

## GENEVA 2009: A SHOW OF ALL THE LATEST

Opening amidst a less than favorable economic and industrial climate, the Geneva International Motor Show, March 5 – 15, featured less-polluting versions of classic thermal combustion vehicles, along with sneak previews of **numerous hybrid and electric concept cars, first fruits of automobiles that promise a respect for the environment and increased energy efficiency.** This continues a trend already observed at recent auto shows.

Browsing the displays, visitors recognized models previously shown in October 2008 at the *Paris Auto Show* such as *Toyota's* traditional hybrid Prius, the electric Bluecar from *Bolloré* – whose appearance on the commercial market is set for early 2010 – the *Citroën C-Cactus*, or the *Smart* electric. Also on view was the *ZEV* concept car from *Renault*, who plans to roll out a series of electric vehicles sometime in 2011. *Peugeot* for its part has just announced that it will market its own version of the iMiev developed by *Mitsubishi*, and has scheduled a hybrid version of its SUV 3008 for 2011. *Heuliez* was also present, exhibiting its small electric models Will and Friendly.

**Among the newcomers** were the sport version of *Mitsubishi's* iMiev, and the three-wheeled Trev concept car, developed by students of the *University of South Australia*. It carries a 25 kW motor and 5,5 kWh lithium-ion polymer batteries, lending it 150 km of autonomy in town driving.

**For hybrids and plug-in hybrid rechargeables**, a number of automakers displayed future models that should eventually make it to dealership floors. *Opel* showed the Ampera, sporting the "series hybrid system" technology similar to that of *General Motor's* Volt, which offers 60 km of autonomy in all-electric mode, with the combustion engine then taking over and recharging the 16 kWh lithium-ion battery. It is set to go on sale in 2011. Equally of note were the *Chrysler* 200C EV and its lithium batteries and autonomy extension feature, or the *Dodge* Circuit. At *Honda*, the commercial version of its Insight was on view, and on stage at *Saab*, the 9-X Convertible hybrid electric and bioethanol concept car. Side by side with the Prius 2 plug in, *Toyota* presented its new Prius 3, slated to appear in showrooms next spring. *BMW* for its part continues to develop hybrid prototypes (series 7 and X6), and is equipping its



Mitsubishi : iMiev Sport electric



Toyota : Prius 3 hybrid



SAAB : 9-X Convertible Concept car

entire line with the Stop&Start system. *Fisker Automotive* says it has taken 1300 pre-orders from American clientele for its sporty Karma hybrid rechargeable.



Rinspeed : iChange Concept car

**As to concept cars**, the news is all about all-electrics with refined design and increasingly sporty looks. The iChange project from *Rinspeed* stands out thanks to electric propulsion at 130 kW and its modular body design that allows for carrying from one to three passengers. Auto builder *EDAG* introduced the 100% recyclable electric Light Car, *Magna Steyr* its Mila EV, *Lightning* its GT, and *Protoscar* its Lampo, equipped with 35kWh lithium-ion batteries providing 200km of autonomy.