



PRESS RELEASE

COPENHAGEN CONTEMPORARY ANSELM KIEFER

For Louis-Ferdinand Céline: Voyage au bout de la nuit
02.04 – 06.08 2017

***For Louis-Ferdinand Céline: Voyage au bout de la nuit*, a large-scale installation by Anselm Kiefer, one of the most important living artists, will be presented by Copenhagen Contemporary (CC) from 2 April through 6 August 2017.**

Anselm Kiefer's paintings and sculptures are filled with references to the past. In the almost fifty years since he began working as an artist in post-war Germany, he has found inspiration in historical events, literature, poetry, alchemy, astronomy, chemistry, and religion. This installation includes four paintings and four lead sculptures of airplanes. These works, monumental in size, have never been exhibited before.

Kiefer has been making lead airplane sculptures since the late 1980s. The pieces in this exhibition, with their battered, war-weary aura, dominate a 1500-square-meter space. The allegorically significant airplanes are juxtaposed and converse with a series of paintings that measure up to 6.6m in height and 11.4 meters in width. The paintings contain references to photographs the artist took during his travels in the Gobi Desert in 1993 and also to a scene in the Austrian writer Ingeborg Bachmann's *Book of Franza* (1955), in which the title character unsuccessfully seeks solace in the barrenness of the desert.

With his choice of the exhibition title, Kiefer dedicates the installation to the French writer Louis-Ferdinand Céline's book "Voyage au bout de la nuit" (Journey to the End of the Night) from 1932, which describes the demise of European humanism in the trenches of World War I. Famous for its gallows humour and world-weary misanthropy, the book is a darkly humorous and grotesque description of the meaninglessness and evil of war. In light of current political events, Kiefer's decision to give this book renewed attention is unlikely to be a random choice.

The multiplicity of references and the diversity of materials can be—although not necessarily should be—interpreted as alluding to the philosophy of Emanationism, which holds that all things flow from and return to one infinite entity.

ABOUT ANSELM KIEFER

Anselm Kiefer was born in Donaueschingen, Germany in 1945 and has lived and worked in France since 1993. After studying law, and Romance languages and literature, Kiefer devoted himself

entirely to painting. He attended the School of Fine Arts at Freiburg im Breisgau, then the Art Academy in Karlsruhe He has exhibited widely, including solo shows at MoMA, New York (1988); Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin (1991); The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (1998); Fort Worth Museum of Art, Texas (2005); the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2006); Mass MoCA, Massachusetts (2007); Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (2007); Grand Palais, Paris (2007); Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Denmark (2010); the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (2011); Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2011); The Royal Academy of Arts, London (2014); the Centre Georges Pompidou and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (2015). In 2007 Kiefer became the first artist to be commissioned to install a permanent work at the Louvre, Paris since Georges Braque some 50 years earlier. In 2009 he created an opera, Am Anfang, to mark the 20th anniversary of the Opéra National de Paris.

The exhibition will be open to members of the press **Saturday 1 April from 11.30–13.00**. The artist will be present. The press preview will be followed by lunch.

The official opening is **Saturday 1 April 16.30 – 20.00**.

Speeches by CC's Director Jens Erik Sørensen, the deputy Ambassador of the German Embassy Anke Meyer, and the exhibition will be inaugurated by Danish Minister for Culture Mette Bock.

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

For attendance at press preview and lunch or interview request please contact no later than March 24:

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