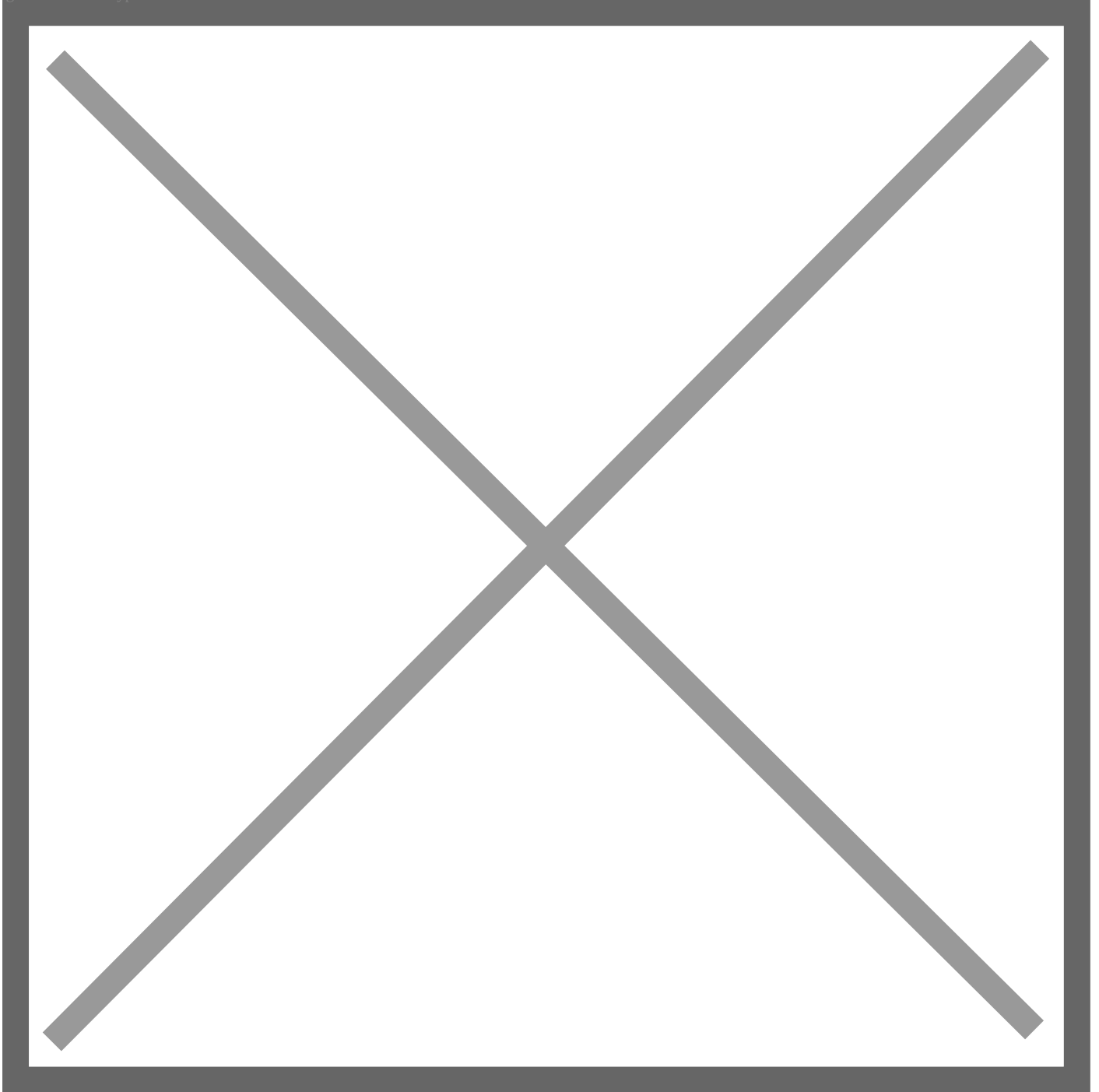


Worth the Wait

August 05, 2019

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The new Toyota Supra looks incredible. You can thank Kevin Hunter, his team at CALTY and the dedicated designers at Toyota for that. They spent years working on the newly reimagined Supra, from its earliest incarnation as the FT-1 concept, to the finished product hitting dealerships in July. We caught up with Hunter to

