



**MERCEDES-BENZ SLS AMG WINS  
AJAC'S BEST NEW DESIGN AWARD FOR 2011**

TORONTO (Ontario) Thursday, February 17, 2011 – The MERCEDES-BENZ SLS AMG won the “Best New Design” award for 2011 presented by the Automobile Journalists Association of Canada (AJAC). The award was handed out as part of the 2011 Canadian Car of the Year (CCOTY) awards that opened the Canadian International Auto Show in Toronto.

*“Innovative, avant-garde design has shaped the image of the Mercedes-Benz brand for over 125 years, and we are thrilled that the members of AJAC have recognized the fascinating and unmistakable silhouette of one of our latest masterpieces with this award,”* said Marcus Breitschwerdt, President and CEO of Mercedes-Benz Canada. *“With its stunning lines, trademark gullwing doors and hallmark wide radiator grille that prominently features the Mercedes-Benz star, the SLS AMG is instantly recognizable as a Mercedes-Benz. A contemporary interpretation of a legendary classic, the SLS AMG is reminiscent of the widely celebrated 300 SL, while also providing a glimpse of the future direction of Mercedes-Benz design”.*

The top three finalists for the 2011 Best New Design award were the Audi R8 Spyder, the Jaguar XJ Supercharged, and the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG.

*“The intent of the AJAC Best New Design award is to identify and reward the vehicle that exhibits the best balance of form and function”,* said Richard Russell, chair of AJAC's 2011 Canadian Car of the Year awards.

Accordingly, the AJAC journalists selected the winner based on a combination of aesthetics, function, and brand essence. The aesthetics component reflects the sheer beauty of the design. The function component assesses the manner and degree to which it accommodates the practical requirements of the vehicle type. And brand essence considers its success in conveying the image, heritage, and values of the specific brand.

AJAC's annual Canadian Car of the Year awards program was created in 1985 with the purpose of providing consumers with sound, comparative information on vehicles that are new to the market.

For that reason, the vote results that determined today's winners are available to consumers as a resource buying guide on the AJAC web site. Also available are the comparative test data derived from the journalists' extensive four day evaluation of 144 new vehicles in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario in October. This annual event is known in the industry as “TestFest”. Shell Canada is the official fuel supplier of the event.

The rigorous TestFest evaluation program includes real world driving on public roads – exactly where consumers drive so that the test and vote results posted to the AJAC web site are directly relevant to potential car and truck buyers.

Still looking to buy a 2010, 2009, or even a 2008 vehicle? AJAC archives the comparative test data from previous years on its web site.

Photos from today's award announcements, the October 29th category winners, and the TestFest evaluation event, are available for print and broadcast media under <Canadian Car of the Year< Photo Gallery> on the AJAC web site. In addition, our AJAC journalists who evaluated the brand new models at TestFest are available across Canada for interviews to talk about the vote results and comparative data. Media are invited to visit the AJAC web site and log-in under “Ask AJAC An Expert”, then choose the “Media” link to access interview information once validation has occurred.

For more information on the 2011 Canadian Car of the Year Awards, either visit our AJAC web site at [www.ajac.ca](http://www.ajac.ca), call the AJAC office at 1.705.924.3444, or send us an email: [beth@ajac.ca](mailto:beth@ajac.ca).