

Media Information  
February 19, 2019

## **Zac Langdon-Pole has commenced his BMW Art Journey.**

### **Tracing along the layered and varied histories of celestial mapping.**

**Hong Kong.** BMW Art Journey winner, Zac Langdon-Pole (represented by Michael Lett, Auckland), has completed the first leg of his journey and is now on the second leg with the aim of tracing the gaps and relations between the culturally-constructed star systems. Entitled **‘Sutures of the Sky: A Journey Tracing Obscured Histories of the Heavens’**, the journey takes Langdon-Pole across a world which humans and birds have been navigating for millennia. Langdon-Pole has thus far completed his journey in Europe and is currently travelling through the Pacific Islands of Hawaii, Samoa and finally New Zealand where he will consolidate his artwork.

Inspired by ancient celestial tracing methodology, Langdon-Pole's journey questions the position of humans as the center of the world. Weaving through Europe, and the Pacific islands of Samoa and Hawaii, his Art Journey seeks to understand how culture intersects with the science of celestial mapping, and consequently how it transcends into larger existential inquiries about our identities and our location in this increasingly globalized world. In the latter half of this journey, he will follow the flight paths of birds that travel along the earth's axis where the Northern and Southern Hemispheres' summers intersect. Transcending traditional art practices, Langdon-Pole will incorporate unlikely combinations of images, objects and histories from specific origins to trace the gaps, relations and interpolations between cultures, generations and epochs in his Art Journey.

Taking place in European cities of London, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Dordrecht, Paris, Montignac, and Marseille the first leg of Langdon-Pole's journey provided a site for preliminary research on early printed star charts and representations of celestial mapping between different regions. In London, the artist visited the Royal Academy's 'Oceania' exhibition, including works by indigenous artists and craftsmen spanning 500 years that demonstrate the astounding mobility of people in the Pacific Islands throughout history. In France, as part of the last stop of the artist's journey in Europe, Langdon-Pole viewed a prehistoric map of the night sky situated within the Lascaux caves near Montignac. It dates back at least 16,500 years, depicting star constellations that were believed to keep track of astronomical events. The research and travel during this leg of the BMW Art Journey examined how the star systems of the Southern Hemisphere were imagined from a European perspective across various historical periods.

The second leg of the artist's journey kicked off in Hawai'i, where the artist visited Mauna Kea and Honolulu. The Mauna Kea Observatories, located at the summit of Mauna Kea on the Big Island of Hawai'i, offered Langdon-Pole the opportunity to explore the presence and mediated dominance of Western astronomy as a starting point in the Pacific Ocean. While these observatories represent the pinnacle of scientific and technological engagement with the stars, the artist

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explored how their presence is entwined with fraught opposition by indigenous Hawaiians.

Furthermore, Langdon-Pole will travel to the Marshall Islands to meet with Alson Kelen of the organization Waan Aelōñ in Majel (Canoes of the Marshall Islands) (WAM) on the atoll of Majuro. In doing so the artist aims to learn how connections to these past traditions can tie to the future of these islands in the context of rising sea levels. Amongst delving into star navigation methods of the region, the artist will also research the Mattang, Meddo and Rebbelib 'stick charts' that map the wave currents and ocean swells throughout the 34 islands and atolls of the Marshall Islands archipelago.

Before heading back to New Zealand to conduct further research and consolidate his work, Langdon-Pole will also visit Apia and Savai'i in Samoa. He will be working together with Samoan-New Zealand artist/composer Michael Lee to trace traditions of celestial navigation songs. The ways in which Polynesian wayfinders passed down their knowledge and expertise of navigation through generations was often in the form of song, which prompted the artist to trace the historical lineage and remains of these songs throughout the Pacific Islands.

The artist will be on the ground in Hong Kong for the documentation of his BMW Art Journey project "**Sutures of the Sky**" at this year's Art Basel show.

Launched in 2015, the BMW Art Journey is a collaboration between Art Basel and BMW, created to recognize and support emerging artists worldwide. The 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.

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

For further information about the artists and the project, please visit:

[www.bmw-art-journey.com](http://www.bmw-art-journey.com)

An international jury of experts will gather again at the upcoming Art Basel show in Hong Kong to select a **shortlist of three artists** from the Discoveries sector for the next BMW Art Journey. Members of the jury are **Claire Hsu**, Executive Director Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong; **Matthias Mühling**, Director Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich; **Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo**, Founder and President of Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, **Phil Tinari**, Director Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), Beijing; and **Samson Young**, artist and winner of the first BMW Art Journey.

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The shortlisted artists who will be invited to submit their proposals for a journey will be announced at the **BMW Lounge on March 28, 2019, at 5.30 PM**. That evening, BMW will host an exclusive VIP cocktail reception to celebrate the announcement of the BMW Art Journey shortlist.

**For further questions please contact:**

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**About Zac Langdon-Pole**

Zac Langdon-Pole (b. 1988) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. He studied at Elam School of Fine Arts, Auckland and at the Städelschule, Frankfurt. His work is often underpinned by questions of belonging, translation and identification. In 2017, he was awarded the Ars Viva Prize for young artists living in Germany. Recent exhibitions include Kunsthalle Darmstadt, Darmstadt; Between Bridges, Berlin; Ars Viva 2018, Berlin; S.M.A.K. Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Ghent and Kunstverein München, Munich.

**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 such as Art Basel Cities, working with partner cities on bespoke cultural programs. For further information, please visit [artbasel.com](http://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. Besides co-initiatives, such as BMW Tate Live, the BMW Art Journey and the "Opera for All" concerts in Berlin, Munich, Moscow 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.



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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 30 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2018, the BMW Group sold over 2,490,000 passenger vehicles and more than 165,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2017 was € 10.655 billion on revenues amounting to € 98.678 billion. As of 31 December 2017, the BMW Group had a workforce of 129,932 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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