

Media Information  
September 4, 2023

## **BMW announces the Polish premiere of EVOLVER in collaboration with the Polish National Opera.**

VR experience created by London-based art collective Marshmallow Laser Feast.

**Munich/Warsaw.** This year's edition of "BMW Art Club. The Future is Art" will feature the first Polish presentation of the VR experience EVOLVER. The immersive, multimedia work of art, created by London-based art collective Marshmallow Laser Feast, uses an innovative fusion of art, science and modern technology to drop audiences deep inside the landscape of the body, following the flow of oxygen through our branching ecosystem, to a single "breathing" cell.

The project was created in collaboration with various prominent cultural figures, with narration by Cate Blanchett, and a score featuring music from Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood, amongst others. The premiere of EVOLVER in the Opera Gallery of the Polish National Opera has been set for October 12, 2023. The exhibition will be open until December 10.

### **Artistic dimension of science**

Science and art give expression to the same human need – the need to understand and describe the world. EVOLVER is a free-roaming, immersive deep dive that takes viewers through the processes that sustain all life. The all-encompassing VR experience takes us on a journey through the microcosm of the human body, which simultaneously acts as the macrocosm of nature. Exploring structures hidden far beneath the skin, viewers are taken through a sequence of breathing, visualizing the very essence of life itself, as air travels from the mouth into the lungs, before circulating around the complex rivers of our cardiovascular system and back out into the natural world.

**Marshmallow Laser Feast (MLF)** seek to highlight the common denominator between scientific precision and the emotional experience of art. Placing audiences at the centre of these ecosystems aims to bring them closer to an understanding of our interconnectedness.

Key contribution was brought to EVOLVER by invited artists and consultants from prestigious scientific centres. The executive producer is director **Terrence Malick**, a living cinematic legend, the author of such classics as "Badlands", "The Thin Red Line", and "The Tree of Life". EVOLVER features the powerful voice of actress **Cate Blanchett** and contributions from poet **Daisy Lafarge** and Radiohead's guitarist **Jonny Greenwood**. EVOLVER's

score also features musical pieces by the vocal innovator **Meredith Monk**, Golden Globe-winning composer **Jóhann Jóhannsson**, the composer, pianist and accordion player **Howard Skempton**, and musician and electronic music producer **Jon Hopkins**.

The creation of EVOLVER would not be possible without the support of scientists from a range of centres researching the human body. They kept tabs on the quality of every detail of the scans of the human body used by the artists and reproduced in virtual reality. Scientific consultants of the project include **Fraunhofer Institute for Digital Medicine MEVIS**, **The Allen Institute for Cell Science** and **Buck Institute for Research on Ageing**.

"When building EVOLVER, the artists from MLF were trying to strike balance between different dimensions: aesthetic, scientific, visual and auditory, to create a virtual universe which is both true and beautiful, which appeals to the senses and emotions, which opens a space for an intellectual reflection", points out **Stach Szablowski, the curator of "BMW Art Club. The Future is Art"**.

### **A visionary experience for the senses**

Since the very first edition, "BMW Art Club. The Future is Art" explores those fields of culture where the combination of art and technology gives birth to new ideas, answers to the challenges of the present day as well as visions of the future. This year's edition touches upon the issue that has been central for the whole cycle: how new technologies can enhance the capabilities of artists and our understanding of the contemporary world with the place which humans occupy in it.

**EVOLVER presented in the Opera Gallery** is a technologically advanced visionary experience for the senses. It begins with a ten-minute audio meditation in a specially designed relaxation space. Spectators are invited to decompress, guided by the voice of Cate Blanchett. In the next room, they proceed to take part in a VR experience, accompanied by a monumental, multidimensional video screening. With VR goggles on, they embark on a twenty-minute virtual journey through the human body, following the flow of oxygen, as it is taken into the lungs and travels to its final destination – an individual cell of the body – a living microcosm, which reflects the structure of the whole universe. The third part of EVOLVER – the epilogue – encourages reflection over the recent experience. It takes the form of a gallery, presenting digital pieces created by the members of Marshmallow Laser Feast and a film expanding on the narrative of the exhibition.

"Audiovisual technologies, such as VR, can be used to escape reality or to delve deep in artificial worlds far away from real-life problems. But the same technologies can be used to an opposing effect. New digital tools allow us not only to perceive, but also to get to know and understand the world in a way which not long ago was hardly imaginable", stresses **Barnaby Steel, co-founder of Marshmallow Laser Feast**.

The Polish premiere of EVOLVER is supported by Morele GeForce RTX Studio PCs, equipped with GeForce RTX 4080 GPUs and **certified by NVIDIA**. They are part of the NVIDIA Studio platform, aimed at artists, designers, engineers and other professionals who need powerful tools to work with graphics, video or virtual reality. The platform includes high-performance graphics cards, specialised software, and dedicated Studio drivers that deliver optimal performance and stability with the most popular 3D graphics, video, and animation software. The entire system has been created specifically for professional graphics applications, which include real-time ray traced rendering or support for AI technologies.

