

Media Information  
June 18, 2020

## **Leelee Chan selected for next BMW Art Journey. Hong Kong-based sculptor will explore the possibilities of ancient and future materials and will bring herself into dialogues with craftspeople, innovators, and scientists.**

**Munich/Basel.** Art Basel and BMW are delighted to present **Leelee Chan** as the next BMW Art Journey winner. An international jury conducted its selection process unanimously and online. Leelee Chan was selected from a shortlist of three proposals by artists who are represented by galleries originally accepted into this year's Art Basel show in Hong Kong. Leelee Chan is represented by Capsule Shanghai gallery.

Leelee Chan's BMW Art Journey **"Tokens From Time"** intends to trace material culture from the past, present and future. The artist will visit artisan families that practice ancient craftsmanship techniques using copper, silver and marble, among other materials, some of which play a role in the artist's own sculptural practice. Along her journey, Chan will engage in dialogues with scientists and experts to understand how natural materials may be substituted by synthetic materials in the future.

Investigating ancient materials and their future substitutes from the emerging fields of nanotechnology and biotechnology, Leelee Chan's BMW Art Journey project gives expression to the evolving relationship between people and materials, and touches on contemporary debates surrounding ecological and cultural sustainability. Spanning from the hand-crafted to the industrial to the post-industrial, the artist's investigation of materials ultimately asks the question, "What does it mean to be a sculptor today?" In search of an answer, Leelee Chan plans to visit destinations in Europe, Japan and the Americas. Her final travel itinerary will be determined in observance of current travel and health regulations tied to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"I am beyond excited to be selected for the BMW Art Journey. Material objects have always been at the core of my practice. The journey will allow me to dig much deeper by discovering new processes, by encountering the people who work with them in their everyday lives, and, thereby, to make them meaningful for me as a sculptor working in this current uncertain moment," says Leelee Chan.

The international jury consisted of **Claire Hsu**, Director, [Asia Art Archive](#), Hong Kong; **Matthias Mühling**, Director, [Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau](#), Munich; **Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo**, President, [Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo](#), Turin; **Philip Tinari**, Director, [UCCA Center for Contemporary Art](#), Beijing; and **Samson Young**, [artist](#) and winner of the first BMW Art Journey.

"Leelee Chan's journey spans across time and space to consider the stories of materials, including metal, stone and crystals, and explore how they have shaped our human experience," noted the Jury in its statement. "From ancient crystal caves in Mexico to marble workshops in Italy to high-tech synthetic quartz factories in Japan, the artist plans to investigate materials with the help of experts and craft practitioners, both as a source of raw material and as an inspiration for reflection. We were impressed by how Leelee Chan engages with materials that are charged with needs, values and ideas, to ask what it means to be a sculptor working today and tomorrow."

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In addition to Leelee Chan, the **shortlisted artists** for the BMW Art Journey 2020 were: **Jes Fan** (represented by Empty Gallery, Hong Kong) and the artist duo **Amy Lien & Enzo Camacho** (represented by 47 Canal, New York).

Launched in 2015, the **BMW Art Journey** is a collaboration between Art Basel and BMW, created to recognize and support emerging artists worldwide. Now in its sixth year the initiative is evolving. Since 2020, the circle of eligible artists has been broadened. For the first time, eligible participants included not only emerging and mid-career artists from the Discoveries sector, but also artists presented by participating galleries founded no more than ten years ago. As this year's Art Basel show in Hong Kong had to be cancelled due to the outbreak and spread of Covid-19, the jury conducted its selection process online. Artists and their galleries were invited to submit digital applications, including a short video by the artists explaining their work and process.

Past winners of the BMW Art Journey include sound and performance artist **Samson Young** (represented by a.m. Space, Hong Kong at Art Basel's Hong Kong show in 2015); video artists **Henning Fehr and Philipp Rühr** (represented by Galerie Max Mayer, Dusseldorf at Art Basel's Miami Beach show in 2015); **Abigail Reynolds** (represented by Rokeby, London at Art Basel's show in Hong Kong in 2016) as well as **Max Hooper Schneider** (represented by High Art, Paris at Art Basel's Miami Beach show in 2016), **Astha Butail** (represented by GALLERYSKY, New Delhi, Bangalore at Art Basel's Hong Kong show in 2017), **Jamal Cyrus** (represented by Inman Gallery, Houston at Art Basel's Miami Beach show in 2017), **Zac Langdon-Pole** (represented by Michael Lett, Auckland at Art Basel's Hong Kong show in 2018) and **Lu Yang** (represented by the gallery Société, Berlin at Art Basel in Hong Kong 2019).

BMW has supported Art Basel's shows in Basel, Miami Beach and Hong Kong for many years.

For further information and press material about the BMW Art Journey artists and their projects, please visit the new press section: [www.bmw-art-journey.com/press](http://www.bmw-art-journey.com/press)

**For further questions please contact:**

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**About Leelee Chan at Capsule Shanghai, Shanghai**

Leelee Chan (b. 1984) lives and works in Hong Kong. She received her MFA in painting from the Rhode Island

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School of Design (RISD) in 2009 and her BFA from the School of Art Institute of Chicago in 2006. Chan's sculptures reflect her experience with the extreme urbanization in Hong Kong and are almost always comprised of dumpster detritus household ephemera, and mundane objects from her daily life not generally considered memorable or worth preserving. Derived from an impulse to interrogate these objects' status and value, Chan imaginatively explores their transformative potential and reconfigures each item according to its unique qualities. Chan's solo exhibition includes Capsule Shanghai, Shanghai. She has exhibited in recent group shows at Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong, and UCCA Dune, Qinhuangdao.

**About Art Basel**

Founded in 1970 by gallerists from Basel, Art Basel today stages the world's premier art shows for Modern and contemporary art, sited in Basel, Miami Beach, and Hong Kong. Defined by its host city and region, each show is unique, which is reflected in its participating galleries, artworks presented, and the content of parallel programming produced in collaboration with local institutions for each edition. Art Basel's engagement has expanded beyond art fairs through new digital platforms and a number of new initiatives such as The Art Basel and UBS Global Art Market Report and The BMW Art Journey. For further information, please visit [artbasel.com](http://artbasel.com).

**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. For years, the BMW Group and its partners have been initiating and establishing their own formats such as BMW Tate Live, BMW Welt Jazz Award, BMW Open Work, the BMW Art Journey and the "Opera for All" concerts in Berlin, Munich, Moscow and London. The company also partners with leading museums, art fairs and orchestras as well as jazz festivals and opera houses around the world. With BMW OPERA NEXT, the new partnership with the Staatsoper Unter den Linden, the opportunities presented by digitalisation are used to open up new ways of accessing the world of opera for young audiences. As part of its art programme "Muse", Rolls-Royce partners for the initiative "The Dream Commission" with two internationally esteemed art institutions. Together with Fondation Beyeler and Serpentine Galleries, emerging and established artists are invited to submit a moving-image work that delivers an immersive sensory experience. The artists are nominated and chosen by renowned personalities of the art world like Daniel, Birnbaum, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Cao Fei, and Theodora Vischer. The BMW Group takes absolute creative freedom in all its cultural activities for granted – 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](http://www.bmwgroup.com/culture) and [www.bmwgroup.com/culture/overview](http://www.bmwgroup.com/culture/overview)

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**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 31 production and assembly facilities in 15 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2019, the BMW Group sold over 2.5 million passenger vehicles and more than 175,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2019 was € 7.118 billion on revenues amounting to € 104.210 billion. As of 31 December 2019, the BMW Group had a workforce of 126,016 employees.

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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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