

PRESS RELEASE: Jannis Kounellis exhibits at Galleri Bo Bjerggaard

On Friday 6 February, Galleri Bo Bjerggaard will be opening its doors to a solo exhibition of works by one of the biggest names in contemporary art: Jannis Kounellis. The exhibition will be the largest ever solo presentation in Copenhagen by the now 78-year-old artist.

Jannis Kounellis was born in the Greek port of Piraeus in 1936, but has lived for most of his life in Rome. Today, he is regarded as the most prominent living artist in the Italian art movement *Arte Povera*, and his significance for contemporary art is indisputable.

The movement arose in the late sixties, and included the artists Alighiero Boetti and Mario Merz, amongst others. They were strongly influenced by their Italian compatriot, the writer Umberto Eco, who a few years earlier had published a collection of essays entitled *Opera Aperta* (The Open Work). Eco regarded the artwork as an open field in which meaning is created internally, through the actions of dissimilar elements and through the contextual approach to it of the individual viewer. For Eco, the most interesting works are those that offer the greatest mobility between the work's elements and the viewer's expectations and interpretations of them.

The *Arte Povera* artists were, as their name suggests, characterised by their use of "poor" everyday materials such as iron, wood, coal, coke, sackcloth and coffee – all elements that most of us can relate to, and with which we have both collective and individual experience. By using immediately recognisable materials, the *Arte Povera* artists thus add to the works a recollection of the material's original function, which in turn is mixed with the viewer's own experiences of this, and only then is the work complete.

Kounellis has pursued and developed the ideas of *Arte Povera* and the consistent use of materials throughout his oeuvre. When Galleri Bo Bjerggaard held its first and so far its only exhibition of Kounellis back in 2003, he created three installations, two of which consisted of old oak tables, through the middle of which he had placed a steel plate, so that it looked as though it had sliced through the tables, which were only rudimentarily held together by strong hemp rope. Around the tables in the gallery, then located at Pilestræde 48, he added 3-400 pairs of shoes in island formations. The third installation consisted of a giant iron plate, placed between the old coffee sacks and filled with about a ton of coke. Together, the installations formed a distinctive image of the readable traces that mankind places in the industrialised world.

It is therefore with great anticipation that Galleri Bo Bjerggaard is hosting Jannis Kounellis, who for a whole week will be installing the exhibition in cooperation with the gallery and two assistants in the gallery's three large west-facing rooms on Flæsketorvet. It is thus far unclear precisely what the exhibition will consist of, but it is certain that a lorry loaded with works and materials from Tuscany has arrived at Flæsketorvet!







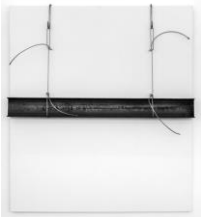
The finished result can be seen from Friday 6 February, when the opening reception will be held from 4.00 pm - 6.00 pm. All are welcome!






Jannis Kounellis' works are found in all the major public art collections worldwide, including MoMA and the Guggenheim in New York, and the Tate Modern in London. Here in Denmark, Kounellis is represented at Louisiana Museum of Modern Art and HEART. At the latter, the new art museum in Herning, HEART, opened in 2009 with a major Jannis Kounellis exhibition, and it was therefore natural for Galleri Bo

Bjerggaard to ask the director of HEART, Holger Reenberg, to write an essay on Kounellis and Denmark for the catalogue accompanying the gallery's exhibition.

The exhibition *Jannis Kounellis – New works* can be seen until 11 April. On Friday 20 February, the gallery will open an exhibition by Georg Baselitz in the east-facing room, which will continue until 18 April. For further information and photographic materials, contact Bolette Skibild at: boletteskibild@bjerggaard.com

Courtesy Galleri Bo Bjerggaard

<p>Untitled, 2015 Iron on canvas 200 cm x 180 cm</p>	
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<p>Untitled, 2015 Iron and burlap sack 200 cm x 180 cm</p>	
<p>Untitled, 2015 Iron on canvas 200 cm x 180 cm</p>	
<p>Untitled, 2015 Iron, knife, newspaper, and shirt on canvas 200 cm x 180 cm</p>	
<p>Untitled, 2015 Iron and copper 200 cm x 180 cm</p>	
<p>Untitled, 2015 Iron, shirt, hat 200 cm x 180 cm</p>	
<p>Untitled, 2015 Iron 200 cm x 180 cm</p>	