The world premiere of EVOLVER project took place at Tribeca Film Festival 2022 in New York. **The exhibition presented as part of "BMW Art Club. The Future is Art" in the Opera Gallery of the Polish National Opera in Warsaw will be open from October 12 until December 10, 2023.**

The patron of the project – BMW – opens all the screenings to general audience for free. Open registration at <https://butik.teatr Wielki.pl> and <https://teatr Wielki.pl> or **at the ticket office** of the National Opera, Teatr Wielki **from September 12.**

More information about the "BMW Art Club. The Future is Art" can be found at [www.bmw.pl/artclub](http://www.bmw.pl/artclub).

If you have any questions, please contact:

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**About the artists**

Marshmallow Laser Feast (Barnaby Steel, Ersin Han Ersin, Robin McNicholas) is one of the world's leading immersive art collectives, expanding human perception and exploring our connections with the world of nature. The British artists have collaborated with culture institutions (among others, Barbican Art Center), theatre companies (Royal Shakespeare Company), festivals (Tribeca Festival) as well as musicians, co-authoring video clips and stage lighting (among others for Miley Cyrus and U2). The collective employs its characteristic aesthetic in real-time VR experiences, exploring perspectives unattainable for the human senses. Their first VR project, "In the Eyes of the Animal", was shown at festivals all around the world. EVOLVER project premiered at Tribeca Festival in 2022 and was shown recently in Museum Wave in Seoul.

**About "BMW Art Club. The Future is Art"**

The Future is Art belongs to an over fifty-year long tradition of the brand's global engagement in mecenate to support and create culture. BMW is famous for its partnerships with world's leading culture institutions (Tate Modern in London, La Scala in Milan) and events (Art Basel). The projects under the auspices of BMW Art Club. The Future is Art focus on contact points between art and new technologies, showing that the combination of the freedom of creative imagination and the precision of advanced technologies give rise to completely new values. "BMW Art Club. The Future is Art" was initiated by BMW in 2018. Previous editions featured Boris Kudlička, Witek Orski with Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra and Michael Hansmeyer. Subsequent editions of the project are conducted in collaboration with Polish leading culture institutions. Up to date, they include Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra in Katowice, Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera and Warsaw-based Nowy Teatr.

**About the Polish National Opera, Teatr Wielki**

The Polish National Opera is Poland's largest cultural institution with strategic importance for Polish culture. Its venue, Teatr Wielki ('Grand Theatre'), is the largest theatre in Poland and one of the biggest performing arts venues in the world. It has been at the centre of opera and ballet history for over 170. Situated in the very heart of the Polish capital, it was originally erected in the 19th century. Destroyed during World War II, the opera house reopened in 1965, becoming one of the most opulent and best-equipped theatres in Europe.

The opera house is helmed by Waldemar Dąbrowski, an award-winning arts administrator and a former Polish minister of culture who in the course of his career has founded theatre companies, orchestras, cultural institutions, and is now a member of the Board of Opera Europa. The opera house's artistic director is Mariusz Treliński, a world-class opera director and winner of the 2018 International Opera Award. Leading the Polish National Ballet is

Krzysztof Pastor, a choreographer whose pieces have been staged across the world by companies such as the Dutch National Ballet, the Washington Ballet, or the Israel Ballet.

Both the Polish National Opera and the Polish National Ballet can boast a robust cooperation with international partners. Their productions have been staged on almost every continent at such venues as the Metropolitan Opera in New York, La Scala in Milan, English National Opera in London, and the festivals in Salzburg, Bregenz and Baden-Baden.

Teatr Wielki is not only home to Poland's top opera and ballet company. It also houses Poland's first theatre museum, a leading contemporary art gallery, and an opera studio for aspiring singers and répétiteurs. Every year, the venue welcomes a range of festivals, special galas and events. For the Polish National Opera, partnering with business is an opportunity to create a space where the most valuable creative phenomena and top-tier artistic achievements can come together.

#### About Opera Gallery of the Polish National Opera

The Opera Gallery is a joint project of Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera and the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. It was initiated by Waldemar Dąbrowski, Director of Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera, and Adam Myjak, Rector of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. It exhibits the works of classic representatives of the Polish avant-garde movement – the artistic generation which laid the foundation for contemporary Polish art.

#### About NVIDIA

Since its founding in 1993, NVIDIA (NASDAQ: NVDA) has been a pioneer in accelerated computing. The company's development of the first GPU in 1999 drove the gaming market, redefined computer graphics, ushered in the era of modern artificial intelligence and is driving the digitization of various industries. NVIDIA is an end-to-end computing company, providing data center-scale solutions that are changing the face of the industry. For more information, visit <https://nvidianews.nvidia.com>

#### BMW Group Cultural Engagement

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Why Culture? Why not! Culture is knowledge, a sanctuary of beauty and depth, of meaning and peace. An inspiring escape. Tranquil at best, even unsettling sometimes. As corporate citizen, the BMW Group takes social responsibility seriously, as part of which it has been involved in hundreds of cultural initiatives worldwide for over half a century, both in the arts, music & sound, architecture as well as in design. As a long-term partner, creative freedom is key – and as essential for groundbreaking works as it is for major innovations within a business enterprise like ours.

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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 over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2022, the BMW Group sold nearly 2.4 million passenger vehicles and more than 202,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2022 was € 23.5 billion on revenues amounting to € 142.6 billion. As of 31 December 2022, the BMW Group had a workforce of 149,475 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company set the course for the future at an early stage and consistently makes sustainability and efficient resource management central to its strategic direction, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.

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