

## On Kue, Kia Shows Its Passionate Side

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EPA/Maury Tannen

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### Introduced on Monday: Kia Kue design study

**Is it real?** The Kue is for the show stand, not the showroom. However, some of its design elements — perhaps the supercharged V-8 engine — could show up on production Kias.

**What's the point?** Kia would like people to buy its cars because they want to, not because they have to. The company recognizes it can't rely solely on value and gas mileage win over customers, so it is going for a sexier look.

**What they said:** "Today our owners just don't have an emotional attachment to Kia." Len Hunt, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Kia Motors America, said.

**What they didn't say:** While Mr. Hunt never stated directly that Kia styling is bland, he did admit that the company is not known for expressing the passionate side of automobiles and needs to differentiate itself through exciting styling.

**What makes it tick?** Under the (sealed) hood is a 4.6-liter supercharged V-8 engine and four-wheel drive. Mr. Hunt assured us that the V-8 — without the supercharger — is being readied for future Kia vehicles. He did not say when or where it will be used.

**How much, how soon?** The Kue is not coming to market.

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**How's it look?** Like a nicely sculptured box. A nice try, but the Kue still doesn't make pulses race. Still, the wildly futuristic interior is quite cool, especially if you're a fan of "Tron," the cult classic film.

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