

BMW Group

Corporate Communications

Media Information
May 6, 2011

BMW Guggenheim Lab to launch in New York City on August 3, before Traveling to Berlin and Asia.

Six-Year Collaboration to Examine Contemporary Urban Issues in Nine Cities Around the World.

International Advisory Committee Selects New York BMW Guggenheim Lab Team.

Design of First Mobile Laboratory Unveiled.

New York, NY, May 6, 2011. Richard Armstrong, Director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation, and Jim O'Donnell, President and CEO, BMW North America, LLC, announced today that the BMW Guggenheim Lab will launch in New York City from August 3 to October 16. Following the New York installation, the BMW Guggenheim Lab will travel to Berlin in spring/summer 2012, and to a city in Asia to be announced later this year. Conceived as an urban think tank and mobile laboratory, the BMW Guggenheim Lab will explore issues confronting contemporary cities and provide a public place and online forum for sharing ideas and practical solutions. The BMW Guggenheim Lab and all of its programming will be free to the public. The new website (bmwguggenheimlab.org) and online communities will create and extend the opportunity to participate in this multidisciplinary urban experiment worldwide.

Over the six-year migration of the BMW Guggenheim Lab, there will be three different themes and three distinct mobile structures, each designed by a different architect and each traveling to three cities around the world. The inaugural BMW Guggenheim Lab will be located on the border between Manhattan's Lower East Side and East Village, at 33 East First Street (between First and Second Avenues), on a site owned by the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation. Designed by Atelier Bow-Wow, an architecture studio in Tokyo, the mobile structure, a compact temporary facility of approximately 2,500 square feet, will easily fit into densely built neighborhoods and be transported from city to city.

The first cycle will conclude with a special exhibition presented at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York in 2013, which will explore the ideas and solutions that were addressed at the BMW Guggenheim Lab's different venues. The two remaining two-year cycles will be announced at a later date.

The theme for the first three-city cycle is Confronting Comfort, an exploration of how urban environments can be made more responsive to people's needs, how

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BMW Group

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Media Information

Date May 6, 2011

Topic BMW Guggenheim Lab to launch in New York City on August 3, before Traveling to Berlin and Asia

Page 2

a balance can be found between modern notions of individual versus collective comfort, and the urgent need for environmental and social responsibility.

An international Advisory Committee has nominated the New York BMW Guggenheim Lab Team (BGL Team), an innovative group of emerging talents in their fields who will create the diverse range of programming that will be presented in New York.

The BMW Guggenheim Lab is curated by David van der Leer, Assistant Curator, Architecture and Urban Studies, and Maria Nicanor, Assistant Curator, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

"We are delighted to be launching the BMW Guggenheim Lab in New York City, followed by Berlin, two progressive urban centers of culture and creativity, and could not be more pleased with the exceptional talent that the members of the BMW Guggenheim Lab Advisory Committee and Lab Team bring to this project," stated Richard Armstrong. "This pioneering effort to identify new ideas, designs, and strategies that address the serious challenges faced by urban cultures today furthers the Guggenheim's deep commitment to education, research, and design innovation. It is a pleasure to be collaborating with BMW, and we look forward to continuing to work together as the BMW Guggenheim Lab continues to evolve and unfold."

"Never before has our company been involved in a collaboration of this scale with a cultural institution," stated Frank-Peter Arndt, member of the Board of Management, BMW AG. "I could not think of a greater project than the BMW Guggenheim Lab to coincide with the 40th anniversary of our international cultural engagement. Richard Armstrong has rightly called our joint activity an 'adventure.' At BMW, we are fond of adventures. With the esteemed Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation at our side, we are eager to engage together in a multidisciplinary worldwide dialogue to confront today's issues, from questions of sustainability and architecture to those of engineering and science."

"New York is the perfect launching ground for the BMW Guggenheim Lab, as it is one of America's foremost megacities and a great incubator for thought leadership," said Jim O'Donnell. "This collaboration underscores BMW Group's commitment to New York and to addressing the challenges of the world's most populated urban centers."



BMW Group

Corporate Communications

Media Information

Date May 6, 2011

Topic BMW Guggenheim Lab to launch in New York City on August 3, before Traveling to Berlin and Asia

Page 3

The Advisory Committee for the first cycle of the BMW Guggenheim Lab, an international group of experts from various disciplines, includes Daniel Barenboim (Conductor and Pianist, Argentina), Elizabeth Diller (Designer, USA), Nicholas Humphrey (Theoretical Psychologist, UK), Muchadeyi Ashton Masunda (Mayor of Harare, Zimbabwe), Enrique Peñalosa (Former Mayor of Bogotá, Colombia), Juliet Schor (Economist and Professor of Sociology, USA), Rirkrit Tiravanija (Artist, Thailand), and Wang Shi (Entrepreneur, China). The Advisory Committee is charged with nominating candidates for the BGL Team for each of the three cities of the first cycle, as well as providing their own ideas relating to the theme and consulting with members of the BGL Team.

