

Media Information
05 September 2017

ECKART 2017 for “Creative Responsibility” awarded to Tiffany Persons. Long-standing efforts for Sierra Leone.

Munich. The jury of the International Eckart Witzigmann Award (ECKART) has announced its next selection: American Tiffany Persons will receive the ECKART 2017 for “Creative Responsibility”. The jury, which includes “chef of the century” Eckart Witzigmann, paid tribute to Persons’ services to education, health and sustainability in the extremely poor Kono region of Sierra Leone. The award will be presented at the ECKART gala hosted by the Witzigmann Academy and the BMW Group at the Palace of Versailles, outside Paris, on 21 Sept. 2017.

In 2006, the well-known marketing and music-video director Tiffany Persons travelled to Sierra Leone for the first time to film a documentary. She spent three months living in the rural, diamond-mining mountain town of Kono, where she witnessed the community’s extremely difficult living and working conditions for herself. Impressed by the enthusiasm and cheerfulness of local people in the most adverse of conditions, Persons founded Shine On Sierra Leone (SOSL) in 2007 to raise money for building urgently-needed schools. The organisation has continued to grow ever since: Today, the non-profit SOSL is committed to promoting wider access to education, healthcare, microfinancing and regional culture, and providing sustainable building and agricultural programmes for the communities of Sierra Leone and its people.

“I prefer to use the term ‘partnership’,” says Persons, describing her approach. “We have come a long way from our humble beginnings. Our community and our projects have grown a great deal. We have formed a deep relationship with the people there, based on trust and authenticity. My biggest goal is to involve the people of Sierra Leone in projects with the highest level of integrity that celebrate the beauty of the country.”

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Her success speaks for itself: The Muddy Lotus Primary School founded by SOSL, which was built using the revolutionary sustainable earthbag construction method, is one of the best in the country. More than 20,000 people across the country were also able to improve their future prospects by attending computer classes. In just five years, by focusing on microloans for women, the organisation has enabled more than 3,500 female small-business owners to earn their living. SOSL worked with the ecotourism company Tribe Wanted to build an ecovillage, using the CalEarth earthbag method and creating many new jobs. The aim is always to develop sustainable change from within society, instead of relying on outside intervention as an act of charity.

“Tiffany Persons shows us how each of us can do great things for others – we just have to make a start,” explained Dr. Nicolas Peter, member of the Board of Management of BMW AG, responsible for Finance, and patron of ECKART 2017, with reference to the jury’s decision. “In her tireless efforts to help the people of Sierra Leone, Tiffany Persons is also a role model for the BMW Group. We take responsibility. We have made social commitment and sustainability an integral part of the BMW Group’s identity. I am therefore delighted that the ECKART 2017 for “Creative Responsibility” and the cash award endowed by the BMW Group will benefit Tiffany Persons and her good cause.”

The ECKART 2017

The International Eckart Witzigmann Award (ECKART) 2017 will be presented in the categories “Art of Cookery”, “Innovation” and “Art of Living”, as well as in the “Creative Responsibility” category, which is endowed by the BMW Group with a cash award.

The jury has already announced the winners in the categories “Art of Cookery” (Alain Ducasse) and “Innovation” (Maria Marté and Luisa Orlando) and now Tiffany Persons in the category “Creative Responsibility”.

The award ceremony will be held outside of Germany for the first time on 21 Sept. 2017 in Versailles, near Paris. This international meeting of the culinary scene will be hosted by ECKART award-winner Alain Ducasse and marks the start of the ECKART world tour, which will continue in the United States in 2018.

The BMW Group and the Witzigmann Academy have been partners since 2012 and are committed to their joint aim of creating an international platform for healthy eating, sustainable cuisine and responsible use of resources. Previous award-winners include Daniel Boulud, HRH Charles Prince of Wales, Elena Arzak, Anne-Sophie Pic, Harald Wohlfahrt, Dieter Kosslick, Ferran Adrià, Marc Haerberlin, Joël Robuchon, Alex Atala, Jon Rose, Mick Hucknall, Massimo Bottura, Dominique Crenn, Andreas Caminada and many others.

If you have any questions, please contact:

BMW Group Corporate Communications

Julian Hetzenecker, BMW Group Business and Financial Communications

Tel.: +49-89-382-39229

Email: julian.hetzenecker@bmw.de

Email: presse@bmw.de

Media website: www.press.bmw.de

Press contact Witzigmann Academy

Otto Geisel

Lachner-Straße 18

80639 München

Tel: +49 89 139 260 26

office@ottogeisel.de

Further information on the Eckart Witzigmann Award can be found at:

www.eckart-witzigmann-preis.de

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. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 31 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2016, the BMW Group sold approximately 2.367 million cars and 145,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax was approximately € 9.67 billion on revenues amounting to € 94.16 billion. As of 31 December 2016, the BMW Group had a workforce of 124,729 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,

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comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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