

Media information

4 July 2025

**Alexander Calder's Art Car returns to Le Mans after 50 years:
BMW Art Car World Tour at Le Mans Classic 2025.****Celebration of the 50th anniversary of the BMW Art Car Collection
and the BMW 3 Series.**

Le Mans/Munich. This edition of Le Mans Classic marks a historic occasion with the return of the first BMW Art Car by Alexander Calder, in its Artist's Proof version, initiated by the Calder Foundation and BMW Group Classic, to the track where it all began 50 years ago. Hervé Poulain, the visionary behind the BMW Art Cars, and Alexander SC Rower, Calder's grandson, will take a ceremonial lap in this automotive artwork on Sunday, July 6, from 9:45 to 10:25am, during the BMW parade. This event pays vibrant tribute to the originality of the project, where art meets automotive, perpetuating a tradition that has lasted for half a century.

As a long-standing partner of Le Mans Classic, BMW celebrates this year the double anniversary of its iconic BMW Art Cars and the BMW 3 Series. Taking place from 4 to 6 July, Le Mans Classic brings together classic and vintage racing cars on the legendary 24 Hours of Le Mans circuit, creating a strong link between historical heritage and contemporary innovation.

This strong presence on the Circuit de la Sarthe underlines BMW's long-standing commitment to the alliance between art and technology. The presentation of the first BMW Art Car marks a celebration of the artistic and technological journey, reinforcing the idea that past progress feeds future innovation. This iconic **BMW 3.0 CSL** embodies a perfect balance of lightness, performance and bold aesthetics.

2025 marks the 50th anniversary of the BMW Art Cars, as well as the 50th anniversary of the **BMW 3 Series**, one of the world's best-selling premium cars with over 20 million units sold.

On this occasion, Hervé Poulain, co-founder of the BMW Art Cars, auctioneer and racing driver, will share his vision and emotions about the creation of the first Art Car and discuss the uniqueness of this visionary collection. Alexander SC Rower, president of the Calder Foundation and grandson of the artist, will talk about the importance of this rolling sculpture in his grandfather's artistic legacy. This meeting will be marked by the themes of transmission and passion.

Hervé Poulain says: "I wanted to provoke a meeting between the major arts and industry, two worlds that ignored each other. The BMW Art Cars have transformed the status of the automobile by bringing this object born from applied

arts into the fine art." Looking to the future, he continues: "The automotive myth has undergone many transformations. Today, this myth is evolving as the 21st century promises unprecedented advancements. The BMW Art Car by Calder was born 50 years ago in reaction to the pessimism generated by the first oil shock, as a symbolic gesture of optimism and confidence in the future."

50 years of 'rolling sculptures': the BMW Art Car Collection

Since 1975, renowned artists from around the world have created BMW Art Cars. The idea emerged thanks to French racing driver and art enthusiast Hervé Poulain, who, in collaboration with Jochen Neerpasch, then Head of Motorsport at BMW, invited his friend and artist Alexander Calder to paint a car. The result was a BMW 3.0 CSL that participated in the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1975, captivating the public and marking the birth of the BMW Art Car Collection. Famous figures such as Frank Stella, Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, Esther Mahlangu, David Hockney, Jenny Holzer and Ólafur Elíasson have since enriched the collection with their unique styles. More recently, John Baldessari and Cao Fei have used the BMW M6 GTLM and BMW M6 GT3 respectively to add dynamic race cars to the collection, competing at Daytona in 2016 and Macau in 2017. The BMW Art Cars by Jeff Koons and Julie Mehretu raced at the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 2010 and 2024.

Le Mans Classic

Since its beginnings, Le Mans Classic has provided a unique stage where more than 600 cars gather to pay tribute to the history of motorsport. BMW, a loyal partner of the event, showcases a range of iconic vehicles, symbols of this rich tradition. This year's Le Mans Classic poster honours the legendary **BMW M1 Procar**, paying tribute to the cars that have marked the history of the greatest endurance race of all time.

With over 200,000 visitors expected, Le Mans Classic is much more than just a car gathering. It is a grand popular festival, enriched by parades and cultural activities that connect automotive history with the future. In this year of double celebration, BMW is highlighting its rich heritage while reaffirming its commitment to innovation and excellence.

Models on display in the BMW area from 4 to 6 July:

- 1975 BMW 3.0 CSL Calder (Artist's Proof)
- 1995 BMW M3 GT Coupé E36
- BMW M3 CS Touring
- BMW i4 M60
- BMW M Electrified (Development Prototype)

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Further information on the Calder BMW Art Car (Artist's Proof) can be found [here](#).

The BMW Group's Cultural Engagement, with exclusive updates and deeper insights into its global initiatives can be followed on Instagram at [@BMWGroupCulture](#).

If you have any questions, please contact:

Corporate Communications

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BMW Group Cultural Engagement

State Opera for all Gerhard Richter **CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP** Kochi-Muziris Biennale
BMW Art Cars Ólafur Elíasson Art Basel Max Hooper Schneider Städel Invites Frank Stella
BMW Art Club **INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE** Art D'Égypte Cao Fei Esther Mahlangu
Zaha Hadid Les Rencontres d'Arles Jeff Koons India Art Fair **LONGEVITY** Julie Mehretu
PARTNERSHIP BMW Open Work by Frieze Andy Warhol Lu Yang Preis der Nationalgalerie
Samson Young Bavarian State Opera **CREATIVE FREEDOM** BMW Young Artist Jazz Award
Ken Done **INTERACTION** Premio de Pintura Gallery Weekend Berlin Art Market Budapest
Paris Photo Leelee Chan Art Dubai **SUSTAINABILITY** BMW Photo Award Leipzig
Teatro alla Scala BMW Classics Jenny Holzer BMW Art Guide by Independent Collectors

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.

Further information: www.bmwgroup.com/culture and www.bmwgroup.com/overview
Instagram: [@BMWGroupCulture](#)
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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 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 2024, the BMW Group sold over 2.45 million passenger vehicles and more than 210,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2024 was € 11.0 billion on revenues amounting to € 142.4 billion. As of 31 December 2024, the BMW Group had a workforce of 159,104 employees.

The economic success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. Sustainability is a key element of the BMW Group's corporate strategy and covers all products from the supply chain and production to the end of their useful life.

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