

Media Information
August 31, 2016

First BMW Art Car designed by Chinese artist to debut in 2017.

Creative contemporary art will anticipate emerging trends in future mobility.

- The 18th BMW Art Car is set to premiere in 2017 and will become the first BMW Art Car designed by a Chinese artist.
- In the spirit of innovation and going with the times, the 18th BMW Art Car will showcase emerging trends in future mobility such as automated driving and intelligent connectivity.

Munich/Beijing. Cao Fei, the first Chinese artist commissioned to design a BMW Art Car, shared her inspirations and design concept for her “rolling sculpture” during a media briefing at her Beijing studio on Thursday, August 25. The 18th BMW Art Car, which is based on the BMW M6 GT3, is set to debut in 2017. Inspired by the speed of racing cars and the tremendous changes of Chinese society over the past decades, Cao Fei will use this installation to interpret the themes of the century such as automated driving and the convergence of virtual worlds and reality.

“The car is key to understanding the changes occurring in contemporary Chinese society. The rapid speed of a car and the rapid changes taking place in Chinese society are my inspirations for creating the 18th BMW Art Car. But my BMW Art Car will adopt an expressive form completely different from previous ones. It will be an interpretation of the century’s theme, namely that we enter ‘a landscape of no man’s land’, e.g. autonomous cars and aircrafts and virtual reality,” said Cao Fei.

Thomas Girst, Head of BMW Group Cultural Engagement, emphasized the heritage and innovations of BMW Art Cars during the media briefing, “Art is a mirror that can reflect the future into today’s reality. The BMW Group believes that sustainability, connectivity and automated driving are the trends for future individual mobility. We are pleased to see that the artists’ ideas for the 18th BMW Art Car regarding future cars, society and humankind is in line with BMW’s vision for future mobility.”

Just like previous BMW Art Cars, the 18th vehicle of the collection will participate in a racing event in Asia and furthermore be exhibited in a major museum, making it the latest example of the BMW Group’s endeavor to promote the arts and intercultural communications.

Cao Fei is considered one of the most important young artists to have emerged from China. She has been active in the international art scene for almost two decades with her unique multimedia projects in which she explores the rapid changes occurring in Chinese society today. In November 2015, the jury of the BMW Art Car project, consisting of twelve renowned museum directors and curators, voted unanimously in favor of Cao Fei and American artist John Baldessari to design the 18th and 19th BMW Art Car respectively. The jury is “in particular looking forward as to how she may turn the car into an imaginative part of her parallel universe” as well as present a new perspective to the world.

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Absolute creative freedom and full support of the artist

The BMW Group is committed to the pursuit of innovation and creativity. With regards to creating the 18th BMW Art Car, Cao Fei has been guaranteed absolute creative freedom and the full support of BMW.

Cao Fei has also gained a unique insight into the automotive industry. Over the course of the past year, the BMW Group arranged for Cao Fei to have several in-depth meetings with the company's senior executives. For example, Dr Ian Robertson, member of the Board of Management of BMW AG, discussed the possibility for Cao to be the first artist to also create the inside of a BMW Art Car; Adrian van Hooydonk, Senior Vice President of BMW Group Design, met with her to discuss colors; Karim Habib, Director of BMW Design, spoke to her about 3-D modeling; and Olaf Kastner, President and CEO of BMW Group, China Region, met with her to discuss BMW's "Art Factory" in Shenyang.

In addition, BMW gave the Chinese artist a first-hand taste of speed and state-of-the-art technologies by arranging personalized visits and activities. For instance, the artist marveled at the sight of a number of IT industry experts collaborating with auto designers at the Group's R&D center. She also was able to see some cutting-edge technologies showcasing human-machine interaction, virtual reality and artificial intelligence, which have already begun to influence the early stages of auto design.

