

Ikuo Maeda to head up Mazda's Global Design Team



Hiroshima, 1 April 2009. Ikuo Maeda has been appointed General Manager of Mazda Motor Corporation's Design Division, effective April 1, 2009.

He will lead a global design team with responsibility for the overall design and styling of all Mazda global products. He will be based at the company's world headquarters in Hiroshima, Japan.

He replaces Laurens van den Acker, who has decided to leave Mazda to pursue other interests. Van den Acker will remain at Mazda until April 10 to ensure a smooth transition to Maeda.

Prior to this appointment, Maeda was the Chief Designer of the Design Strategic Studio at Mazda headquarters in Hiroshima, Japan. Maeda joined Mazda in April 1982 (then known as Toyo Kogyo Co., Ltd).

He was in charge of advanced design at Mazda's Yokohama Design Studio from 1985 to 1986. Following a three-year work assignment at Mazda North America Operations' design studio in the late 1980s, he held a succession of prominent design positions before being dispatched to Ford's Design Studio in Detroit in 1999 and 2000.

Upon his return to Mazda in Hiroshima in 2000 as Chief Designer, he led the team which designed the highly acclaimed Mazda RX-8 sports car. More recently, Maeda was the Chief Designer for the new Mazda2, which was crowned 2008 World Car of the Year, among many other motoring accolades.



“Maeda-san has played a pivotal role in the success that Mazda Design has experienced globally,” says Seita Kanai, Mazda’s Senior Executive Officer of Research and Design. “His local and global experience make him well-qualified to take Mazda Design to the next stage.”

“We appreciate the contribution made by Laurens van den Acker. He and his team have taken Mazda Design to new heights and we wish him well for the future,” said Mr. Kanai.

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