

AUTOMOTIVE

## BMW signs on for future free concerts in London

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*BMW LSO Open Air Classics in 2017. Image courtesy of BMW*

By STAFF REPORTS

German automaker BMW Group is reaffirming its commitment to the arts by extending a partnership that brings live music to London for free.

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Through a collaboration with the London Symphony Orchestra, BMW has been presenting open air concerts in the British capital for the past six years. Now, the automaker is renewing its partnership with the musical group, continuing the effort to introduce classical music to a new audience.

### Accessible arts

The BMW LSO Open Air Classics attract a predominantly young crowd, with half of the 2017 audience under the age of 35. This event, held in Trafalgar Square, also provides an entry point for this genre of music, as 93 percent of the audience had never heard the London Symphony Orchestra and about a quarter had never heard classical music performed live before ([see story](#)).

This annual event, which is supported by London's mayor, also sees student musicians perform with the professionals.



*2017's concert drew a crowd of 7,000. Image credit: LSO, photo by Scott Gallagher*

"The LSO believes that access to great music is for everyone, whatever their age or their background, and through this visionary partnership with BMW we reach an audience almost completely new to the orchestra's music-making," said Kathryn McDowell, managing director of the LSO, in a statement.

"We are also able to give a platform to many of the talented young people we work with throughout the year in East London schools, and performing in the spectacular setting of Trafalgar Square is as thrilling for them as it is for the players in the orchestra itself, and the hugely enthusiastic crowd the event attracts," she said.

"I'm delighted that the renewal of our partnership will allow this great work to continue under our new music director Sir Simon Rattle from 2018, and I would like to thank the BMW Group for their support."

This event is part of BMW's open-air concert series, which also hosts performances in Munich and Berlin.

"Together with newcomers to classical music and seasoned open-air concert enthusiasts, we said thank you and farewell to Valery Gergiev in this sixth year of our partnership with the LSO," said Dr. Ian Robertson, (Hon DSc) member of the board of management of BMW AG.

"Now we are looking forward to continuing the BMW LSO Open Air Classics partnership with exciting, new ideas and Sir Simon Rattle on the conductor's podium," he said. "We welcome him and look forward to next year's concert in Trafalgar Square."

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