At BMW Group's plants in Munich and Shenyang, Cao Fei was given a comprehensive overview of the modern auto manufacturing process. She even witnessed the manufacturing of BMW's latest engine. A young technician from the production line spoke with the artist about the many positive changes the plant has made in his life as well as for the city of Shenyang. The expatriate German experts from the headquarters at Shenyang plant showed Cao Fei how BMW's "engineer culture" informs every detail of their work.

The communication of these ideas gave Cao Fei a whole new understanding of the design and meaning of cars, which in turn helped her gain a better understanding of the advanced technologies used in the modern car industry. In addition, she gained further insights into the wide range of creative ways informing the shape of future mobility. This interplay of ideas was the source of inspiration for the artist's many ideas of how to create the 18th BMW Art Car.

History of the BMW Art Cars

The perfect interaction of design, automotive, racing, technology and contemporary art has helped make each BMW Art Car legendary in both the auto industry and the art world. In 1975, together with former Motorsport Director Jochen Neerpasch, the passionate French racecar driver Hervé Poulain came up with the idea to create a canvas on his BMW 3.0 CSL, and commissioned American artist and friend Alexander Calder to paint the first BMW Art Car, thus marking the birth of the collection.

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Over the past 41 years, BMW invited seventeen international artists to design BMW models, among them some of the most renowned artists of our time: Alexander Calder (1975), Frank Stella (1976), Roy Lichtenstein (1977), Andy Warhol (1979), Ernst Fuchs (1982), Robert Rauschenberg (1986), Michael Jagamara Nelson (1989), Ken Done (1989), Matazo Kayama (1990), César Manrique (1990), A. R. Penck (1991), Esther Mahlangu (1991), Sandro Chia (1992), David Hockney (1995), Jenny Holzer (1999), Olafur Eliasson (2007), Jeff Koons (2010). Thanks to their creativity, the BMW Art Cars have been a manifestation of minimalism, pop art, art brut and conceptual art – an authentic testimony to the unique trends and cultural ideas of their time.

Moreover, the BMW Art Cars have a long-standing racing tradition, in step with the BMW brand philosophy of “Sheer Driving Pleasure” they combine continuous innovation with speed and art. All BMW Art Cars are “rolling sculptures” built from production models or racecars, and out of those exquisite vehicles so far eight have excelled on the tracks and achieved extraordinary results.

Promoting cultural engagement to fulfill the commitment to social responsibility

BMW Group is committed to corporate social responsibility through cultural engagement while pursuing innovation and development. The range of seventeen existing BMW Art Cars showcases various artistic themes including animal patterns from Australian aboriginal myths as a symbol of admiration for ancient civilizations as well as a recurrence of African tribal paintings that introduce distinctly novel perspectives and thus new life into traditional art. All of these demonstrate the BMW Group’s unrelenting efforts to promote the development of and exchange between various cultures.

As the latest member to join the BMW Art Car collection, the 18th BMW Art Car will offer the whole world an opportunity to better appreciate the values of Chinese modern art and understand the transition of Chinese society.

BMW initiated the program “BMW China Cultural Journey” in China in 2007 in an effort to raise public awareness for its heritage and culture as well as to protect both tangible and intangible Chinese cultural heritage.

Find the BMW Art Car Collection on our social media sites following:
#BMWArtCar
<http://bmwartcars.tumblr.com/>

For further questions please contact:

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About BMW Group's Cultural Commitment

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. Currently, female artist Cao Fei from China and American John Baldessari are creating the next two vehicles for the BMW Art Car Collection. Besides co-initiatives, such as BMW Tate Live, the BMW Art Journey and the "Opera for All" concerts in Berlin, Munich and London, the company also partners with leading museums and art fairs as well as orchestras and opera houses around the world. The BMW Group takes absolute creative freedom in all its cultural activities – 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 and www.bmwgroup.com/culture/overview
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The BMW Group

With its three brands BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce, 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 2015, the BMW Group sold approximately 2.247 million cars and nearly 137,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2015 was approximately € 9.22 billion on revenues amounting to € 92.18 billion. As of 31 December 2015, the BMW Group had a workforce of 122,244 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, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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