BMW
Corporate Communications

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Company

Bayerische

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Aktiengesellschaft

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**BMW is first partner of the exhibition “The Art of Enlightenment” at the Chinese National Museum in Beijing.**

**Lorin Maazel to conduct opening concert with the German Minister for Foreign Affairs, Guido Westerwelle, in attendance.**

**Beijing/Munich.** The wide-ranging exhibition “The Art of Enlightenment”will open at theChinese National Museum in Beijing on 1 April 2011. BMW is first partner of the collaboration being presented by the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, the Staatliche Kunstsammlung Dresden and the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen in Munich. The project is being implemented under the patronage of German Federal President Christian Wulff and his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao. The collaboration is the highlight of the German-Chinese cultural exchange programme agreed upon in 2005 by the Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao and Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Moreover, BMW will support promoting the exhibition, which will be open until the spring of 2012, with additional formats. For example, an exchange programme for young curators from China and Germany, which is designed to bring both cultures closer together, will be jointly initiated with the partner institutions. In addition, a youth congress will offer an opportunity for cultural exchange. A series of concerts entitled “The Music of Enlightenment” will complete the programme. Moreover, Volkswagen together with BMW enables a concert on the evening of April 1st as the highlight of the opening ceremony. The Dresden State Orchestra conducted by Lorin Maazel will perform with musicians from the Bavarian State Orchestra and the Berlin State Orchestra. Around 800 international guests from politics, industry and culture as well as international media representatives are expected to attend. The German Minister for Foreign Affairs Guido Westerwelle, the German ambassador in China Dr. Michael Schaefer, Saxony’s Prime Minister Stanislaw Tillich and Dr. Wolfgang Heubisch, Bavarian State Minister of Science, Research and Art, as well as numerous members of the Bundestag will also be present. At the same time, the concert will mark the start of the “Music of the Enlightenment” series, featuring pieces such as Beethoven’s “Eroica”. The concert will be held at the newly designed Chinese National Museum concert hall in Beijing, following the hall’s conversion and extension by the Gerkan, Marg and Partner architects office in Hamburg.

**Reactions to the opening of the exhibition**

The general directors of the museums, Michael Eissenhauer, Berlin, Martin Roth, Dresden, and Klaus Schrenk, Munich:

“The exhibition opens up the visual world of an epoch on the threshold of modernity, whose ideas are to this very day of programmatic significance to art and whose history of influence is to be brought to life in all its diversity for the Chinese public.”

Frank-Peter Arndt, Member of the Management Board of the BMW AG:

“It is part of our identity to be culturally involved in countries we do business in. The BMW Group has been operating in China since 2003. Our second plant will open there in 2012. The support of “The Art of the Enlightenment” in Beijing is the BMW Group’s most significant cultural commitment in Asia in 2011. Both China and Germany find themselves yet again in times of great change and reorientation. I believe that the liberal discourse and the open exchange between the two nations are both topical and necessary.”

Olaf Kastner, President and CEO of BMW Brilliance, emphasises:

“The reopening of the National Museum today is a major event that manifests China’s profound cultural legacies as well as its success today. As a brand with solid artistic and humanistic substances, BMW is very proud to support the reopening of the National Museum and witness Chinese and German cultures join hands here. I believe this exhibition will help promote Sino-German cultural exchange and present a top-class spiritual feast to Chinese and world audiences.”

