

Media Information
29 March 2019

BMW Welt Jazz Award finalists 2019 announced. Four vs. five – Maciej Obara Quartet against Rudresh Mahanthappa Quintet.

Munich. After six spectacular matinees, the BMW Welt Jazz Award 2019 enters its final round on 4 May, with a play-off between the **Maciej Obara Quartet** and **Rudresh Mahanthappa Quintet**. Taking to the stage in the auditorium of the BMW Welt, they will perform their interpretation of this year's theme, Saxophone Worlds, before the renowned jury decides which of them will take home the award. Created by BMW Design, the accolade will be accompanied by prize money of €10,000 for the winner, with €5,000 for the runner-up.

Jazz fans have been experiencing first-hand the musical skills of this year's performers in six free matinees between January and March. The audience award, presented by Schloss Elmau, will be handed over at the final, along with an invitation to play at the Schloss.

The finalists

Maciej Obara Quartet

On 27 January the Maciej Obara Quartet launched the competition for the BMW Welt Jazz Award 2019 with their performance, wowing not only the audience but also the highly respected jury with their interpretation of the theme of Saxophone Worlds. Maciej Obara is a key figure in latest-generation European jazz. With his sixth album, Unloved (2017), the Polish alto and tenor saxophonist made his debut at ECM Records. His multi-faceted, lyrical music is delivered with breath-taking technique and accompanied by his compatriot Dominik Wania on the piano, and Norway's Ole Morten Vagan and Gard Nilssen on bass and percussion. The resulting fusion that is the Maciej Obara Quartet left such an impression that made it through to the final.

Rudresh Mahanthappa Quintet

At the heart of the international acclaim for the jazz artist Rudresh Mahanthappa are his passion for Carnatic music and his Indian roots. The work of this talented musician is already well-documented by a string of awards. On 24 March Mahanthappa captivated his audience with a fusion of rhythmic structures and contemporary jazz. Accompanied by Rez Abbasi on guitar, Bobby Avey on piano, François Moutin on bass and Rudy Royston on percussion, the Rudresh Mahanthappa Quintet presented the successful Bird Calls album. Mahanthappa's very personal, highly virtuoso interpretation of original compositions by saxophone legend Charlie 'Bird' Parker saw him reinterpret the arrangements, themes and solos of the godfather of modern jazz in a new context to reflect the theme of this year's BMW Welt Jazz Awards. Their inexhaustible joy at playing and their powerful output won the quintet a place in the final.

Firma

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The jury

The respected jury, chaired by **Oliver Hochkeppel** (music and culture journalist with the Süddeutsche Zeitung), has proved its credentials in previous years and comprises:

- **Roland Spiegel**, music editor and jazz expert with the Bavarian broadcaster Bayerischer Rundfunk, BR-KLASSIK
- **Andreas Kolb**, editor-in-chief of JazzZeitung.de and nmz – neue musikzeitung
- **Heike Lies**, musicologist in the Music and Musical Theatre Division of the City of Munich's Department of Culture
- **Christiane Böhnke-Geisse**, Artistic Director of the international jazz festival Bingen swingt.

The finale

Like the Sunday matinees, the finale will be introduced by Beate Sampson, jazz editor with BR KLASSIK. The award, created specially by BMW Design, will be handed over by Dr Nicolas Peter, BMW AG Board Member. Representing the City of Munich will be cultural adviser Dr Hans-Georg Küppers.

The final concert and award presentation will be held on 4 May 2019 at 7 pm in the Auditorium of the BMW Welt. Tickets are available from München Ticket and the BMW Welt.

This year's BMW Welt Jazz Award is once again presented with the support of BR KLASSIK, nmz, Schloss Elmau and the City of Munich's Department of Culture.

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www.press.bmwgroup.comE-Mail: presse@bmw.de**About BMW Group Cultural Engagement**

For almost 50 years now, the BMW Group has initiated and engaged in over 100 cultural cooperations worldwide. The company places the main focus of its long-term commitment on contemporary and modern art, classical music and jazz as well as architecture and design. In 1972, three large-scale paintings were created by the artist Gerhard Richter specifically for the foyer of the BMW Group's Munich headquarters. Since then, artists such as Andy Warhol, Jeff Koons, Daniel Barenboim, Jonas Kaufmann and architect Zaha Hadid have co-operated with BMW. In 2016 and 2017, female artist Cao Fei from China and American John Baldessari created the next two vehicles for the BMW Art Car Collection. Besides co-initiatives, such as BMW Tate Live, the BMW Art Journey and the "Opera for All" concerts in Berlin, Munich, Moscow and London, the company also partners with leading museums and art fairs as well as orchestras and opera houses around the world. The BMW Group takes absolute creative freedom in all its cultural activities – as this initiative is as essential for producing groundbreaking artistic work as it is for major innovations in a successful business.

Further information: www.bmwgroup.com/culture and www.bmwgroup.com/culture/overviewFacebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BMW-Group-Culture>Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/bmwgroupculture/>

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BMW Welt – at the heart of the brand, on the pulse of the city

The BMW Welt welcomes over 3 million visitors per year. With its pioneering architecture, BMW Welt is the heart of all the brands in the BMW Group – BMW, the sub-brands BMW M and BMW i, MINI, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars and BMW Motorrad, which are impressively presented in their own worlds of experience. But it is not only the exhibitions and the collection of new vehicles that are highlights for car lovers from all over the world. Visitors can enjoy a year-round programme of varied events covering culture, art and entertainment as well as a popular event location for over 400 external events per year. The various restaurants of the BMW Welt offer a variety of culinary delights up to star gastronomy. In the BMW Welt Junior Campus, children and youngsters can enjoy exciting guided tours and workshops on the themes of mobility and sustainability.

The BMW Group

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises 30 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2018, the BMW Group sold over 2,490,000 passenger vehicles and more than 165,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2018 was € 9.815 billion on revenues amounting to € 97.480 billion. As of 31 December 2018, the BMW Group had a workforce of 134,682 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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