The New York BGL Team is comprised of Omar Freilla, a Bronx, New York–based environmental justice activist, cooperative developer, and founder and coordinator of Green Worker Cooperatives; Canadian journalist and urban experimentalist Charles Montgomery, an advocate for sustainability and well-being; Nigerian microbiologist and inventor and 2010 TEDGlobal Fellow Olatunbosun Obayomi; and architects and urbanists Elma van Boxel and Kristian Koreman of the Rotterdam-based architecture studio ZUS [Zones Urbaines Sensibles]. Video interviews with each of the BGL Team members can be viewed at youtube.com/bmwguggenheimlab.

“The Parks Department is delighted that the first BMW Guggenheim Lab will launch on a Parks site. First Park will provide a unique outdoor urban setting for this ambitious public program, which aims to reinvent the way we think about cities,” said New York City Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe. “The project will also benefit residents of the Lower East Side and the city at large by permanently improving a long-vacant lot.”

“New York City’s creative identity comes from the energy of its residents and neighborhoods,” said Cultural Affairs Commissioner Kate D. Levin. “That’s why we are so proud that New York is the launch site for this project aimed at generating new ideas and designs for community spaces and urban living. This is public-private partnership at its best, combining the innovative strengths of the Guggenheim, BMW, and the people of New York.”

“We look forward to welcoming the BMW Guggenheim Lab to Berlin next year. In 2012 the BMW Guggenheim Lab will engage our community in a crucial dialogue about urban responsibilities and strategies for the future,” stated Berlin Mayor Klaus Wowereit. “With its provocative theme of Confronting Comfort, the BMW Guggenheim Lab will explore the conditions and potentials of our city and of the urban environment worldwide. As a vibrant and progressive center of art



BMW Group

Corporate Communications

Media Information

Date May 6, 2011

Topic BMW Guggenheim Lab to launch in New York City on August 3, before Traveling to Berlin and Asia

Page 4

and design innovation, and a laboratory in its own right, Berlin will be an ideal site and an important contributor to this exciting initiative.”

The graphic identity of the BMW Guggenheim Lab includes an interactive logo created by graphic designers Sulki & Min, from Seoul, South Korea, was unveiled today. Unlike traditional logos, Sulki & Min’s design will grow and change through audience interaction on bmwguggenheimlab.org over the course of the BMW Guggenheim Lab’s first two-year cycle. Reflecting the role of the BMW Guggenheim Lab as a space for the exchange of ideas, the logo will become the metaphorical and virtual representation of worldwide interaction with the theme of Confronting Comfort and the larger discourse about cities and urban life. The online dialogue will be extended through dedicated BMW Guggenheim Lab social media channels, including Twitter (twitter.com/bmwgugglab), Facebook (facebook.com/bmwguggenheimlab), YouTube (youtube.com/bmwguggenheimlab), Flickr (flickr.com/bmwguggenheimlab), and FourSquare (foursquare.com/bmwgugglab).

New York BMW Guggenheim Lab

The inaugural BMW Guggenheim Lab, located at 33 East First Street (between First and Second Avenues), will be open Wednesdays and Thursdays, 1 to 9 pm, Fridays, 1 to 10 pm, and Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am to 10 pm.

The BGL Team will design public programs, experiments, and an installation exploring how interventions and innovations that decentralize, decelerate, localize, and democratize New Yorkers can reinvent the urban experience, creating a more adaptable and sustainable version of comfort. The BMW Guggenheim Lab is conceived to spark visitor curiosity and interaction, and audiences will be encouraged to participate and contribute to the answers, ideas, and stories generated inside. Programming will include unconventional tours exploring the urban fabric, hands-on experiments and how-to workshops, film screenings, and community-based discussions.

Each BGL Team member will also work closely with collaborators such as AgeLab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT); Environmental Psychology, The Graduate Center, City University of New York (CUNY); Latin Lab, School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University; Poiesis Fellowship, Institute for Public Knowledge, New York University; and THNK, the Amsterdam School of Creative Leadership. These local and international collaborators will share their expertise and contribute their knowledge to enrich the ideas and proposals of the BGL Team.



BMW Group

Corporate Communications

Media Information

Date May 6, 2011

Topic BMW Guggenheim Lab to launch in New York City on August 3, before Traveling to Berlin and Asia

Page 5

The Architecture

With a structural skeleton built of carbon fiber, the lightweight and compact BMW Guggenheim Lab has been designed by Atelier Bow-Wow as a “traveling toolbox.” The lower half of the structure, a present-day version of the Mediterranean loggia, will be left open at most times. Its configuration will change periodically throughout the run of the BMW Guggenheim Lab to meet the needs of particular programs developed by the BGL Team. The cross-pollination and user interaction that will be an integral part of the BMW Guggenheim Lab’s programs find their counterpart in the upper part of the structure, which houses a flexible rigging system and is wrapped in a semitransparent mesh. Through this external skin, visitors will be able to catch glimpses of the extensive apparatus of tools that will be lowered or raised from the fully enclosed toolbox canopy according to the BMW Guggenheim Lab’s manifold programming needs. The ground space can shift from a formal lecture setting with a stage, to the scene for celebratory gatherings or for workshops with tables for hands-on experiments. A video of Atelier Bow-Wow’s architectural rendering of the BMW Guggenheim Lab structure can be viewed at youtube.com/bmwguggenheimlab.

