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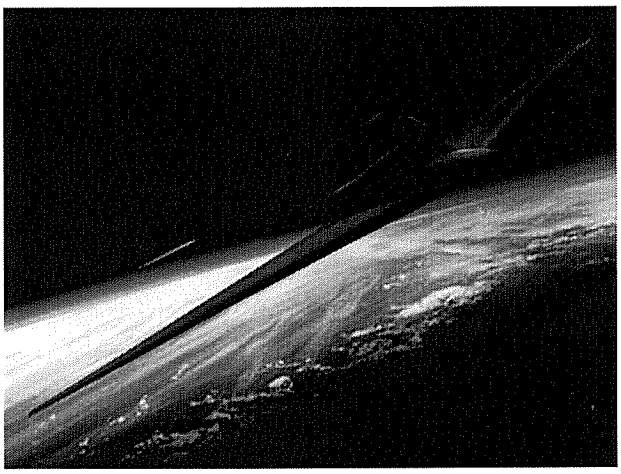
Lockheed Martin Skunk Works TR-X High-Altitude Low-Observable/Stealth Tactical Reconnaissance Aircraft Concept

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Photo Credit: Lockheed Martin Skunk Works

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The media (MSM, aviation, and military defense media, alike), is currently abuzz with news of the new Lockheed Martin Skunk Works TR-X low-observable/stealth tactical reconnaissance aircraft concept (or, concept aircraft), which is the follow-on to the Lockheed Martin U-2 "Dragon Lady" spy plane, or next-gen U2 designed for high-altitude ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) ops. The TR-X will utilize the U2's General Electric F118 engine and fly at 70,000 feet. The TR-X will sport increased power and cooling for new sensors, electronic warfare suites and more advanced communications tech that will alow the aircraft to communicate with both 4th and 5th-gen fighter aircraft, including the F-22 Raptor and F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) variants.

Just going on the concept artwork visuals, the TR-X looks like an unmanned aircraft platform, but DefenseReview (DR) isn't sure about this, nor are we clear yet on the difference between the TR-X and reported RQ-X concept aircraft. In any case, *AINonline* reports that the TR-X will have open mission systems (OMS) architecture for improved/enhanced versatility and mission adaptability.

Defense Review is actually much more interested in the high-altitude, low-observable/stealth hypersonic aircraft currently being developed by the US military and large defense contractors like Lockheed Martin, Boeing and Northrop Grumman, and we're particularly interested in those systems that can be armed/weaponized with mission-specific weapons payloads, including guided missiles and bombs, both conventional and nuclear.

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Lockheed Martin Develops Compact, Lightweight, High-Energy 30-Kilowatt Portable Electric Fiber Laser Weapon System for Fighter Aircraft: Spectral Beam Combining (SBC) Combines Multiple Lasers into Single Beam for Maximum Power!

LaserMotive and Lockheed Martin Skunk Works Developing "Power Beaming" In-Flight Laser-Recharging for UAS/UAV/Drone Aircraft: Are Wireless-Powered/Laser Beam-Powered "Eternal" Armed/Weaponized Unmanned Combat Aircraft Soon to Become the Norm?

Lockheed Martin HULC (Human Universal Load Carrier) Anthropomorphic Robotic Exoskeleton for Future Military Special Operations Forces (SOF) Warfare at SOFIC 2012 (Video!)

Lockheed Martin Joint Air-to-Ground Missile (JAGM) System: Next-Gen HELLFIRE Missile with Tri-Mode Gudance/Tracking Scores Hit on Tank from More than 3.7 Miles Out at White Sands Missile Range, and Gets Closer to Landing U.S. Military Contract.

Hypersonic Missiles Being Developed by China and the United States for World War III (WWIII): Meet the WU-14 Hypersonic Glide Vehicle (HGV) and DARPA-Raytheon Tactical Boost Glide (TBG) Hypersonic Cruise Missile

Pentagon Seeks Maneuverable Scramjet-Powered Ultrahigh Speed Strike Vehicle/Hypersonic UAS (Unmanned Aircraft/Aerial System): Meet the Latest Air Power Race!

Northrop Grumman RQ-180 Low-Observable Flying-Wing Stealth UAS/UAV/Drone Aircraft for ISR Missions: Out of the Black and into the Light!

DARPA/Lockheed Martin/Piasecki Aircraft Transformer TX Lightweight Airborne/Flying Tactical Fighting Vehicle: U.S. Military Combat/Warfare Meets "The Jetsons"

Boeing Phantom Works Phantom Swift Tilt-Rotor/Tilt-Wing Ducted-Fan VTOL (Vertical Take-Off and Landing) X-Plane: 3D Printing and Rapid Prototyping at It's Futuristic Best, and Fastest

Boeing/Sikorsky 'Defiant' Joint Multi-Role (JMR) Helicopter: Coaxial/Dual-Rotor Compound Helicopter for U.S. Military Special Operations Forces (SOF)

Sikorsky X2 Coaxial Compound Helicopter Technology Demonstrator Aircraft Achieves 287.69 MPH: Is the Sikorsky S-97 Raider Compound Helicopter the U.S. Army's Future Light Tactical Helicopter?

Datron Scout Air Reconnaissance System (ARS) Backpackable/Manpackable Lightweight Quad-Rotor VTOL Micro Air Vehicle (MAV)/SUAS/UAV for Tactical Surveillance Missions (Video!)

BCB/AAI SQ-4 RECON Nano Quad-Rotor MAV/UAS/UAV (NUAS/NUAV) Bat-Like Unmanned Spy-Copter Stealth Micro Air Vehicle for "Over the Hill" Observation and Reconnaissance: Special Operations Forces (SOF) Get a New (Small) Backpackable/Manpackable Quadcopter VTOL Eye in the Sky…Maybe (SOFIC 2012 Video!)

Prioria Robotics Maveric Flexible-Wing Mini-UAS (Mini-Unmanned Aircraft System) at SOFIC 2011: Manpackable, Throwable SUAV (Small Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) with Flexible/Bendable Wing! (Photos and Video!)

AeroVironment (AV) Switchblade Backpackable/Manpackable "Kamikaze Drone" SUAV/Mini-UAS (Small Unmanned Aerial Vehicle/Mini-Unmanned Aircraft System) "Over-the-Ridge" Precision-Kill Weapon: Tactical Reconnaissance Meets Low-Order-Detonation Lethality

General Atomics MQ-9 Reaper UAS/UAV Retrofitted with Gorgon Stare Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR) Multi-Camera System: The All-Seeing Eye in the Sky…You Look at It, You Die.

Piasecki X-49A Speeedhawk Compound Helicopter: 250-mph Black Hawk?