

ENGLISH

GALLERIA CONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS HABANA ROMA SAO PAULO PARIS

Pop-up exhibition space | Burj Al Arab Jumeirah Dubai

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# ANISH KAPOOR

21/11/2021 – 15/02/2022

Open every day | 11.00 am-1.00 pm | 2.00 pm-8.00 pm

*Access to Burj Al Arab Jumeirah is by registration only. Register your interest at [galleriacontinua.com/reservation-dubai](https://www.galleriacontinua.com/reservation-dubai)*

Galleria Continua is happy to announce the opening of a **pop-up exhibition space** inside the most iconic hotel in the world, the **Burj Al Arab Jumeirah**. Situated off the shore of Dubai's largest private beach and recognised the world over for its sailboat-inspired shape, it is an icon of the modern city.

One of the most significant figures on the international art scene, **Anish Kapoor**, with whom Galleria Continua has worked for over 25 years, **inaugurates** the exhibition space. An artist with over thirty years of experience exhibiting in the most important museums and institutions of the world, his work across diverse materials has formulated a unique artistic language that has become recognised throughout the world. In this solo show, the British-Indian artist **presents** a series of previously **unseen works** that confirm the infinite capacity for reinvention in his artistic practice.

**Galleria Continua arrives in Dubai**, joining the old Cinema-Theatre space in San Gimignano, (the historic location of the gallery, opened in 1990), the Bauhaus style former factory in the 798 district in Beijing (2004), Les Moulins - the two old mills in the Parisian countryside (2007), and the cinema in Havana's Chinatown (2015). Recent additions also include the Brazilian location situated in the Pacaembu sports complex in São Paulo (2020), the space inside the iconic Roman hotel, the St. Regis (2020), and the multifaceted and multifunctional space, which opened last

January in the heart of Paris.

The interest for the Arab world and for its culture came about in 2008 with the participation in the first edition of ArtDubai; a fair in which the gallery participated throughout the following years and which, from 2012, accompanied its participation in the Abu Dhabi fair. "The network of relationships and friendships built over this period of time are the humus that gave shape, meaning and substance to this new project. We see the opening of a temporary location in Dubai not only as an opportunity to consolidate and deepen the bond with the United Arab Emirates, but also as a way to contribute, with our energies and above all with the universal language of art, to the construction of dialogues and cultural exchanges between people. We believe that art is the ideal territory to express oneself, to stimulate and produce changes, to grow together, with respect for differences and within an awareness that multiculturalism means enrichment for all." Mario Cristiani, Lorenzo Fiaschi and Maurizio Rigillo, founding partners of Galleria Continua.

In conjunction with **Expo 2020 Dubai**, the first Universal Exposition held in the ME.NA.SA. (Middle East, North Africa, South Asia), with a project that wants to go beyond the duration of a fair, **Galleria Continua** renews, once more, **its desire to move between different geographies** and to be a witness and play an active part in **the opening of cultural landscapes that do not consider borders**. The **exhibition** will offer a unique opportunity to discover an array of iconic works from the

artist's oeuvre. The selection showcases different series and research on light, color and materiality that Anish Kapoor has been conducting over the years, engaging the audience in a visual and sensorial experience. Carved alabasters, concave mirrors, and the magistral *Alice* series realised in 2017, the works chosen for the exhibition convey a sense of infinity and suspended time.

Anish Kapoor describes himself as a painter who is a sculptor. For him, sculpture has always been about presence in the world; as evanescent as this presence can be. "That's the nature of painting. It's a mindscape or a soulscape, whereas on that level sculpture would be a bodyscape."<sup>1</sup> Creating a point of intersection between the two disciplines, the physicality of his works always points to a place beyond, guided by the means of illusion.

In the two rarely seen alabaster sculptures, Kapoor has carefully carved out a highly refined section into the initial square cube of mineral. Playing with light and one's senses and perception, they invite the spectator to reflect upon the concept of the infinite and the mysteries of time buried within form and substance. Thanks to the translucent qualities of the material, the artist manages to reinforce the sense of transition from painting to sculpture and from painting to aerial dissolution, to finally becoming light.

With *Red Satin* and *Black Mist* and *Spanish Gold* to *Magenta Satin*, Kapoor further explores the symbolism of color, using a deep sense of materiality to create an object that shifts one's perception of its own environment. At once intimate and imposing, the works implicate viewers as they become participants within the work's undulating landscape; standing before its cavernous surface, the viewer is enveloped into a world of color. Kapoor himself refers to these works as "non-objects" as their reflective surface allows the sculpture to disappear within its surroundings. The sculptures create a new space, suspended between darkness and light, a vertiginous immateriality and boundless depths, which transcend these dualistic

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1 Cecilia Delgado Masse, Homi K. Bhabha, Julia Kristeva, Catherine Lampert, Anish Kapoor, Anish Kapoor. *Arqueología : Biología / Archaeology : Biology*, (MUAC, UNAM, 2016).

boundaries and generate uncertainty. The foundation of Kapoor's plastic and aesthetic research lies within this specific space, where subject and object differentiate.

