aerodynamics. The front lid is unique to this model, while add-ons include the wheelarch extensions, a profusion of air-inlet and outlet

there are several air channels specially configured for this car, beginning with the front apron and active splitter that optimise airflow to the large ducts ventilating the water-radiator and oil-cooler. The front lid is in carbon-fibre, which we call the TechArt aero lid because it has an aerodynamic shape that guides the air into the two NACA ducts that provide additional brake cooling. It's important to stress that these are not merely visual features; every air duct and every opening you can see in the car's body has a technical and practical purpose.' There's more ducting over the top of the front wheelarches in the shape of ventilation louvres that extract hot air from the brakes. These louvres are similar to those of the GT3 RS, but Marc stresses that they are TechArt parts, being slightly larger and

You either get it or you don't. There is no middle ground here, but for those that want to stand out, then TechArt's creations take Porsche tuning and styling to another level

It's carbon fibre, but not as we know it. Known as a Forged Design composite, the strands are randomly aligned as opposed to arranged in a more uniform mesh/weave

“ These pieces of bling bejewel every aspect of the car's extremities ”

torque, good enough to travel from standstill to 100kph in a mere 2.5 seconds, and from 0 to 200kph in just 8.1sec. Top speed is (a governed) 340kph on road-legal tyres, and 360kph is doable with appropriate tyres on.

ducts, as well as diffuser and trim on the rear wing. Each a piece of plastic sculpture in its own right, these pieces of bling bejewel every aspect of the car's extremities. Marc does the specifics: 'if we start at the front,





they might as well stick with them.

The rear wing is one of the more complex devices that I've seen: it's an active two-level bi-plane that can be raised and lowered at the press of a button on the centre console, cantilever-tilting by 15-degrees. The wing also activates automatically, so it deploys at certain speeds, and then in performance mode its angle self-adjusts by 15-degrees to generate more downforce on the rear axle. Its supports and upper level are in black carbon, with that deep red lower section and end-plates. All TechArt aerodynamic bodykit passes through the wind tunnel during its development, and the shape of the top wing profile is a case in point, being similar to the GTStreetR, though the RS version employs a little spoiler at the top of the car's rear window which has a very slight angle, enough to deflect the airflow directly onto the wing profile. 'Overall, it's well balanced aerodynamically,' avers Marc, 'which means it has sufficient downforce, especially at higher speeds, but it has a still has a good drag co-

The impressive rear wing can be raised and lowered at the touch of a button, cantilever-tilting by 15-degrees for maximum downforce on the rear axle

efficient, and that's one of the achievements of the engineering department, working with our designers in the wind tunnel.'

The underneath of the car is almost completely covered, so in effect it's flat, in the interests of generating ground-effect downforce, amplified by the diffuser at the bottom of the rear valance. It also has a more cosmetic effect of highlighting the centrally-mounted exhaust tailpipes, which consist of four tips, the culmination of a full TechArt system. Marc again: 'this exhaust generates a suitable sound for the car, and it's a controlled system that's operating without steps, so it's continuously adjusting the sound. Usually exhaust systems just have the valves open or closed, but this one has intermediate positions as well, so it's still possible to homologate it in terms of noise so it's road legal, but on the other hand when you're in the mood you just switch to Sport mode and then you'll have the full sound experience as well.'

The clue as to the car's persona is in the name – this is a road car, though, as Marc affirms, it can perform perfectly well in trackday mode, too. 'It can be driven perfectly normally on the street, and then you can go to the race track and drive it in an impressive way because it's powerful enough to perform like a genuine sports-GT car.' As a package, you can see how it comes together, providing the security of the Turbo's all-wheel drive powertrain, combined with the specially evolved aero. Suspension is enhanced by PDCC (Porsche Dynamic Chassis Control) compatible Bilstein coil-over dampers. 'In that way, you have a car which is not only quick in a straight line, but you can also drive winding roads quickly, too, and it still provides all the comfort you expect from a 991 Turbo S.'