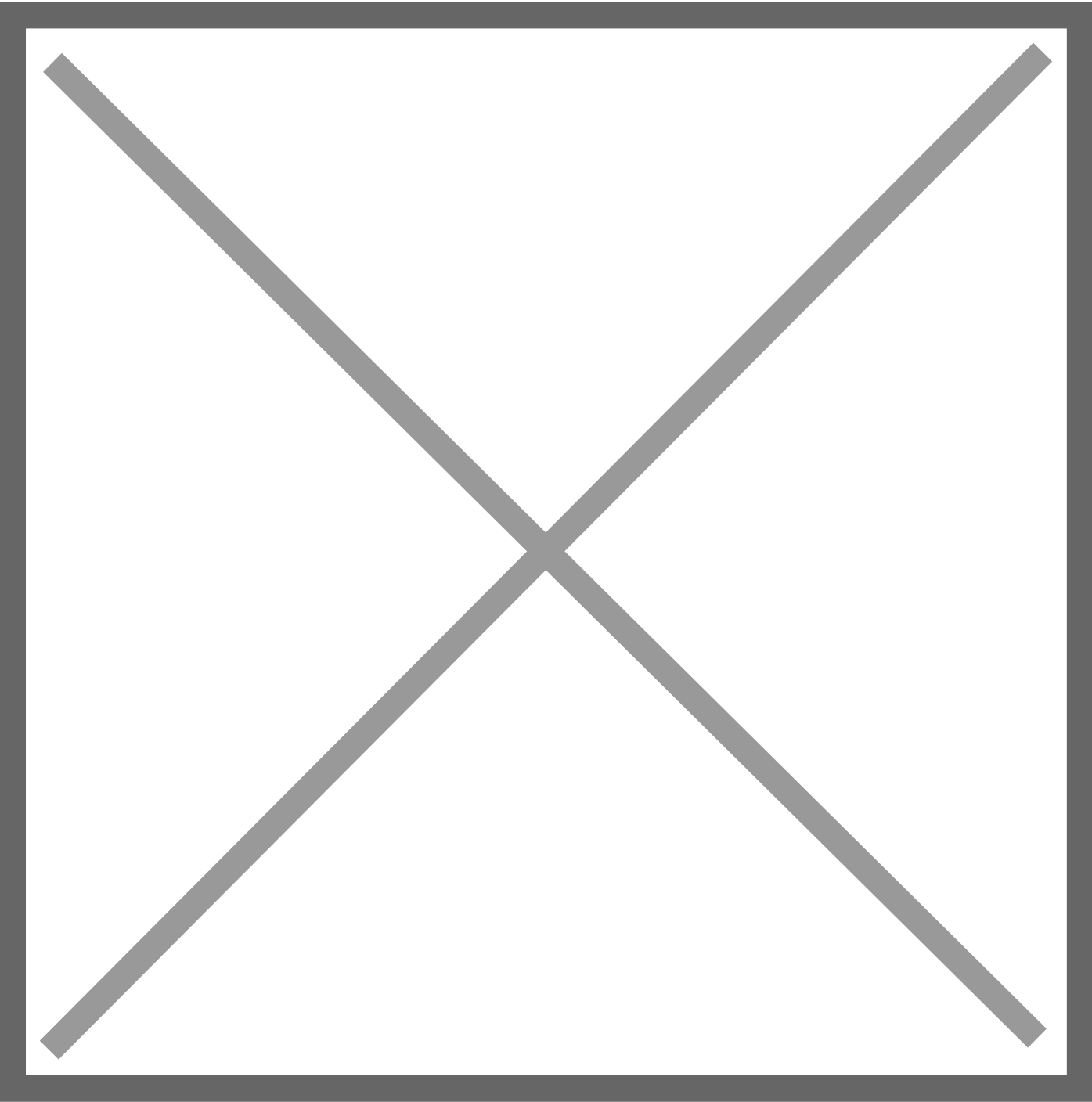
discuss how it all came together.