**About the exhibition “The Art of Enlightenment”**

The international exhibition at the reopened National Museum of China highlights the development of an artistic and intellectual inquisitiveness and cosmopolitanism that characterised this period in European history. Conception and organisation of the exhibition are the joint efforts of the National Museums in Berlin, the Dresden State Art Collection, the Bavarian State Art Collection Munich and the National Museum of China. The almost 600 works on loan include masterpieces by Chodowiecki, Friedrich, Gainsborough, Goya, Graff, Greuze, Hogarth, Kauffmann, Pesne, Piranesi, Tischbein, Vernet and Watteau. Over an area of 2700 m², the exhibition is presenting arts of the enlightenment throughout their entire media spectrum – from the masterpieces of painting, sculpture and graphics, handcraft and fashion to valuable scientific instruments. A total of nine sections direct the view to the central topics of 18th century art: “Courtly Life During the Age of Enlightenment”, “Perspectives of Knowledge”, “The Birth of History”, “Distance and Closeness”, “Love and Sensitivity”, “Back to Nature”, “Nocturnal Sides”, “Emancipation and the Public” as well as “The Revolution of Art”. The exhibition cooperation between the three German museum institutions and the National Museum of China was signed in Berlin on 29 January 2009 in the attendance of the German Chancellor and the Chinese Prime Minister. It is a magnificent highlight of the programme for German-Chinese cultural exchange, which was bilaterally agreed upon in 2005 and serves the mutual understanding between both countries and the expansion of cultural relations.

**2011: The BMW Group is celebrating 40 years of international cultural commitment**

For almost 40 years now, the BMW Group has initiated and engaged in more than 100 international cultural co-operations and sees its commitment as an essential part of corporate communications. The BMW Group places the main focus of its long-term commitment on modern and contemporary art, jazz and classical music 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, Roy Lichtenstein, Olafur Eliasson, Thomas Demand and Jeff Koons have co-operated with BMW. The company has also commissioned famous architects such as Karl Schwanzer, Zaha Hadid and Coop Himmelb(l)au to design important corporate building and plants. In 2011, the BMW Guggenheim Lab, a joint six-year initiative of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, the Guggenheim Museum and the BMW Group, will launch in New York. With its mobile labs, the worldwide cooperation will offer a multidisciplinary platform for urban experiments and public events aiming at creating innovative concepts and designs for urban life. In its commitment, the BMW Group attaches the utmost importance to unrestricted freedom of creative potential, as it is equally as crucial for groundbreaking achievements in art as it is for the most crucial innovations within a business enterprise.

**BMW Group cultural involvement in China**

In China, the BMW Group is supporting the 2011 Asian tour of the “West East Divan” Orchestra founded by Daniel Barenboim. Since as early as 2007, support has been given to the “Cultural Journeys”, which allow the country’s rich culture to be experienced first-hand by a great number of citizens. Furthermore, the BMW Group cooperates with the Liaoning Ballet Company and the Art Value Magazine. As the partner of the National Opera Guangzhou designed by Zaha Hadid, BMW is also active in the field of architecture. At this year’s Hong Kong Fine Art Fair the company will also present the 17th BMW Art Car, which was designed by Jeff Koons.

**The Art of Enlightenment**

1 April 2011 – Spring 2012

National Museum of China

16, East Chang’an Street, Dongcheng district

Beijing 100006, China

www.chnmuseum.cn

**Further information**

www.kunstderaufklaerung.de

**Enlightenment in Dialogue**

As the official accompanying programme, the Mercator foundation will support the exhibition from 2 April until the spring of 2012 with the event series “Enlightenment in Dialogue”, which comprises five dialogue blocks. In addition to this programme, the foundation, which supports projects in the areas of science, education and international understanding, will hold a series of panel discussions dealing with the subject.

For further information please visit: www.aufklaerung-im-dialog.com

**Photographic and footage material**

**Photos**: www.kunstderaufklaerung.de and www.press.bmwgroup.com (section „Photo“, search string „Art of the enlightenment“)

**Footage**: [www.press.bmwgroup.com](http://www.press.bmwgroup.com) (search string „Art of the enlightenment“) or [www.thenewsmarket.com](http://www.thenewsmarket.com/) (high res quality). Available on April 2, 6 PM CET.

**The BMW Group**

The BMW Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 24 production facilities in 13 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

During the financial year 2010, the BMW Group sold 1.46 million cars and more than 110,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for 2010 was euro 4.8 billion on revenues amounting to euro 60.5 billion. At 31 December 2010, the BMW Group had a workforce of approximately 95,500 employees.

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| The success of the BMW Group has always been built 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. As a result of its efforts, the BMW Group has been ranked industry leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes for the last six years. |

Information regarding the BMW Group’s cultural involvement: www.bmwgroup.com/culture

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