

Media Information  
March 8, 2018

## **Jamal Cyrus selected for next BMW Art Journey. Houston-based artist to explore the notion of the Afro-Atlantic.**

**Munich/Basel.** Art Basel and BMW are delighted to present Jamal Cyrus as the next BMW Art Journey winner. The international jury selected him unanimously from a shortlist of three artists whose works were exhibited in the Positions sector at last year's Art Basel show in Miami Beach. Jamal Cyrus is represented by Inman Gallery, Houston.

The notion of the Afro-Atlantic provides the conceptual underpinning for Jamal Cyrus' journey. It is, in his own words, "an intercontinental and multinational geography describing the circulation of ideas between Africa, Europe, and the Americas." Inspired in part by Paul Gilroy's writings from the early 1990s, Cyrus aims to examine the many diverse cultural hybrids that have emerged through protracted interaction between the continents. Such cultural hybrids – molded by forces of conquest, colonization, slavery, industry, migration, and philosophy – can be apprehended in the cultural centers Cyrus plans to visit. These include among others the Elmina Castle in Accra, Ghana; the Theatre Champs-Élysées, in Paris, France; Brixton's Electric Avenue, in London, England; the Alhambra in Granada, Spain; and Congo Square, in New Orleans, United States.

At each location, Cyrus will record interviews with artists, musicians, historians, and philosophers who engage with the creative traditions of the Afro-Atlantic. "The journey promises to be a transformational process involving travel, dialogue, collective imagination, and intuitive response that will allow new ideas to surface in my work", said Cyrus.

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.

The international experts awarding Jamal Cyrus' journey proposal were **Massimiliano Gioni**, Artistic Director, New Museum, New York City; **Gabi Ngcobo**, Curator, Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, Berlin; **Victoria Noorthoorn**, Director, Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires; **Philip Tinari**, Director, Ullens Centre for Contemporary Art, Beijing; and **Susanne Pfeffer**, Director, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt.

"Jamal Cyrus' BMW Art Journey delineates an imaginary geography that transforms relations of power and imposed hierarchies," the five-member jury stated after its unanimous decision. "His journey combines elements of directed research and open-ended discovery, all within a deeply considered theoretical framework. His project struck us as a profound and sincere search for an understanding of the self, through the artistic lens of an individual who never forgets his role as a teacher, and who therefore foresees the multiplying effect of his experience. Cyrus' BMW Art Journey will expand and amplify a practice that has already brought much to the conversation around culture, history, and identity in the United States."



Date March 8, 2018  
Subject Jamal Cyrus selected for next BMW Art Journey.  
Page 2

In addition to Jamal Cyrus, the shortlisted artists from the Positions sector for emerging artists at Art Basel in Miami Beach included: A.K. Burns (represented by Callicoon Fine Arts, New York) and Mariela Scafati (represented by Isla Flotante, Buenos Aires).

Launched in 2015, the BMW Art Journey is a collaboration between Art Basel and BMW, created to recognize and support emerging artists worldwide. From 2018 onwards this unique award is open to artists who are exhibiting in the Discoveries sector during Art Basel in Hong Kong. A judging panel comprised of internationally renowned experts meet first to select a shortlist of three artists from the sector, who are then invited to submit proposals for a journey aimed to further develop their ideas and artistic work. The jury reconvenes to choose a winner from the three proposals.

Past winners of the BMW Art Journey include sound and performance artist **Samson Young** presented by a.m. Space, Hong Kong at Art Basel's Hong Kong show in 2015, who represented Hong Kong at the 2017 Venice Biennale; German video artists **Henning Fehr** and **Philipp Rühr** presented by Galerie Max Mayer, Dusseldorf at Art Basel's Miami Beach show in 2015; British artist **Abigail Reynolds** presented by Rokeby, London at Art Basel's show in Hong Kong in 2016 as well as **Max Hooper Schneider**, presented by High Art, Paris at Art Basel's Miami Beach show in 2016 and **Astha Butail** who was recently announced as the fifth winner and is presented by GALLERYYSKE, New Delhi, Bangalore.

The **next selections** for the **BMW Art Journey** will take place during Art Basel in **Hong Kong on March 28, 5:30 PM** at the BMW Lounge. The winner of the BMW Art Journey from the Hong Kong show will be announced in early summer 2018.

BMW is a global partner of Art Basel and has supported Art Basel's three shows in Basel, Miami Beach and Hong Kong for many years.

For further information about the artist and the project, please visit:  
[www.bmw-art-journey.com](http://www.bmw-art-journey.com)

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Date March 8, 2018  
Subject Jamal Cyrus selected for next BMW Art Journey.  
Page 3

**Jamal Cyrus at Inman Gallery, Houston**

Jamal Cyrus was born in 1973 in Houston, United States, where he still lives and works. He received his Master of Fine Arts from the University of Pennsylvania in 2008. Cyrus' work draws on the languages of collage, assemblage, and the cultural politics embedded within Black American music and culture. At Art Basel in Miami Beach 2017, Cyrus presented "STANDARDZENBLÜZ II", a project whose imagery is sampled from concert posters, record covers, Jet Magazine, and the interior of a record store in Tokyo. Cyrus' solo and group exhibitions include Inman Gallery, Houston, MOCAD Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Detroit, and ICA Institute of Contemporary Art Philadelphia, Philadelphia.  
[www.inmangallery.com/artists/cyrus\\_jamal/bio.html](http://www.inmangallery.com/artists/cyrus_jamal/bio.html)

**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 a number of new initiatives. In 2014, Art Basel launched its Crowdfunding Initiative which has catalyzed much-needed support for outstanding non-commercial art projects worldwide and so far has helped garner pledges in excess of USD 2 million in support of around 70 art projects from around the globe – from Bogota to Ho Chi Minh City, San José and Kabul. For Art Basel Cities, launched in 2016, Art Basel is working with selected partner cities to develop vibrant and content-driven programs specific to the individual city. Connecting them to the global art world through Art Basel's expertise and network, Art Basel Cities supports its partners to develop their unique cultural landscape. For further information, please visit [artbasel.com](http://artbasel.com).

**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. 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. 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 for granted – as this is as essential for producing groundbreaking artistic work as it is for major innovations in a successful business.

Further information: [www.bmwgroup.com/culture](http://www.bmwgroup.com/culture) and [www.bmwgroup.com/culture/overview](http://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 14 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2017, the BMW Group sold over 2,463,500 passenger vehicles and more than 164,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2016 was approximately € 9.67 billion on revenues amounting to € 94.16 billion. As of 31 December 2016, the BMW Group had a workforce of 124,729 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,



Date March 8, 2018  
Subject Jamal Cyrus selected for next BMW Art Journey.  
Page 4

comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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