The series of works titled *Alice-Triangle*, *Square* and *Oval* investigate the source of Kapoor's research and his questioning of the mirrored surface. Creating a phenomenological experience for his viewers, Kapoor encapsulates other geometrical shapes within a circular surface, adding a disruption of perception, time and space. He states, "mirror is confusing. Alice in Wonderland would tell you that like the hole, the mirror is also the space; Lewis Carroll would propose that it is a tumbled down other world. I have rarely worked with straight mirrors. What I am really interested is concavity. From the 15th or 16th century, concave mirrors were used in science but they were never part of art, and I have worked with them over many years, because they do very weird things. Firstly, they turn the world upside down, this of course has to do with my interest in inverted form. Then they have this really curious other reality. If you put them on the wall, they in a way act like a painting. (...) Now that is confusing because on one level you might say it is a game, turning the world upside down, where is the point in which it turns the right way up, at the focal point of the mirror?"<sup>2</sup>

Anish Kapoor's exhibition with Galleria Continua in Burj Al Arab Jumeirah reveals the sublime and mystery he has managed to excavate from an in-depth investigation of materiality and color, inviting the audience to step into a new, shifted reality.

Galleria Continua opened in San Gimignano in 1990, on the initiative of three friends: Mario Cristiani, Lorenzo Fiaschi and Maurizio Rigillo. Finding its headquarters in the spaces of a former cinema, Galleria Continua has established itself and thrived in a completely unexpected position, far from big cities and ultramodern urban centers, in a timeless village, that's rich in history - San Gimignano.

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2 Marcello Dantas, Interview with Anish Kapoor, *Surge*, (Fundación Corpartes, 2019).

This choice of location has allowed the development of new forms of dialogue and a symbiosis between unexpected geographies: rural and industrial, local and global, the art of the past and the art of today, with both famous and emerging artists. Remaining faithful to a spirit of perpetual evolution and committed to engaging the widest possible audience in contemporary art, over the course of nearly thirty years Galleria Continua has built a strong identity through its bonds and experiences. This identity is founded on two values: generosity and altruism, which are at the center of all their relationships with artists, the general public and its development as a whole.

Galleria Continua was the first foreign gallery with an international program to open in China in 2004 and three years later, in 2007, it inaugurated a new special site for large creations - Les Moulins - in the Parisian countryside. In 2015 the gallery embarked on new paths, opening a space in Havana, Cuba, dedicated to cultural projects aimed at overcoming all borders. Galleria Continua represents a desire for continuity between the centuries, the ambition to have a part in the writing the history of the present day, a history sensitive to contemporary creative practices and which preserves the link between past and future, and between different and unusual individuals and geographies. In 2020, the year in which thirty years of activity occur, it inaugurated a new exhibition venue in Rome, within The St. Regis Rome with a calendar of exhibitions, educational activities and artist residencies. In the same year, it opened a space in Brazil, Galleria Continua São Paulo, within the Pacaembu sports complex. In January 2021, it inaugurated a new exhibition space in Paris, in the Le Marais district.

Anish Kapoor is considered one of the most influential artists working today. Born in Mumbai, India in 1954, he has lived and worked in London since the late seventies. His works are permanently exhibited in the most important collections and museums around the world from the Museum of Modern Art in New York to the Tate in London; at the Prada Foundation in Milan; at the Guggenheim Museums in Venice, Bilbao and Abu Dhabi. Recent solo exhibitions have been held at Modern Art Oxford, U.K

(2021); Houghton Hall, Norfolk, U.K (2020); Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich, Germany (2020); Central Academy of Fine Arts Museum and Imperial Ancestral Temple in Beijing (2019); Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires (2019); Serralves, Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Porto, Portugal (2018); University Museum of Contemporary Art (MUAC), Mexico City (2016); Château de Versailles, France (2015); Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center, Moscow (2015); Gropius Bau, Berlin (2013); Sakıp Sabancı Müzesi, Istanbul (2013); Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2012).

Kapoor represented Great Britain at the 44th Venice Biennale in 1990 where he was awarded the Premio Duemila Prize. In 1991 he won the Turner Prize and has gone on to receive numerous international awards including the Praemium Imperiale in 2011 and Padma Bhushan in 2012. He received a CBE in 2003 and a Knighthood in 2013 for visual arts.

Also renowned for his architecturally-scaled works, public projects include: Cloud Gate (2004), Millennium Park, Chicago, USA; Leviathan (2011) exhibited at 2011 Monumenta, Paris; Orbit (2012), Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London; Ark Nova, the worlds first inflatable concert hall created for Lucerne Festival, Japan (2013-), Descension, (2014) most recently installed in Brooklyn Bridge Park, New York, USA (2017) and HOWL (2020) exhibited at Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich, Germany (2020-2021).

In April 2022 Anish Kapoor will be the first British artist to be honoured with a major exhibition at the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, Italy.

For further information about the show and for photos:

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