

GAGOSIAN

May 23, 2017



CARSTEN HÖLLER

REASON

Opening reception:
Monday, June 19, 6–8PM
June 20–August 11, 2017

555 West 24th Street
New York, NY 10011

I find mushrooms incredible ... their sole function is to lift their spores out of the ground to be carried away by the wind. So why do they have this immense variety of shapes, colors, and constituents, some of them psychoactive? As far as we know, they don't communicate with other mushrooms above the ground, and they don't use these toxins to protect themselves. There's something else going on that we don't understand.

—Carsten Höller

GAGOSIAN

Gagosian is pleased to present “Reason,” recent work by Carsten Höller, his first exhibition in New York since the New Museum survey in 2011.

Towering mushroom collages, a maze of mirrored panels, abstract paintings, hyperreal little fishes, an environment for children in the form of a huge dice: Höller unites art, play, and phenomenology to transform the gallery into a laboratory of reason and the incomprehensible. With a professional formation in the natural sciences, Höller has long been fascinated by the unique attributes and behaviors of people, fungi, and animals. The *Giant Triple Mushroom* (2015) sculptures combine enlarged cross-sections of three different species, fungal hybrids that seem at once empirical and surreal. Fly agaric mushrooms always make up at least half of these sculptures; like many of Höller’s topics, they are both formally and conceptually captivating, incarnations of “irrationality with a method.” When ingested, they can induce hallucinogenic effects—as seen in *Muscimol* (1996), an early video of the artist under the influence. *Flying Mushrooms* (2015) is a giant stabile with moving parts, which turns when its lowest arm is pushed, causing a crop of seven fly agaric replicas to orbit slowly through the air, living up to their name. Each mushroom is cut vertically down the middle, then reassembled so that one half is upright and the other upended, the distinctive white-spotted red caps spinning like propellers at either end of their stems.

Höller searches for reason only to escape or disprove it. He allows experience to surpass meaning, and provides a model for infinity through radical simplicity. While his *Divisions* paintings, animal works, and neon objects embody this model, *Revolving Doors* (2004/16) repeats the mirrored image endlessly, creating a *mise-en-abîme* that engulfs those who enter it in a multitude of ever-changing reflections.

Carsten Höller was born in 1961 in Brussels, Belgium to German parents and lives in Stockholm, Sweden, and Biriwa, Ghana. Institutional exhibitions include the 50th Biennale di Venezia (2003); “Carsten Höller: One Day One Day,” Färgfabriken, Stockholm (2003); 7th Biennale de Lyon (2003); “Carsten Höller: Half Fiction,” Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2003); “Carsten Höller: 7,8 Hz,” Le Consortium, France (2004); “Carsten Höller: Une exposition à Marseille,” Musée d’Art Contemporain, Marseille (2004); 51st Biennale di Venezia (2005); “Carsten Höller: Test Site,” Tate Modern, London (2006); “Carsten Höller: Amusement Park,” MASS MoCA, North Adams, MA (2006); “Carsten Höller: Carrousel,” Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria (2008); “Carsten Höller: The Double Club,” Fondazione Prada, London (2008); 28th Bienal de São Paulo (2008); “Carsten Höller: Double Slide,” Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, Croatia (2009); 53rd Biennale di Venezia (2009); 8th Gwangju Biennale (2010); “Carsten Höller: Divided Divided,” Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2010); “Carsten Höller: Soma,” Hamburger Bahnhof, Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin (2010); “Carsten Höller: Double Carousel with Zöllner Stripes,” MACRO- Museo d’Arte Contemporanea Roma, Italy (2011); “Carsten Höller: Experience,” New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (2011); 11th Sharjah Biennale (2013); “Carsten Höller: LEBEN,” Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna (2014); 8th Berlin Biennial for Contemporary Art (2014); 10th Gwangju

GAGOSIAN

Biennale (2014); "Carsten Höller: Golden Mirror Carousel," National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (2014–15); 56th Biennale di Venezia (2015); "Carsten Höller: Decision," Hayward Gallery, London (2015); and "Carsten Höller: Doubt," Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan (2016).

Höller's *Slide at the ArcelorMittal Orbit*, an addition to Anish Kapoor's *ArcelorMittal Orbit* (2012) commissioned in 2016, is permanently installed at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London. This fall, a new monumental slide will be installed permanently at the Aventura Mall in Florida.

Image: "Carsten Höller: Decision," installation view, Hayward Gallery, London, June 10–September 6, 2015. Artwork © Carsten Höller. Photo by Ela Bialkowska. *Flying Mushrooms*, 2015, polyester mushroom replicas, polyester paint, synthetic resin, acrylic paint, wire, putty, polyurethane, rigid foam, stainless steel, 200 3/8 (h) × 339 3/8 (diameter) inches (509 (h) × 862 (diameter) m).

For further information please contact the gallery at newyork@gagosian.com or at +1.212.741.1111. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

Please join the conversation with Gagosian on Twitter (@GagosianNY), Facebook (@GagosianGallery), Google+ (@+Gagosian), Instagram (@GagosianGallery), Tumblr (@GagosianGallery), and Artsy (@Gagosian-Gallery) via the hashtags #CarstenHoller #HollerReason #GagosianW24St.

PRESS ENQUIRIES

Gagosian | T. +1.212.744.2313 | www.gagosian.com
Contact: press@gagosian.com