

ENGLISH

GALLERIA CONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING **LES MOULINS** HABANA ROMA SAO PAULO PARIS

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CARSTEN HÖLLER

New long term project

Opening on June 13, 2021

In compliance with the measures for the containment of the contagion of Covid-19, reservation is recommended

GALLERIA CONTINUA is honoured to present the work of Carsten Höller for the first time at the Moulin de Sainte-Marie. Carsten Höller applies his training as a scientist to his work as an artist, concentrating particularly on the nature of human relationships. For the first time at Les Moulins, Höller invites the visitors to explore a “forest” of giant mushroom sculptures, each being composed of replicas of Fly agarics and other mushrooms.

The Fly agaric mushroom *Amanita muscaria* is known both for its beauty and its poisonous and psychoactive properties. It has been used in shamanic rituals and figures extensively in folk, popular and underground culture. The artist’s interest in Fly agaric mushrooms lies upon his quest for alternative perceptions and ways of knowing. The enlarged mushroom replicas are also an extension of the artist’s ongoing research around the idea of the ‘double’ and the ‘principle of division’, which he uses as a tool for understanding. Only through separation and hence division from its theoretically endless environment can something be first perceived, then contemplated and lastly understood, he says – within our means, of course, and only to a certain extend: the undivided whole remains an enigma.

Mushrooms are themselves mysterious beings, as the often extravagant shapes, colours, and ingredients of the different species make little or no sense in an evolutionary context. They are, hence, symbols of uncertainty and ambiguity. Our existence has from the beginning been linked to mushrooms, which are able to thrive even in inhospitable areas, surviving different geological eras and ecological disasters.

Fly agaric mushrooms always make up exactly half of the *Giant Double* and *Giant Triple Mushroom* sculptures on display at Les Moulins, with either one half or two quarters of other species of the same height attached to the divided *A. muscaria*. The enlarged mushroom replicas seemingly grow from the concrete ground of this rough industrial space, which used to be the cistern area of a paper factory. The *Giant Double Mushrooms* shown here have previously been exhibited at Höller’s famous exhibition *SOMA*, at Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, where live reindeers had the possibility to consume real Fly agarics and play with the sculptures.

Carsten Höller applies his training as a scientist to his work as an artist, concentrating particularly on the nature of human relationships. Major installations include *Flying Machine* (1996), an interactive work in which viewers are strapped into a harness and hoisted through the air; *Test Site* (2006), a series of giant slides installed in Tate Modern's Turbine Hall; *Amusement Park* (2006), a large installation at MASS MoCA of full-sized carnival midway rides operating at dramatically slowed speeds; *The Double Club* (2008–09), a work designed to create a dialogue between Congolese and Western culture in the form of a London bar, restaurant, and nightclub; and *Upside-Down Goggles* (2009–11), an ongoing participatory experiment with vision distortion through goggles. Höller's *Revolving Hotel Room*, an installation that became a fully operational hotel room by night, was featured in the exhibition *theanyspacewhatever* at the Guggenheim Museum, New York (2008–09).

Höller was born in 1961 in Brussels to German parents. Major exhibitions and solo presentations include the 50th Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2003); *One Day One Day*, Färgfabriken, Stockholm (2003); 7th Biennale de Lyon, France (2003); *Half Fiction*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2003); *7,8 Hz*, Le Consortium, Dijon, France (2004); *Une exposition à Marseille*, Musée d'Art Contemporain, Marseille (2004); 51st Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2005); *Test Site*, Tate Modern, London (2006); *Amusement Park*, MASS MoCA, North Adams, Massachusetts (2006); *Carousel*, Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria (2008); *The Double Club*, Fondazione Prada, London (2008); 28th Bienal de São Paulo (2008); *Double Slide*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb (2009); 53rd Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2009); 8th Gwangju Biennale, South Korea (2010); *Divided Divided*, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Netherlands (2010); *SOMA*, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2010); *Double Carousel with Zöllner Stripes*, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rome (2011); *Experience*, New Museum, New York (2011); 11th Sharjah Biennial, United Arab Emirates (2013); *LEBEN*, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna (2014); 8th Berlin Biennale (2014); 10th Gwangju Biennale, South Korea (2014); *Golden Mirror Carousel*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia (2014–15); 56th Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2015); *Decision*, Hayward Gallery, London (2015); *Doubt*, Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan, Italy (2016); *Video Retrospective with Two Light Machines*, Mu.ZEE, Ostend, Belgium (2016); *Y*, Centro Botín, Santander, Spain (2017) and *Sunday*, Museo Tamayo, Mexico City (2019). *The Slide* at the ArcelorMittal Orbit (2016), Höller's commissioned addition to Anish Kapoor's ArcelorMittal Orbit (2012), is permanently installed at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London; and his site-specific *Aventura Slide Tower* (2018) can be experienced at the Aventura Mall, Florida. Höller's memorial to Hans Künzi, *Denkmal für Hans Künzi*, (2017) is installed at SBB CFF FFS, Zürich, Switzerland, whilst *Decimal Clock (White and White)*, (2018) at Centrale Supélec is one of his largest light works to date. *DAC Slide*, (2020) another site specific public slide for the Dansk Arkitektur Center (DAC), in Copenhagen, Denmark, was most recently unveiled in 2020.

Höller lives and works in Stockholm and Biriwa, Ghana.