

NIKOLAJ KUNSTHAL

PRESS RELEASE

FOKUS 2016 video art festival

February 11 – March 6 2016

With established artists, budding talents and a new, experimental platform, Nikolaj Kunsthal for the sixth consecutive year welcomes you to this year's edition of FOKUS with an overview of what is happening within video art right now.

This year, FOKUS 2016 presents the London-based artist and film director **John Akomfrah**. Akomfrah's works are deep, complex and powerful poetic statements, and with their focus on migration, identity and remembrance they significantly address contemporary issues. For FOKUS 2016, Akomfrah presents his large three-channel video installation *Vertigo Sea*, an epic account of man's relationship with the sea. The film brings together stories of exploitation, global migration, war and slavery in a timeless montage. Harpooned whales, political dissidents of Argentina and Algeria and the slaves of days past unite with today's refugee boats. *Vertigo Sea* is a meditative description of man's relationship with nature, and of beauty, choice and defencelessness.

Vertigo Sea was premiered at last year's Venice Biennale, and the work will be on show at Nikolaj Kunsthal until May 8 2016. During FOKUS 2016, the following additional works by Akomfrah will be screened: *Handsworth Songs*, *The Last Angel of History* and *The Stuart Hall Project*.

This year's FOKUS also features an **open call** for which more than 250 video works from 34 different countries have been submitted. Together, they paint a comprehensive picture of current developments in video. A jury has selected 30 works that can be experienced at Nikolaj Kunsthal for the duration of the Festival. At the end of FOKUS three winners will be awarded a prize. The jury this year is: Pia Röncke, visual artist; Pernille Albrethsen, art critic; Lotte Mik-Meyer, documentary filmmaker, Andreas Brøgger, head of Nikolaj Kunsthal, and Johanne Løgstrup, curator at Nikolaj Kunsthal.

Under the heading **VR:LAB – PEER REVIEW**, FOKUS 2016 makes room for new technological platforms. This year, nine virtual reality works are presented as installations all the way up through the Nikolaj Kunsthal tower. These works are the results of VR:LAB – a 10 days' production course during CPH:DOX 2015 – with 18 Nordic artists exploring the language of the medium and challenging the way we experience film. VR:LAB - PEER REVIEW has been curated by Johan Knattrup Jensen and Mads Damsbo and is produced by Darshika Karunahara for Makropol in collaboration with Nikolaj Kunsthal.

Finally, FOKUS 2016 includes **Niels Pugholm's** new video work *Bilferie - Tyskland – 1936* ("Road trip – Germany – 1936"), shown at the reading room of Københavns Stadsarkiv, The Copenhagen City Archives. Nikolaj Kunsthal also houses the premiere of the work *7 X Dialog* ("7 X Dialogue") created by **Tina Enghoff** in collaboration with residents of the Copenhagen neighbourhood Folehaven.

Opening: Thursday February 11 2016 5-8pm.

FOKUS 2016 open call awards event: Thursday March 3, 7-9pm.

For the complete event programme, please check www.nikolajkunsthal.dk under "Events".

Participating artists: Hanna Abrahamsson (SE), John Akomfrah (UK), Viktor-Emil Dupont Billund, Hannah Buckley (GB), Malene Choi, Eva la Cour, Dark Matters, Declinación Magnética (ES), Tina Enghoff, Felleskassen (NO), Søren Thilo Funder, Rafael Guendelman (CL), Selini Halvadaki, Bjørn Erik Haugen (NO), Maalem Omar Hayat (MA) & DJ Rupture (US), Louis Henderson (GB), Elias

Heuninck (BE), Duane Hopkins (GB), Lin Li (GB), Nautofon (SE), Nikolai Nekh (PT), Jeppe Rohde Nielsen, Linea Ojala, Other Story, Niels Pugholm, Nanna Rebecca & Pernille Lystlund Matzen, Flemming Rolighed, Anna Samsøe, Luise Sejersén, Malte Starck, Annicken Thrane-Steen (NO), Vladimir Tomic & Ana Pavlovic, Vilje Celin Kern Vestenfor (NO), VR:Lab (Aino Suni, Rikke Tambo Andersen, Alexander Lind, Maximilian Mayrshofer, Calle Holck, Allan Luckow, Camilla Figenschou, Elín Hansdóttir, Birgitte Rask, Frida & Lasse Barkfors, Christian Vangsgaard, Karna Sigurðardóttir, Anna J Ljungmark, Rasmus Kloster Bro, Kristian Kryger, Tobias Gundorff Boesen, Niels Ahlefeldt Wetterberg, Johan Knattrup Jensen og Mads Damsbo).

The 30 shortlisted open call videos can be seen at Nikolaj Kunsthal, at the Grand Teatret cinema, at the culture centre Kulturhuset Islands Brygge, the Copenhagen Main Public Library, Østerbro Library, the cafe Kaffebaren på Amager and the wine bar Vinhanen 1.

Special opening hours during FOKUS 2016

From February 11 to March 6 2016: Thursday and Friday: 12-10pm, Saturday and Sunday: 12-5pm, Monday-Wednesday: closed.

Admission fee including FOKUS programme: DKK 50.

Contact: Karen Mette Fog Pedersen, head of PR and communication, m: pr@nikolajkunsthal.dk, t: 3318 1784 / 2154 7498. Press photos available on: www.nikolajkunsthal.dk under "Presse".