



Press release

## BRUCE NAUMAN

25 August – 22 December 2016  
Copenhagen Contemporary, Papirøen

**It is with great pride that Copenhagen Contemporary (CC) becomes the first art institution in Scandinavia to present a comprehensive exhibition of works by the American artist icon Bruce Nauman. The exhibition features several of Bruce Nauman's major works: a corridor, a hanging carousel with animal carcasses, a work from the Raw Material series and several of his experimental films, plus neon works.**

Throughout his long career Bruce Nauman (b. 1941) has worked with many media and materials. His artistic practice ranges from traditional modes of expression such as drawing, photography and sculpture through neon works and video to installation and performance art. Nauman's extensive oeuvre explores fundamental concepts like boredom, repetition and irritation. Using claustrophobic installations, endurance-straining performances and intricate wordplay in neon, Nauman creates situations in which the viewer becomes physically or mentally disoriented, teased or challenged.

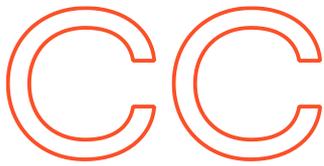
Since the 70s Bruce Nauman has been one of the most important artists in the development of art that involves the viewer as an active part of the work. The exhibition at CC shows several sides of Nauman's artistic activity, not least the spatial works into which the exhibition visitor is invited to step. In these spaces Nauman bombards the senses of the visitor with a variety of sensory impressions that may trigger feelings of claustrophobia, mental disorientation, fascination or straightforward irritation.

### **Visitor's choice**

The installation *Green Light Corridor* (1970) is one of Nauman's famous corridor works. In the encounter with the work the visitor faces a choice: do you want to, do you dare to walk through *such a* narrow passage? The feeling of claustrophobia and confinement is already there even before you actually enter the work. If you dare to go in, the sense of touch in particular is stimulated in the close contact with the walls of the work – thus affecting the visitor psychologically.

### **Bizarre death carousel**

Bruce Nauman changes course several times in his artistic work. Many of the recent sculptures become installations – or carousels, as Nauman calls them – with foam-rubber bodies that are normally used to stuff animals. In the exhibition you can experience *Hanging Carousel (George skins a fox)* (1988), a giant mobile. On the carousel hang five foam-rubber animals and a small TV screen showing a hunter flaying a fox.



The construction rotates on its own axis, first one way and then the other, in the exhibition space. The visitor moves around to see the hunter working in painstaking detail with the body of the dead fox. This bizarre death carousel can be seen as an image of the wheel of life.

### **Intense physical effects**

In 1990 Nauman created a series of three video installations in which he appeared himself. The series has the overall title *Raw Material*, while the individual works bear the subtitles *BRRR*, *MMMM* and *OK OK OK*. The first of these is in the exhibition and consists of two TV screens one above the other and a wall projection. *Raw Material BRRR* shows a film of the artist's face on the two TV screens as well as a large wall projection, also of Nauman's head. Normally we expect faces to talk to us but not here. The only sound that comes from the rather ravaged, trembling head is a wordless ejaculation – “BRRR” – repeated again and again. The sound seems quite random and meaningless and because of its intensity and persistence the sound affects the viewer with such violence that you cannot bear to stay in the space for very long.

### **In collections all over the world**

Throughout his long career Bruce Nauman has had major solo exhibitions at the biggest art museums, and his works are featured in collections at the leading art museums all over the world, such as the Guggenheim Museum in New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, Centre Pompidou in Paris and Tate Modern in London. In 2009 he won the Golden Lion with his exhibition in the American pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

### **75 years old in December**

Bruce Nauman lives today in New Mexico as a cowboy while still practicing as a creative artist. Nauman turns 75 in December, and Copenhagen Contemporary begins an international celebration of him with this exhibition. In the year to come he will be shown at the Schaulager in Basel, the Schirn in Frankfurt and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

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