



Copenhagen
Contemporary

Press release

GRAND OPENING

Copenhagen Contemporary – 25 August 2016

Copenhagen Contemporary (CC), Copenhagen's new centre for international installation art, opens on Papirøen on 25 August 2016 with a Big Bang of an exhibition programme: the cult artist Bruce Nauman, the Icelandic art meteor Ragnar Kjartasson, the German artist and musician Carsten Nicolai, as well as Yoko Ono and Petterson & Hein.

CC is an independent institution established to create a new, international exhibition space in Copenhagen for the big, technically demanding installations of contemporary art – art you can often walk into and sense with your whole body. Art that the existing institutions have difficulty accommodating. Our ambition is to create unique art experiences and present art in the best possible way to as many people as possible. CC wants to challenge and create space for reflection.

Project Director Jens Erik Sørensen:

“CC is to be a force field for people of all ages, A Gate to the Future for art – in the heart of Copenhagen!”

Pilot project

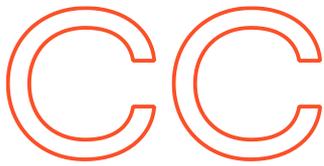
Copenhagen Contemporary on Papirøen has been created as a pilot project on private initiative over the past year and a half in a fruitful dialogue with the Copenhagen City Council and with generous backing from foundations, private collectors and the business world. CC has rented four large halls totalling 3,400 m² on Papirøen (Christiansholm) in Copenhagen alongside Copenhagen Street Food. Here, until 31 December 2017, CC will mount changing exhibitions of works in the large format by internationally recognized artists. The vision of the pilot project is that CC can subsequently be established as a more permanent venue in Copenhagen.

Over the past few decades new art institutions have been opened in the big cities around the world to cater for the more space-demanding formats – institutions like the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, Tate Modern in London, the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in the Newcastle area, Hangar Bicocca in Milan, and MoMA PS1 in New York.

CC would like to create a similar popular institution for Copenhagen.

The opening exhibitions

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CC opens on 25 August with a major exhibition presenting the American artist Bruce Nauman in the large format for the first time in Scandinavia, and with two large-scale video installations by the feted young Icelandic video and performance artist Ragnar Kjartansson.

At the same time it will still be possible to see the German artist and musician Carsten Nicolai's big light and audio installation that people have already visited during CC's 'warm-up' opening in the course of the summer. Out on the quayside in front of CC's exhibition halls you are invited to write down a wish in Yoko Ono's poetically beautiful *Wish Tree Garden*, and you can sit looking out over the water and into the future on one of the thirteen coloured concrete benches *A View from the Present 1-13*, created by Pettersen & Hein.

Bruce Nauman

The American artist Bruce Nauman, who turns 75 this year, is an institution in his own right in the art world – some would say a cult artist. Since the end of the 60s Bruce Nauman has created art that arouses attention and challenges the public all over the world. With simple means and the body as object he has shaped mental spaces in performance, film, sculpture and installation art that provoke and irritate. In Nauman's own words the effect of his art is like being hit on the head by a baseball bat!

The exhibition presents some of Nauman's most important works such as *Green Light Corridor* (1970), *Hanging Carousel (George Skins a Fox)* (1988), *Raw Material, BRRR* (1990), a couple of neon works and several of his experimental repetitive films. The works in the exhibition show how the encounter with Bruce Nauman's art creates a kind of bodily interaction – and it is this sensory experience that is pivotal to Nauman's practice. The experience that the individual works provoke may be very different, and they arise because we move into the work, as in the light corridor, or are subjected to disorienting, cacophonous noise as in *Raw Material, BRRR*.

Ragnar Kjartansson

In recent years Ragnar Kjartansson (b. 1976) has become known all over the world for his music-based performances and his large-scale video installations, which take a humorous and poetic-philosophical look at both the banalities and subtleties of our everyday life.

The exhibition presents two of his latest large video installations: the performance-based *A Lot of Sorrow*, which is a film adaptation of the six-hour performance he staged in collaboration with the band The National at MoMA PS1 in New York in 2013; and the nine-screen video installation *Scenes from Western Culture* (2015) in which Ragnar Kjartansson has staged a series of everyday situations that work like filmic paintings or living tableaux of our western life.

Carsten Nicolai

Carsten Nicolai's (b. 1965) work revolves around the way our brain interprets our visual impressions. His more than 30-metre-long light and audio installation *unidisplay* (2012) consists of a long wall on which changing light patterns are projected and where mirrors on



both sides of the projection create an infinite universe. The undulating patterns affect our eyes through optical illusion, flicker and after-images. At the same time the various visual expressions are rooted in a soundtrack so that the work affects us both physically and mentally.

Yoko Ono – Pettersen & Hein

Along the waterfront Yoko Ono (b. 1933) has created her *Wish Tree Garden* specifically for CC, inviting the passers-by to write a wish on a slip of paper and hang it on one of the branches. The wish tags are regularly collected, and when the exhibition ends they will all be sent to Ono's *Imagine Peace Tower* on Iceland, an installation Ono has dedicated to her late husband John Lennon.

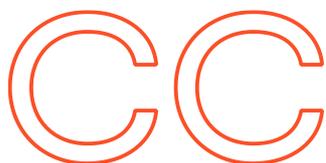
Also on the quayside the Norwegian artist Magnus Pettersen (b. 1983) and the Danish furniture designer Lea Hein (b. 1981) have created *A View from the Present 1-13*, thirteen concrete benches made with a special dying technique where colour pigments form patterns in the normally monochrome, hard material. The rounded edges invite people to sit down and spend time on the quayside.

Broad support

CC has held ongoing discussions of the ambitious exhibition project with the mayors of the Copenhagen City Council and with both the present and the previous minister of culture. Among these there was support for the establishment in Copenhagen of such an international art centre. In April 2015 CC entered the Copenhagen Council's Ideas Competition for the development of Papirøen, and CC was chosen as one of the winners of the competition. In connection with the implementation of the exhibition programme, including loans of artworks, artists, private collectors and museums all over the world have shown great willingness to cooperate with CC. For example, the Bruce Nauman exhibition has been made possible by loans from the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, and the whole presentation of the twelve works has been mounted in collaboration with the artist.

CC is supported by

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Other press releases: <http://cphco.org/eng/presse/>

- FACTS ABOUT CC
- BRUCE NAUMAN
- RAGNAR KJARTANSSON
- CARSTEN NICOLAI
- YOKO ONO
- PETERSEN & HEIN

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