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PRESS RELEASE

CARSTEN HÖLLER

Reproduction

28.09.19 – 13.04.2020

Carsten Höller opens first-ever exhibitions in Denmark at Copenhagen Contemporary (CC) and Kunsten Museum of Modern Art Aalborg

What is love? What makes us who we are? Why do we have children? Is art a playground? What games are we playing? These are some of the questions that Carsten Höller's major new solo exhibitions, *Reproduction* at Copenhagen Contemporary (CC) and *Behaviour* at Kunsten Museum of Modern Art Aalborg, pose to visitors, making them experimental subjects in worlds created by the artist renowned worldwide for his immersive installations.

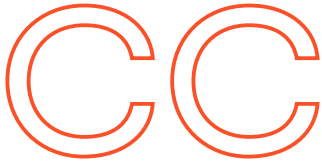
Reproduction at CC (28 September 2019 to 13 April 2020) and *Behaviour* at Kunsten (26 September 2019 to 23 February 2020) complement each other in content and form as they explore the human perception of our world. Carsten Höller holds a PhD in agricultural science and worked as a scientist for several years before becoming an artist. His artworks incorporate elements from playgrounds, zoos and amusement parks, often presented in a pseudo-scientific environment to give the impression of research. This is also evident at CC and Kunsten where gigantic Fly Agaric mushrooms, carousels, smells and mirrors greet the visitors, who in turn constitute what art critic Baldo Hauser calls the 'real material' of the exhibitions.

Carsten Höller firmly believes in the transformative potential of art which, transgressing normal conventions and perceptions, allows us to see the world, its objects and our behavioural patterns in new ways. The first of their kind ever presented in Denmark, these exhibitions provide audiences with a unique opportunity to see a broad selection of works that span the artist's entire career – ranging from some of his very earliest works to new, site-specific installations.

***Reproduction* at Copenhagen Contemporary**

In the exhibition at CC, Höller examines the theme of 'reproduction', adopting an approach which is both scientific and artistic. In all life forms, reproduction begins with cell division, and indeed the principle of division underpins his immersive installation in CC's large Hall 1, entitled *Gartenkinder*.

Höller presents a large diorama where the walls and the floor are covered in red, blue, yellow, and green carpets divided into successive steps of diminishing colour intensity. Here visitors are invited to crawl through holes into a die, sit on slow-moving carousels, play with a giant roly-poly mushroom sculpture, or throw a ball the shape of which makes it impossible to calculate its trajectory.



Höllner's career has evolved within a generation of artists whose work disrupts and alters our experience of and conduct within their exhibitions. Often, their artworks require the audience to complete them through interaction. They have the nature of an experiment but also contain moments of deception that distort our expectations. So rather than spinning around quickly to entertain the users, the carousels turn slowly, almost imperceptibly, the user becoming the unexpected spectacle.

The visitors' senses are also tested when passing through *Six Sliding Doors*, a corridor of mirrors that leads to the second part of the exhibition in Hall 2, where Höllner's infamous *Killing Children* series from the early 1990s is presented.

Here, the audience is not directly involved. A podium presents a series of traps intended to catch and kill children. This provocative installation simultaneously repels and amuses, evoking memories of the dread-filled joy of hearing eerie fairy tales told as a child.

Reproduction questions the desire for having children while simultaneously harking back to an early experience we have all gone through: the awakening of consciousness and one's own existence at an early age, followed by the disturbing challenge of positioning oneself in this world. It also reflects on how behaviour is encoded through regulation from childhood.

Höllner left behind the world of science in favour of art because of his interest in uncertainties rather than certainty, using his practice as a spectrum for experimentation rather than a source of conclusions. The exhibition *Reproduction* provides ample opportunity to consider what constitutes us as human beings.

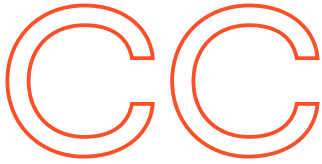
Practical information

Reproduction runs from 28 September 2019 to 13 April 2020 at Copenhagen Contemporary in Copenhagen. *Behaviour* runs from 26 September 2019 to 23 February 2020 at Kunsten in Aalborg. For more information about *Behaviour* please see <https://kunsten.dk/en/exhibition/carsten-holler-behaviour-10311>.

About Carsten Höllner

Carsten Höllner was born in 1961 and lives and works in Stockholm and Biriwa, Ghana. Many of Höllner's works invite the viewer to participate and interact, providing opportunities to examine human behaviour, ideas and logic. Höllner is concerned with what makes us the people we are, both physically and mentally. Inspired by the history of scientific research, his works create situations that alter and challenge our mental and sensory perceptions. He provokes uncertainty in the viewer – a sense of disorientation and fundamental doubt.

His major solo exhibitions include: *Bonn Slide*, Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn (2018); *Aventura Slide Tower*, Aventura Mall, Aventura, Florida (2018); *Y*, Centro Botín, Santander (2017); *Henie Onstad Sanatorium*, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Høvikodden (2017); 56th Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2015); 53rd Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2009); *Experience*, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (2011); *Double Slide*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb (2009); *Test Site*, Tate Modern, London



Copenhagen
Contemporary

(2006); 51st Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2005); 50th Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2003).

The exhibition *Reproduction* at Copenhagen Contemporary will be open to members of the press Thursday 26 September 2019 from 14.30–15.30.

CC's Director Marie Nipper will give a welcome speech followed by an introduction to the exhibition by Head of Exhibitions and Senior Curator Jannie Haagemann. The artist will be present. After the press preview refreshments are served.

Press kit and images are available for download from the CC website:
<http://cphco.org/en/presse/>

For attendance at the press preview or interview requests please contact:

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The public opening will take place Friday 27 September from 17.00–23.00.

Read more about the event here:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/511477772952593/>

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