True enough. The so-called Clubsport cabin is a sophisticated snug bar where creature comforts abound: 'It retains air conditioning, it has heated seats, regular sat-nav, and it has everything you need to drive in everyday mode,' he says; 'it's the best of both worlds, one which is pure performance,

angled differently, to improve the ventilation inside the wheel arches and assist with heat dissipation from the brakes. The ducts in the rear three-quarter panel ahead of the rear wheelarches feed air to the intercoolers, and

The black front lid is a hollow carbon-fibre shell, composed of upper and lower layers, and the underside is embossed with the TechArt logo. With the front lid lifted, the eye falls on the unusual orifices that link with the

Visually, of course it's making an extreme statement, but all such offerings have to be backed up by a set of equally rad wheels. In this case, they are 20in forged alloy TechArt Formula IV Race, in matching black, progeny of the company's five-spoke wheel design going back 20 years, now viewed as classic in some circles. Actually, these are double-fives – ten-spoke, if you like. Marc qualifies the designation: 'our wheels evolved from Formula II to Formula III, which was TechArt's first forged wheel, and then Formula IV Race, which is a lightweight forged wheel with a central locking device, and that is basically how the Race wheels differ from the others.' They're shod with Michelin Pilot Cup Sport 2, which are 265/35 ZR20 at the front and 325/30 ZR20 at the rear. The brakes are original Porsche 991 Turbo ceramic composite discs, and although TechArt used to make their own brakes they decided that the standard issue stoppers were so good

You may think that the GTstreetRS is all style over function, but TechArt insists that is absolutely not the case, with all the appendages having either an aero or a cooling effect

Left: Not surprisingly TechArt uses Porsche's standard 991 carbon ceramic brakes under its own bespoke wheels

“ Everything TechArt does with a car body has function ”

are also a little bigger than the regular 991 Turbo S. There's also an intriguing air duct on the leading edge of the rear lid, which serves to guide additional air into the engine, necessary on account of the power hike. On both lower corners of the rear panel there are paired vents that release hot air and also act as venturi to augment rear downforce.

NACA ducts in the lid, channelling the cooling air downwards. 'Everything that TechArt does with a car body has a function,' declares Marc. 'It's there for a purpose; hardly anything is done just for ornamentation or special effect.' That said, you don't own a TechArt car if you're anything other than ostentatious.





and the other which is comfort and individuality.' It's equipped with snug-fit TechArt-monogrammed seats, with GTStreetRS embroidered in the backrests. Another new fabric to be incorporated in the seat upholstery is 'virgin wool', complementing the leather, said to be not merely comfortable (which they undoubtedly

by a cross-braced rollover bar, painted in red to match the bodywork. The PDK shift is nicely embossed with TechArt's logo, and elements of it are in matching red as well. The TechArt wheel is flat across the bottom to clear your thighs, and it's manufactured in-house – and we've admired their workshops and saddlery in the past when visiting their

heated steering wheel, for example, this element will be built into the TechArt wheel.' Another example of the company's personalising service is the perforated Alcantara lining the central areas, through which the red body colour is visible. Other neat touches include the red clock, rev counter face and the Sport Chrono dial. Even the electric seat adjuster levers are painted red. Every GTStreetRS is delivered with a hand-stitched document wallet, a rather fetching handmade helmet bag – containing a red racing helmet with the number 2 painted on it, relevant to this particular car, of course – and a shoe bag to hold your driving shoes, also in the same colour and material as the cabin interior.

