

**ARTFORUM****JAMAL CYRUS SELECTED AS BMW ART JOURNEY AWARD WINNER**

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Jamal Cyrus, the latest BMW Art Journey Award winner, performing *Texas Fried Tenor*, 2012, for which he deep fried brass instruments used by jazz musicians. Photo: Liz Ligon.

Art Basel and BMW announced that the Houston-based artist Jamal Cyrus, whose work focuses on the formulation of African American identity through cultural and political movements, such as the Jazz Age of the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s and the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, has been named the next BMW Art Journey winner. An international jury selected him unanimously from a shortlist of three artists—which in addition to Cyrus, included A.K. Burns and Mariela Scafati—whose works were exhibited in the Positions sector at last year's Art Basel show in Miami Beach.

Cyrus's winning proposal outlined a journey that would explore the notion of the Afro Atlantic, which the artist describes as "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 cultural hybrids that have emerged through protracted interaction between the continents. He will also focus on the roles that colonization, slavery, industry, migration, and philosophy have played in the creation of these hybrids. Along his journey, he will stop at several cultural centers including the Elmina Castle in Accra, Ghana; the Theatre Champs-Elysees in Paris; Brixton's Electric Avenue in London; the Alhambra in Granada; and Congo Square in New Orleans.

At each location, Cyrus will record interviews with artists, musicians, historians and philosophers. "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," the artist said.

The five-member jury comprised Massimiliano Gioni, artistic director of the New Museum in New York; Gabi Ngcobo, curator of the Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art; Victoria Noorthoorn, director of the Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires; Philip Tinari, director of the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing; and Susanne Pfeffer, director of the Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt.

In a joint statement, the jury said: "Jamal Cyrus's BMW Art Journey delineates an imaginary geography that transforms relations of power and imposed hierarchies. [It] 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."