

Media Information
October 24, 2016

Abigail Reynolds begins her BMW Art Journey, visiting the lost libraries of the Silk Road as well as participating in Yinchuan Biennale, the first biennale in Northwest China.

Munich/Basel. BMW Art Journey winner **Abigail Reynolds** (represented by ROKEBY, London) has begun the first leg of her journey along the Silk Road, which sees her travel by motorbike to visit the sites of ‘lost libraries’ she has come across in her research. Reynolds is the third BMW Art Journey winner and will be the second artist to unveil her work at Art Basel’s Hong Kong show, following work by previous winner Samson Young which debuted at this year’s edition. Reynolds is currently completing the first stage of her tour, and has so far travelled from the UK to China, where she has visited Xi’an before heading to Yinchuan, where her work has been included as part of the Biennale. From Yinchuan she will travel through Dunhuang before heading to Kokand in Uzbekistan and Istanbul in Turkey.

The first stop on Reynolds’ journey saw her visit the Xianyang Palace library, founded in 350 BCE and destroyed in 206 CBE. Xianyang was made the capital of the state of Qin in 350 BCE where the Ch’in dynasty (221 BCE – 207 BCE) left a lasting impact. While the site is mentioned in many ancient scholarly texts and the site was excavated in 1956, all that remains today is a barren plot of wasteland, the sight of which was a resonant and moving experience for the artist.

Reynolds’ second stop took her to the Baisikou Pagodas. These Pagodas, home to a library containing the first ever book printed with moveable type, were built by Xixia in 1075, partially destroyed by Genghis Khan in 1227, and were completely destroyed during the cultural revolution, with replicas constructed in the 1990s. The artist explored the site and Xi’an’s local libraries to find documentation on the original pagodas, piecing together the circumstances of their gradual and complete destruction.

Throughout the journey, Reynolds will be recording her travels using 16mm film and a Bolex camera. The camera itself is heavy and cumbersome, while the film is delicate and can be easily affected by its conditions. Reynolds is at present unsure whether the film from China will survive owing to the strong X-ray scanners in many international airports as well as the extreme weather found in the desert conditions of Central Asia. Images and scenes captured will only be revealed upon developing the film in the UK. However, Reynolds believes that should the film be fogged or damaged, then this decay will mirror the conditions of the sites she is visiting. The idea of having to salvage what she can find from the film directly correlates to the various degrees of preservation and redevelopment she will encounter on her journey.

Having studied English Literature at Oxford University, Abigail Reynolds frequently draws inspiration from literary essays and figures to imagine places and moments from the past, present and future. Her project for BMW Art Journey 2016/17, ‘The Ruins of Time: Lost Libraries of the Silk Road,’ will allow her to connect the complex religious and secular narratives of Europe and Asia through an extensive multi- continent series of visits to historic and fabled repositories of books. The artist will trace sixteen sites of libraries lost to political conflicts, looters, natural catastrophes and war. Conceptually, Abigail Reynolds intends to explore blanks and voids, with the library symbolising the impossibility of encompassing all knowledge.



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The second half of Reynolds' journey will be completed by the end of January 2017. This second leg will see Reynolds travel to sites in Italy, Egypt, Turkey and Iran before once again returning to the UK.

Abigail Reynolds' project, 'The Ruins of Time: Lost Libraries of the Silk Road' will be presented by Art Basel and BMW at Art Basel in Hong Kong 2017 and will comprise a body of work completed by Reynolds in response to her findings along the Silk Road.

The BMW Art Journey is a global collaboration between Art Basel and BMW, created to recognize and support emerging artists worldwide. This unique award is open to artists who are exhibiting in the Discoveries and Positions sectors in the Hong Kong and Miami Beach shows of Art Basel, respectively. Two judging panels 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. The next round of selections for the BMW Art Journey will take place during Art Basel in Miami Beach.

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

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

For further questions please contact:

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About Abigail Reynolds

Based in Cornwall, UK, Abigail Reynolds read English Literature at Oxford University before pursuing Fine Art at Goldsmiths University. Her interest in books prompts her collages, sculptures, films and printmaking. The ideas driving Reynolds' work are based on images from reportage photography books, her interest in networks of association and how our sense of time is affected by technology. Represented by ROKEBY (London), she has exhibited at art institutions and galleries in London, Vienna, Los Angeles, Seattle, Berlin and Eindhoven.



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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, as reflected in its participating galleries, the artworks presented, and the parallel programming produced in collaboration with local institutions for each edition.

In recent years, Art Basel's art-world engagement has expanded beyond art fairs. In 2014, Art Basel launched its Crowdfunding Initiative, in collaboration with Kickstarter, which has helped catalyze much-needed support for outstanding non-commercial art projects worldwide and has helped pledge over \$1 million to creative projects all over the world. For Art Basel Cities, launched in 2016, Art Basel will work with select 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 partner cities in developing their unique cultural landscape. The first city Art Basel is partnering with for Art Basel Cities is Buenos Aires. For further information please visit 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. Currently, female artist Cao Fei from China and American John Baldessari are creating 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 – 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 three brands BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 31 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2015, the BMW Group sold approximately 2.247 million cars and nearly 137,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2015 was approximately € 9.22 billion on revenues amounting to € 92.18 billion. As of 31 December 2015, the BMW Group had a workforce of 122,244 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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