KUNSTHAL CHARLOTTENBORG

FOS: *koøje*
20 March – 17 May 2015

Press conference and tour: Wednesday 18 March 11:00 – the artist will be present
Official opening: Thursday 19 March from 19:00 to 22:00 (party continues until 01:00)

A tour de force of language and materials
It gives Kunsthal Charlottenborg great pleasure to be able to present *koøje* – the largest-ever exhibition of works by the internationally acclaimed Danish artist FOS (b. 1971).

The exhibition features references to art history, discussions of culture and politics, playful installations, events and music. Such elements have been recurring features of FOS's artistic endeavours over the course of the last two decades, and they are now brought together at Kunsthal Charlottenborg, offering a seamless view of an oeuvre that can almost be said to constitute a single, vast work of art.

Curator and acting director Henriette Bretton-Meyer says: *"We are very proud that Kunsthal Charlottenborg is able to present this ambitious solo exhibition. We have invited FOS to challenge and play around with our very capacious rooms, and this has given the artist a unique opportunity to create new, large-scale works. Visitors will be taken on a striking tour of his sculptural universe – ranging from detailed museum-like objects on pedestals, a vast tunnel, and event spaces to singing keys and limestone from a chalk quarry. The exhibition constitutes an immersive, total installation that embraces and showcases FOS's phenomenal feel for language and materials."*

Memory loss and bales of straw
One of the key themes addressed by FOS in *Koøje* is memory and the loss of memory – but this is less about personal memory than it is about society's; about collective memory as a shared territory that encompasses traditions, language, culture and values.

As FOS says: *"Our communal memory is made out of sediments of lived life, and in that sense it is more real than that which has not yet happened. We use our collective memory to step carefully and to move on towards an uncertain future. Suppression is a natural aspect of the human drive to forge ahead, but memory loss can turn out to be a tragic shortcut for a society. The loss of memories offers a way to move on, but things can be irrevocably lost in the process – so memory loss and memory are both double-edged swords."*

From homeless shelters to Céline

When FOS transforms the shops of the French luxury brand Céline (since 2012) he does so with the same keen commitment he put into the design of a homeless shelter in Istedgade in Copenhagen, a project executed in collaboration with fellow artist Kenneth Balfelt (2002). Both cases involve a kind of present-day total installation that arises out of a deeply felt, sensitive, quirky humanity. FOS has a special ability to make complex matters comprehensible, playfully challenging himself, his audience and the art world. He knows human nature inside out, has a masterful grasp on language and words, and poetic humour and critical potential play key parts in his endeavours as an artist.

Two became one

Part of the exhibition has been produced in close collaboration with Martin Erik Andersen, a professor at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, and his students from the School of Sculpture. This collaboration reflects the fact that Kunsthal Charlottenborg merged with The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Art back in 2012, and testifies to the potential inherent in being a single institution. What is more, the FOS exhibition features an event room where Academy students can stage events, classes and performance art throughout the exhibition period.

The exhibition is accompanied by a wide range of learning activities: guided tours, open workshops for children, an artist talk and other initiatives that invite all visitors to reflect on the role played by art and design in our everyday lives.

To coincide with this exhibition FOS presents an all-new artist's book, and he also – together with the band Small White Man and the record company Escho – releases a new vinyl album. Both will be available from the Kunsthal Charlottenborg bookshop Motto.

CV

FOS (real name Thomas Poulsen, born 1971) is an acclaimed artist with a highly diverse body of work. He has received numerous prestigious awards, grants and scholarships; examples include a three-year grant from the Danish Arts Foundation. FOS has worked and exhibited his work in many different contexts and settings, including much-admired museums and galleries across the world, and has also created large-scale works for public institutions. Recent solo exhibitions include Camden Arts Centre, London (2012), Andersen's Contemporary, Copenhagen (2012), Max Wigram Gallery, London (2012), Statens Museum for Kunst/The National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen (2011) and Gesellschaft Aktueller Kunst, Bremen (2008). August 2015 will see the official inauguration of his monumental art project for the upper-secondary school HF-Centret Efterslægten in Copenhagen; a project launched at the behest of the Ny Carlsberg Foundation.

Acknowledgements

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Press contacts
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Press photos are available for download at http://kunsthalcharlottenborg.dk/presse (updated regularly)

Opening hours and admission fees
Tuesdays – Sundays 11:00 to 17:00, Wednesdays 11:00 to 20:00 (free admission on Wednesdays from 17:00 to 20:00)
Adults DKK 60 / Students DKK 40 / OAPs DKK 40 / Groups DKK 40 / Annual pass DKK 150

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