As far as Porsche is concerned, companies such as TechArt who whine and grine its products are about as welcome at the FoS as a peregrine at a pigeon party. The GTStreetRS doesn't get a run up The Hill, but nevertheless, it is parked on a plinth amongst the supercars for the duration of the Festival weekend. So, even though we don't get to helm it up The Hill, we do at least get to grips with it in the hinterland surrounding

TechArt's power kit gives the GTstreetRS 770bhp, making for a road car that's as quick as anything

“ A GTstreetRS plaque on the glove locker declares this is car no2 ”

are) but also beneficial in cabin climate control as well as having flame retardant properties. There's also a feast of Alcantara going on, and a GTStreetRS plaque on the glove locker declares this car is number 2 out of 10 special editions. Occupants can select either the four-point harness or regular seat belts, all in red to match the car's body colour, depending on the envisaged action. Instead of rear seats, the space is occupied

Leonberg premises – revelling in a leathery welter of vertically-suspended hides (sniff those skins!) and lines of skeleton wheels. There's a bespoke element to all TechArt offerings. As Marc affirms, 'all our steering wheels are completely made in-house; we have our own moulds on which the wheel is built up on the basic inner steel rim and arms, and all the features and functions are incorporated onto it. If the customer orders a

Interior gets the bespoke touches that you would expect. Tipler is an optional extra



Above: You'll need the harness with all the power! Middle: Front lid is a hollow composite moulding, with the TechArt logo embossed on the underside

Goodwood Racecourse.

Even just sitting behind the wheel, let alone starting up, this is an awesome machine. I slot the PDK shift into D and off we go. I play myself in, feeling out the gutsy power delivery. That little red turn-button on the steering wheel arm is just too tempting! I switch to Sport mode, and instantly the power kit comes on, manifest in a surge of revs and blast of exhaust volume – and an additional gobblet of power, should I wish to deploy it. Like a giant ladybird, the GTStreetRS prowls the Sussex backroads. It's firm, but not distressingly so, and though I can feel all the undulations in the road, the ride is fine. The Sussex Downs provide some hugely entertaining and – if you're pressing on – challenging enough hilly backroads, and I sling the GTStreetR through a series of agreeably banked S-bends, taking care with throttle pressure, and it steers perfectly and flows smoothly through the turns – and I can easily induce as much drama and excitement as I wish, just with a tweak on the accelerator. It's a delectable experience. On the straight, it's exhilarating, with acceleration suggestive of an Olympic sprinter, bolting along the forested straights and pressing me

back in my seat unless I'm circumspect with the throttle. Yet at no time did I feel it had the better of me, and, ultimately, it's a very civilised car.

Our photoshoot involves a succession of swiftly executed about-turns for the snapper's benefit, and as I approach some of the more uneven turnarounds I apply the on-board nose-lift mechanism so the front splitter doesn't catch on cobbles, elevating the nose by 60mm. The on-off button is between the seats, roughly where you might expect the cigarette lighter to live, and the front drops to normal ride height once on the move again.

While some tuners might strip their subject car to the bare bones in a quest for lightness, in pursuit of speed and handling finesse, TechArt does not seek to save weight; rather the opposite, in order to provide the most comfortable and occupant-friendly environment within the cab as possible. 'Our cars still have their navigation system, their air conditioning, whatever it takes, and all TechArt cars, even if it's the GTStreetRS, which delivers the ultimate performance, can be individualised so it has everything you can possibly need for the perfect driving experience, and we should not be confused

with tuners that are mainly focused on getting the best lap times, for example. Saving the last gram is not really the point, because otherwise we wouldn't have all these creature-comfort features still on board. We are presenting a complete package, a car which the customer can drive every day, or in racing mode if he likes.' Everything mentioned above, when applied to the GTStreetRS, would add €143,520 to the price of the standard 991 Turbo. But this is customising at its finest, if most blatant.

We've only seen spy shots of a car that's purportedly the forthcoming 992 Turbo testing on the Nürburgring, though rumours suggest it's not far away from release. TechArt are currently working on their own version of the 992 Turbo, and we shall no doubt be reviewing that in due course. Modern art has always been about pushing the boundaries of what's acceptable, sometimes assaulting the viewer's sensitivities, which doesn't please everyone, especially not the purists. But TechArt have done something fairly sensational with the 991 Turbo and gone that extra mile with the GTStreetRS. It grows on you. In fact, it is a work of art on its own terms. **PW**

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