

Media Information  
08 December 2025

## **BMW ART MAKERS: The call for applications for the 2026 edition is now open.**

To mark the bicentenary of Nicéphore Niépce's invention of photography, BMW Group France is launching the call for applications for the fifth edition of BMW ART MAKERS, its patronage programme dedicated to emerging creativity and contemporary imagery.

- Each year, the BMW ART MAKERS programme supports an artist-curator duo in the creation and installation of an art project.
- The artist and the curator each receive a grant, as well as a budget for research and production of the works that will be presented in two exhibitions at the Rencontres d'Arles and Paris Photo.
- The call for applications is open until 31 December 2025. The jury will announce the winning duo in January 2026.

**Munich/Paris.** 2026 will be a special year for photography as we celebrate the bicentenary of its creation. **Nicéphore Niépce, a visionary inventor** from the early 19th century, is widely recognised as having produced **the first permanent photograph** in 1826, thereby sparking a visual revolution that continues to shape the way we see the world today. **Less well known but equally influential, Nicéphore**, along with his brother Claude, **was also a pioneer of the internal combustion engine**, an invention that profoundly transformed mobility and our daily lives. These **two major advances**, photography and the internal combustion engine, have brought about fundamental technological and cultural changes. It is in this spirit that BMW, at the crossroads of mobility and creativity, is passionately committed to photographic patronage, notably at the Niépce Museum in Chalon-sur-Saône, where the BMW residency was born in 2010, before launching the BMW ART MAKERS programme in 2021.

Evolution and progress come through knowledge: these inventions provide rich material for artists and curators to think about and create, inviting them to imagine new forms of expression and reflection.

### **Call for applications**

To celebrate the bicentenary of photography in 2026, the BMW ART MAKERS programme invites applicants to honour this heritage while imagining forward-looking projects. Echoing Niépce's pioneering spirit, this exceptional edition encourages the exploration of the links between image, innovation and transformation, in a context where creativity and responsibility come together.

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Since 1826, photography has stood at the heart of cultural and technological change—an ambition now shared by BMW through its commitment to more intelligent, more human-centered and more sustainable mobility. Artist–curator duos are therefore invited to propose a project that reimagines our relationship with the image, movement and progress.

**The call for applications is open until 31 December 2025 at 11:59 p.m.  
The winning duo will be announced in January 2026.**

**BMW ART MAKERS: financial, material and human support** that includes

- A grant of €10,000 for the artist,
- A grant of €8,000 for the curator,
- A budget of €15,000 for research and production of the works,
- The production of an exhibition integrated into major events such as Paris Photo and the Rencontres d'Arles,
- Support in coordination and communication.

### **Practical information**

In particular, the project should:

- Innovate or experiment with the medium.
- Design a scenography that is carefully thought out throughout its entire life cycle and can be reused at the Rencontres d'Arles and then at Paris Photo.
- Prioritise the sober and responsible use of resources.
- Question or provide an artistic perspective on current issues.

Applications are open until 31 December 2025 on the dedicated [BMW ART MAKERS application platform](#). More information is available on the official Instagram account [bmwgroupculture\\_fr](#).

The nominated duos will be contacted in early January to present their project to the jury, which will announce the winning duo in January 2026.

### **Over 50 years of cultural patronage**

For more than 50 years, BMW has been committed to culture, convinced that artists are pioneers capable of anticipating and revealing the major challenges of their time. Supporting creativity means supporting those who are shaping the future.

This commitment is exemplified in its longstanding partnerships—23 years with Paris Photo and 15 years with the Rencontres Photographiques d'Arles. By supporting the international art scene, BMW offers decisive visibility to emerging

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talents, many of whom have since achieved major recognition, reaffirming the relevance of this engagement. This dialogue between artistic innovation, society and business reflects a shared ambition: to safeguard the future of culture and make it accessible to all, today and for generations to come.

From Frank Stella to Andy Warhol, Jeff Koons and the emerging artists of the BMW Residency and the BMW ART MAKERS programme, BMW has spent decades promoting new artistic perspectives and the hybridisation of techniques across contemporary art, music, architecture, design, photography and the visual arts. Hundreds of projects have been created worldwide.

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

If you have any questions, please contact:

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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 a 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, in the fields of contemporary art, music and film 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](http://www.bmwgroup.com/culture) and [www.bmwgroup.com/overview](http://www.bmwgroup.com/overview)

Instagram: [@BMWGroupCulture](https://www.instagram.com/BMWGroupCulture)

#BMWGroupCulture

**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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