

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

## Luxury brands spotlight artistic appreciation at Frieze Los Angeles

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*Frieze already hosts events in London and New York. Image courtesy of Frieze*

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Contemporary art fair Frieze is descending on Los Angeles for the first time, helping expose galleries and luxury brands to West Coast affluents and art lovers.

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German automaker BMW, retailer MatchesFashion and Swiss beauty group Valmont are among the brands participating in the inaugural Los Angeles edition of the event. Since the art world is often associated with exclusivity and refined taste, events such as Frieze are enticing to many companies who seek out clients with money to burn.

"We've been partners with Frieze from the very beginning when they opened up shop in London and we were happy when they branched out to New York," said Dr. Thomas Girst, global head of cultural engagement at the **BMW Group**, Munich.

"For Frieze L.A. to open up this weekend was for us a great opportunity that we didn't want to miss," he said. "The West Coast is, of course, [an important market] to us."

### Artistic affair

Organized by the publishers of *frieze* magazine, the Frieze Art Fair hosts annual events in London and New York. The first Los Angeles fair runs through Feb. 17 at the Paramount Picture Studios in Hollywood and brings together 60 galleries.

BMW is continuing its long-standing relationship with Frieze by providing a shuttle service of a BMW 7 Series and a BMW i3 for the fair's VIP clients.

"By providing a shuttle service, we become part of the narrative that is Frieze L.A.," Mr. Girst said.



*BMW has been involved with Frieze for several years. Image credit: BMW*

Leading up to the opening of the fair, BMW hosted a panel at Soho House West Hollywood about the intersection of art, innovation and design. Panelists included why's founder and creative director Kulapat Yantrasast and artist Thomas Demand, and Jessica Kantor moderated.

Los Angeles-based street artist Spencer Mar Guilburt will also continue his BMW X7 Mural Art Tour, which began in Miami for Art Basel, by painting two new murals at Frieze.

On Feb. 16, BMW will present Frieze Music at NeueHouse Hollywood. Curated by Hamza Walker in collaboration with Blue Note Records, the sonic experience features the performances of five jazz musicians.

Other brands are also getting involved in the fair.

Valmont and global arts club The Cultivist cohosted an artist dinner before the official start of Frieze. The artist-driven dining experience welcomed more than 125 attendees and centered on Valmont's motto of "Where art meets beauty."

German luggage brand Rimowa also took an opportunity during the buildup of Frieze to host a private preview of its upcoming collection with multimedia artist Alex Israel.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

RIMOWA x Alex Israel over Melrose Ave. in LA. #rimowaxalexisrael

A post shared by RIMOWA (@rimowa) on Feb 13, 2019 at 12:25pm PST

*Brands including Rimowa are embracing a West Coast aesthetic to coincide with Frieze LA*

MatchesFashion is popping up at Frieze as well, reflecting its recent permanent bricks-and-mortar launch.

The temporary shop will be open for festival attendees to have a chance to browse MatchesFashion's offerings. The retailer will take up space in Paramount's New York backlot, where it will push out image-heavy content on a variety of outlets to strengthen its presence ([see story](#)).

Luxury events

Frieze is far from the only large-scale event during which the worlds of luxury and art converge.

From exhibits to pop-ups, luxury brand turned to art and the city of Miami as inspiration for their initiatives during Art Basel and the Design Miami fair.

A longtime sponsor of Art Basel events, Swiss watchmaker Audemars Piguet supported a large-scale art project with artist and environmental activist Toms Saraceno. "Albedo" harnessed solar energy for a floating sculpture on the shores of Miami Beach ([see story](#)).

BMW is committed to sponsoring the arts by continuing its longstanding partnership with Art Basel Switzerland in addition to Frieze. Just as in Los Angeles, the automaker offered on-site shuttle services for VIP guests.

The automaker also announced Zac Langdon-Pole as the latest recipient of its Art Journey. The artist will be exploring the flight paths of birds to help better understand humans' place in the world ([see story](#)).

"We support the arts as a corporate citizen and are mindful of the people we are able to reach with our engagement," BMW Group's Mr. Girst said. "It's also about providing know-how and a network to support contemporary artists."

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