

Media Information
September 14, 2020

Leelee Chan starts off her BMW Art Journey. **Artist from Hong Kong travels in times of COVID-19.**

Munich/Hong Kong. BMW Art Journey winner Leelee Chan, represented by Capsule Shanghai gallery, begins her journey across Europe in September 2020 to explore the possibilities of ancient and future materials, while bringing herself into dialogues with craftspeople, innovators and scientists. Leelee Chan is the ninth recipient of the BMW Art Journey, a collaboration between Art Basel and BMW since 2015, created to recognize and support emerging artists worldwide.

From the beginning of September until the end of October 2020, Leelee Chan's BMW Art Journey "**Tokens From Time**" will take her to Italy, Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and Great Britain to trace material culture from the past, present and future. Therefore, the artist will take part in artisan workshops, learning more about the practice of ancient craftsmanship techniques using copper and marble and will visit several UNESCO World Heritage Sites including some of the oldest and largest Christian and Roman mosaics. Along her journey, Leelee Chan will engage in dialogues with scientists and experts to understand how natural materials may be substituted by synthetic materials in the future.

Investigating ancient materials and their future substitutes from the emerging fields of nanotechnology and biotechnology, Leelee Chan's BMW Art Journey project describes the evolving relationship between people and materials and touches on contemporary debates surrounding ecological and cultural sustainability. Spanning from the hand-crafted to the industrial to the post-industrial, the artist's investigation of materials ultimately asks the question, "What does it mean to be a sculptor today?"

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Leelee Chan adjusted her original travel plans and starts her BMW Art Journey in Europe. Other destinations, such as Japan and Mexico, have been postponed and the further course of her journey is depending on the developments of the pandemic. Leelee Chan's travels in Europe will be carefully monitored and adjusted according to the latest guidelines and regulations.

"This is only my second day in Italy, and I am already amazed by my chance encounters and conversations with various craftspeople that hand make brass picture frames, marble paper, and domestic pottery in the corners of their small workshops. Living under the Covid-19 restrictions in Hong Kong, people have become so used to not touching anything outside their homes. I believe living like this for many months has made me hypersensitive to my new surroundings - watching the hand movements of the craftspeople, feeling their worn tools and materials in my hands, I am ready to soak it all in," says **Leelee Chan**.

Art Basel and BMW will collaborate with the artist to document the journey and share it with a broader public through print publications, online and social media.

About Leelee Chan at Capsule Shanghai

Leelee Chan (b. 1984) lives and works in Hong Kong. She received her MFA in painting from the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in 2009 and her BFA from the School of Art Institute of Chicago in 2006. Chan's sculptures reflect her experience with the

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extreme urbanization in Hong Kong and are almost always comprised of dumpster detritus household ephemera, and mundane objects from her daily life not generally considered memorable or worth preserving. Derived from an impulse to interrogate these objects' status and value, Chan imaginatively explores their transformative potential and reconfigures each item according to its unique qualities. Chan's solo exhibition includes Capsule Shanghai, Shanghai. She has exhibited in recent group shows at Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong, and UCCA Dune, Qinhuangdao.

Leelee Chan was selected as ninth BMW Art Journey winner from a shortlist of three artists, represented by galleries originally accepted into this year's Art Basel show in Hong Kong, during an online process. The international jury of experts included **Claire Hsu**, Executive Director, [Asia Art Archive](#), Hong Kong; **Matthias Mühling**, Director, [Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau](#), Munich; **Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo**, President, [Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo](#), Turin; **Philip Tinari**, Director, [UCCA Center for Contemporary Art](#), Beijing; and **Samson Young**, [artist](#) and winner of the first BMW Art Journey.

The next BMW Art Journey shortlist of three artists will be announced in March 2021 during Art Basel in Hong Kong.

Launched in 2015, the BMW Art Journey is a collaboration between Art Basel and BMW, created to recognize and support emerging artists worldwide. Now in its sixth year the initiative is evolving. Since 2020, the circle of eligible artists has been broadened. For the first time, eligible participants included not only emerging and mid-career artists from the Discoveries sector, but also artists represented by participating galleries founded no more than ten years ago. As this year's Art Basel show in Hong Kong had to be cancelled due to the outbreak and spread of Covid-19, the jury conducted its selection process online. Artists and their galleries were invited to submit digital applications, including a short video by the artists explaining their work and process.

For further information and press material about the BMW Art Journey artists and their projects, please visit the new press section: www.bmw-art-journey.com/press

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About Art Basel

Founded in 1970 by gallerists from Basel, Art Basel today stages the world's premier art shows for Modern and contemporary art, sited in Basel, Miami Beach, and Hong Kong. Defined by its host city and region, each show is unique, which is reflected in its participating galleries, artworks presented, and the content of parallel programming produced in collaboration with local institutions for each edition. Art Basel's engagement has expanded beyond art fairs through new digital platforms and a number of new initiatives such as The Art Basel and UBS Global Art Market Report and The BMW Art Journey. For further information, please visit artbasel.com.

About BMW Group Cultural Engagement

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. In 2016 and 2017, female artist Cao Fei from China and American John Baldessari created the next two vehicles for the BMW Art Car Collection. For years, the BMW Group and its partners have been initiating and establishing their own formats such as BMW Tate Live, BMW Welt Jazz Award, BMW Open Work, the BMW Art Journey and the "Opera for All" concerts in Berlin, Munich, Moscow and London. The company also partners with leading museums, art fairs and orchestras as well as jazz festivals and opera houses around the world. With BMW OPERA NEXT, the new partnership with the Staatsoper Unter den Linden, the opportunities presented by digitalisation are used to open up new ways of accessing the world of opera for young audiences. As part of its art programme "Muse", Rolls-Royce partners for the initiative "The Dream Commission" with two internationally esteemed art institutions. Together with Fondation Beyeler and Serpentine Galleries, emerging and established artists are invited to submit a moving-image work that delivers an immersive sensory experience. The artists are nominated and chosen by renowned personalities of the art world like Daniel Birnbaum, Suhanya Raffel, and Theodora Vischer. The BMW Group takes absolute creative freedom in all its cultural activities for granted – 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 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 31 production and assembly facilities in 15 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2019, the BMW Group sold over 2.5 million passenger vehicles and more than 175,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2019 was € 7.118 billion on revenues amounting to € 104.210 billion. As of 31 December 2019, the BMW Group had a workforce of 126,016 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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