A series of smaller wooden structures to be placed in close proximity to the main BMW Guggenheim Lab structure will provide space for restrooms and a cafe. Whereas the main structure is forward-looking in its materiality and highly urban in its programmatic approach, the design of the restrooms and cafe references timeless timber construction that has been used in many settings, both rural and urban. Together, the wooden structures and the main BMW Guggenheim Lab form a temporary twenty-first-century ensemble that in each city will frame a particular urban void. After the BMW Guggenheim Lab departs for Berlin, the improvements made to the currently vacant lot in New York City will remain, allowing a formerly unusable city space to become an accessible public park.

About Atelier Bow-Wow

Atelier Bow-Wow was established in Tokyo in 1992 by the husband-and-wife team of Yoshiharu Tsukamoto and Momoyo Kaijima. Best known for its surprising, idiosyncratic, yet highly usable residential projects in dense urban environments, the firm has developed its practice based on a profound and unprejudiced study of existing cultural, economic, and environmental conditions—a study that led it to propose the term “pet architecture” for the multitude of odd, ungainly, but functional little buildings wedged into tiny sites around Tokyo. Atelier Bow-Wow has also acquired an enthusiastic following through its Micro Public Space projects, as well as innovative projects for exhibitions such as the 2010 Venice Biennale (as an official representative of



BMW Group

Corporate Communications

Media Information

Date May 6, 2011

Topic BMW Guggenheim Lab to launch in New York City on August 3, before Traveling to Berlin and Asia

Page 6

Japan) and the São Paulo Bienal, and at venues such as the Hayward Gallery in London, the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin, The Gallery at REDCAT in Los Angeles, the Japan Society in New York, and the OK Offenes Kulturhaus Oberösterreich in Linz, Austria. More information about Atelier Bow-Wow can be found at bow-wow.jp.

About Sulki & Min

Sulki & Min is a partnership established in Seoul by Sulki Choi and Min Choi, who met as MFA students at Yale University in 2001. From 2003 until 2005 they were based at the Jan van Eyck Academie in Maastricht, the Netherlands, where they participated in a research project for the cultural identity of the city of Leuven, Belgium; designed the academy's various publications and promotional materials; and, with Tamara Maletic and Dan Michaelson, designed the exhibition Welcome to Fusedspace Database at Stroom Den Haag. Their first solo exhibition, Sulki & Min: Factory 060421-060513, was presented at Gallery Factory, Seoul, in 2006, and received the 2006 Art Award of the Year from the Arts Council Korea. Their second solo exhibition, Sulki & Min: Kimjinhye 080402-080414, was held at Kimjinhye Gallery, Seoul, in 2008. More information about Sulki & Min can be found at sulki-min.com.

About the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation

Founded in 1937, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation is dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of art, primarily of the modern and contemporary periods, through exhibitions, education programs, research initiatives, and publications. Currently the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation owns and operates the Guggenheim Museum on Fifth Avenue in New York and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection on the Grand Canal in Venice, and provides programming and management for the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. The Deutsche Guggenheim in Berlin is the result of a collaboration, begun in 1997, between the Guggenheim Foundation and Deutsche Bank. The Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, a museum of modern and contemporary art designed by Frank Gehry on Saadiyat Island and adjacent to the main island of Abu Dhabi city, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, is currently in progress. More information about the Foundation can be found at guggenheim.org.

About BMW's Cultural Commitment

In 2011 the BMW Group is celebrating 40 years of international cultural commitment. During this time the BMW Group has initiated and engaged in more than 100 cultural cooperations worldwide. The company places the main focus of its long-term commitment on modern and contemporary art, jazz and classical music, as well as architecture and design. The BMW Group has also



BMW Group

Corporate Communications

Media Information

Date May 6, 2011

Topic BMW Guggenheim Lab to launch in New York City on August 3, before Traveling to Berlin and Asia

Page 7

been ranked industry leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes for the last six years. 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 cooperated with BMW. The company has also commissioned famous architects such as Karl Schwanzer, Zaha Hadid, and Coop Himmelb(l)au to design important corporate buildings and plants. The BMW Group guarantees absolute creative freedom in all the cultural activities it is involved in – as this is just as essential for groundbreaking artistic work as it is for major innovations in a successful business.

More information about BMW's cultural commitment can be found at bmwgroup.com/culture and bmw.com/guggenheimlab
Join the conversation on Twitter with @BMWGuggLab and use hashtag #BGLab.

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For the complete press kit, go to guggenheim.org/presskits
For publicity images, go to guggenheim.org/pressimages
User ID = photoservice, Password = presspass

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. 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.



BMW Group

Corporate Communications

Media Information

Date May 6, 2011

Topic BMW Guggenheim Lab to launch in New York City on August 3, before Traveling to Berlin and Asia

Page 8

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