

Khora Contemporary presents Virtual Reality commissions by Paul McCarthy and Christian Lemmerz

Physical and psychological dimensions overlap in experiential artworks made in partnership with HTC VIVE, marking the launch of VR production company for artists

12 May - 27 August 2017

Faurschou Foundation, Fondazione Cini, Venice



Paul McCarthy

CSSC VR experiment "what is your name?", 2017

Virtual reality

© Paul McCarthy and Khora Contemporary

Courtesy the artist, Hauser & Wirth, Xavier Hufkens and Khora Contemporary

This year's Venice Biennale will mark the launch of Khora Contemporary, a Virtual Reality (VR) production company created specifically for artists.

Major commissions by German artist, Christian Lemmerz, and from LA-based Paul McCarthy, will mark Khora Contemporary's launch, part of this summer's Faurschou Foundation presentation in Venice, during the 2017 Venice Biennale. Both artists can be seen to

have pushed their ideas, and ultimately their practice, through their ground-breaking approach to the use of this fast-evolving medium.

Christian Lemmerz's *La Apparizione*, produced earlier this year, aims to disrupt stereotypes of religious imagery, engaging the viewer in a discomforting, close-up experience with a burning corpse of Jesus Christ, which 'rains' embers. Jesus and other religious personages have figured in the artist's work before, and 'Bodybuilder' Jesus first appeared in Lemmerz's oeuvre in 2013 in sculpture form. Here, he comes alive in death, his rippling muscles writhing in agony, dripping golden blood into the physical space of the viewer. The aim of this VR work is to enhance the relationship the viewer forms with the imagery; its beauty, excess, death and pain.

Paul McCarthy's work *CSSC VR experiment "what is your name?"* has been especially created for the show in Venice, and revisits characters previously present in the series '*Coach Stage Stage Coach*', or '*CSSC*' for short. McCarthy has often tested the emotional stamina of the public. This time experience transcends borders, through the interplay of the female characters Mary and Eve, the artwork interacts directly with the viewer's personal space, left with no choice, but to take a protagonist position in the unfolding act.

Khora Contemporary commission works directly from artists, connecting them to specialist developers at Khora VR in Denmark. The artworks are presented using the best VR technology to date, HTC VIVE, a fully immersive VR system allowing room-scale movement. Khora Contemporary aims to trigger a new wave of artistic practice, and experiential artworks, with the power to affect the senses and the subconscious.

Virtual reality has made a successful entry onto the global market at an unusually fast pace, although access for artists to the most up to date technology and quality viewing options is still developing. Khora VR has joined forces with Faurschou Foundation to launch Khora Contemporary to enable artists to create new scenarios where the psychological and physical spheres overlap.

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Notes to Editors

Khora Contemporary

Khora Contemporary is the first production company to focus on creating contemporary artworks in Virtual Reality, to research this progressive medium and translate the vision of established and emerging artists into the language of VR. Established in 2016 in Copenhagen by five partners with a common passion for art, experience in VR production and a shared vision of its significance in the art landscape of the future.

Christian Lemmerz

Christian Lemmerz (1959-) was born in Germany. Today he lives and works in Denmark and Italy. From 1978 to 1982 he studied at the The Academy of Fine Arts in Carrara, Italy, and from 1983 to 1988 at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen. Lemmerz expresses himself in a variety of media: film, performance, sculpture, drawing, painting and installation works. He has explored unconventional materials, as can be seen for example in his early margarine sculptures and his slaughtered pigs exhibited in glass cases. He also works with traditional materials such as bronze and

marble. Many of Lemmerz's works focus on taboo-related themes taken from contemporary or historical events.

Paul McCarthy

Paul McCarthy (b. Salt Lake City, USA, 1945) lives and works in California. Recent solo exhibitions include 'White Snow, Wood Sculptures', Henry Art Gallery, Seattle WA (2016); 'Paul McCarthy. Drawings', The Renaissance Society, Chicago IL (2015); Volksbühne, Berlin, Germany (2015); 'Paul McCarthy. Spin Offs: White Snow WS, Caribbean Pirates CP', Hauser & Wirth Zürich, Switzerland (2015); 'Chocolate Factory', Monnaie de Paris, Paris, France (2014) and 'Paul McCarthy – WS SC', Hauser & Wirth London (2014). In summer 2013 McCarthy presented three solo exhibitions at Hauser & Wirth New York 18th and 69th street. In June, 'WS' went on display at Park Avenue Armory in New York, McCarthy's largest installation in the United States to date. Other solo exhibitions include 'The Box', Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin, Germany (2012); 'The King, The Island, The Train, The House, The Ship' and 'The Dwarves, The Forests', which opened respectively at Hauser & Wirth London and Hauser & Wirth New York in 2011; 'Pig Island', Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Milan, Italy (2010) and 'White Snow', Hauser & Wirth New York NY (2009).

About HTC VIVE™

VIVE is a first-of-its-kind virtual reality platform developed by HTC and Valve for total immersion in virtual worlds. Designed from the ground up for room-scale VR and true-to-life interactions, VIVE delivers on the promise of VR with game-changing technology and best-in-class content. VIVE has been recognized with over a hundred awards and wide critical acclaim since its unveiling in 2015. For more information, visit www.VIVE.com.