

# KUNSTHAL CHARLOTTENBORG

Press release

Copenhagen, October 29, 2020

**New exhibition about the Nordic Witch Hunt engages the persecutions of the past to understand the violences of the present**



**On November 7, the major autumn exhibition ‘Witch Hunt’ opens at Kunsthall Charlottenborg. The exhibition includes both original materials from the 15th-18th century and newly commissioned artworks. Through the lens of contemporary art, the exhibition examines the under-explored regional history of the Nordic witch hunt, and the particularities of indigenous violence and gendered persecution. Among the artists are names like: Pia Arke, La Vaughn Belle, Louise Bourgeois, Carol Rama and Carmen Winant.**

The exhibition will present seven new commissions from internationally-renowned artists who, through research and dialogues with leading scholars, dive into the social, gendered, and geopolitical layers of the witchcraft trials. Along with existent artworks and original archival material from the period, the exhibition investigates how specific threads of the Nordic witch hunts, particularly relating to identity, cartography, climate, and systems of power, reverberate today. From the impact of Danish colonialism to the multifaceted violences of misogyny, the exhibition proposes a present haunted by persecutions of the past – but one that is also occupied by new critical voices of opposition.

The participating artists explore discriminatory fear and hatred as it spreads from both the bottom up and the top down—between neighbors onto larger communities and from governments to other political institutions, questioning how such narratives are often written out of history. At a time of global unrest, as the politics of commemoration are in question, *Witch Hunt* suggests the need to revisit seemingly distant histories and proposes new imaginaries for remembering and representation.

In connection with the exhibition, an ambitious bilingual reader will be published, which brings together leading new witch research, debates about the witch's current relevance, as well as contributions from the artists. Produced with support from The Nordic Culture Fund.

**Exhibition period:** November 7, 2020 – January 21, 2021

**Exhibition opening:** November 6, 12.00 - 20.00

**Press opening:** October 7, 10.30 - 11.30 with the curators and the exhibiting artist: Sidsel Meineche Hansen & Reba Maybury, Aviva Silverman, Virginia Lee Montgomery, Rasmus Myrup and New Noveta

**Witch Hunt** at Kunsthal Charlottenborg is curated by Alison Karasyk and Jeppe Ugelvig and generously supported by 15. Juni Fonden, Aage and Johanne Louis-Hansens Fond, Axel Muusfeldts Fond, Grosserer L. F. Foghts Fond, Kern-Jespersen Fonden, Knud Højgaard's Fond, Konsul George Jorck and wife Emma Jorck's Fond, Nordisk Kulturfond and William Demant Fonden. Kunsthal Charlottenborg would like to give a special thank you to Michael Fornitz, who has made his unique archive of historical material available.

**Participating artists:** Pia Arke, La Vaughn Belle, Anna Betbeze, Louise Bourgeois, Youmna Chlala, Keviselie (Hans Ragnar Mathisen), Sidsel Meineche Hansen and Reba Maybury, Virginia Lee Montgomery, Sandra Mujinga, Rasmus Myrup, New Noveta, Carol Rama, Máret Anne Sara, Aviva Silverman, Angela Su, Carmen Winant, Cecilia Vicuña

#### **Practical details**

Witch Hunt

November 7, 2020 – January 21, 2021

Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Kongens Nytorv 1, 1050 København K

Pressevisning: Contact: Oliver Riel: or@kunsthalcharlottenborg.dk +45 3374 4635

#### **Hashtag**

#WitchHunt

#### **Photos in the press release**

La Vaughn Belle, strange gods before thee, 2020, video still. Courtesy the artist. (l.)

Carmen Winant, The neighbor, the friend, the lover, 2020. Found double-sided images on paper. Courtesy the artist and Stene Projects, Stockholm. (m.)

Albrecht Dürer, De fire hekse, 1497, Nürnberg. Radering. Michael Fornitz collection (r.)

#### **Press materials**

Press materials, including high-resolution photos, are available for download from Kunsthal Charlottenborg's website: <https://kunsthalcharlottenborg.dk/en/exhibitions/witchhunt/>

For additional information and materials, please contact:

Oliver Riel, Head of Communications, Kunsthal Charlottenborg

or@kunsthalcharlottenborg.dk / (+45) 3374 4635

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