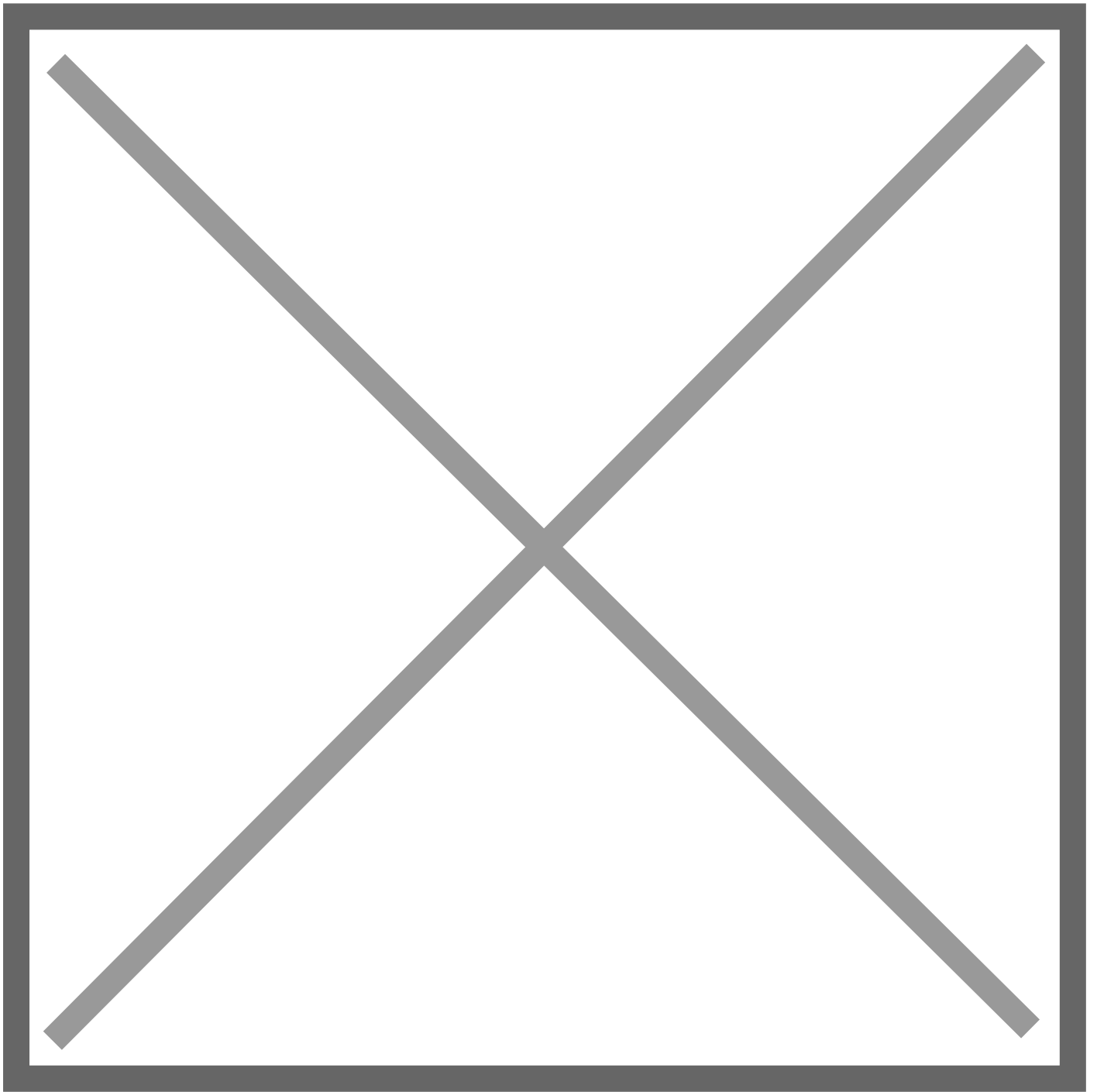
Car designers become car designers to work on vehicles like the Supra. Was this a dream job for you?

Kevin Hunter: Designing the next Supra IS a dream job. The Supra is especially unique in Toyota's lineup. So to be here and actually drive the car and experience it, when it all started from a sketch in 2012, it's really great.

You're talking about the FT-1 Concept?

Yes. Supra is really special to everyone at CALTY because we initiated the FT-1 Concept. That was us sitting around, talking about how it would be great to have Supra come back. There are so many great car enthusiasts who wanted to see this happen. And we listened to them. So we made a proposal to Toyota headquarters that we should work on this. We proposed FT-1 as a concept and got approval from our boss in Japan.





It Started with a Sketch — CALTY Design Research President Kevin Hunter unveiled the FT-1 Concept at the 2014 North American International Auto Show in Detroit. The concept evolved into the 2020 GR Supra.

How did that work?

Pretty straightforward. We presented a full-size model to Akio Toyoda in 2013. He approved it to be built as a concept car.

As a designer, how does it feel to see something that starts as a sketch... come to life as a car? To actually see people driving something that you imagined?

Hunter: When we start a project, that's the endgame that we hope for. This car is why designers become designers. We might be very busy working on Corollas, Camrys and Siennas but this is really at the heart of what we love to do: sports cars.

What are your favorite features of the new Supra?

I love the overall proportions. The wheelbase to overhangs to width is really perfect. It has a compressed muscularity that speaks to being on a racetrack. When we started designing FT-1, our entire goal was to make this car feel like it belongs on a track. Those are its roots. I also love the rear three-quarter view. Some of the styling elements that speak to the last generation Supra are really wonderful: the rear, the spoiler, the taillights, the front headlights, the signature lights. And speaking to the classic 2000GT, and the history of that car. We have a lot of sports car heritage at Toyota. We wanted to play that up. It makes me feel great when people come up to me and say they really value the connection to those vehicles.

What color Supra will you be driving?

When I get my Supra – not if – I would love a straight silver Supra. I want to show off the beautiful forms. It's beautiful and expressive. Silver cars really pop and show the form well.

By Kristen Orsborn