

Julian Charrière

Towards No Earthly Pole

27 October 2019 – 15 March 2020

Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano
at the LAC

Curated by Francesca Benini

The exhibition is organized in collaboration with the **Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau**

Press conference: Friday, 25 October 2019, 11 am

Opening: Saturday, 26 October, 6pm



Press release

Lugano, Friday, 25 October 2019

Between 27 October 2019 and 15 March 2020 the Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana will be presenting a large solo exhibition by Julian Charrière, one of the most innovative and promising young Swiss artists of his generation. Titled *Towards No Earthly Pole*, the exhibition has been developed around a new videowork of the same name, for which the artist explored remote places subject to extremely hostile weather. The exhibition will subsequently be presented in a modified version at the Aargauer Kunsthaus in Aarau and at the Dallas Museum of Art.

Julian Charrière immediately stood out on the contemporary art scene as a modern explorer on a conceptual artistic quest that combines different disciplines, including geology, archaeology, physics and history. Employing performance, sculpture, photography and video, his work offers new and unexpected perspectives on some of the essential issues of our era, and related to humanity in general. Charrière spends much time travelling, visiting regions of the planet that are both very remote and invested with a strong geopolitical identity – for instance, volcanoes, glaciers, radioactive sites – where, using unconventional methods and materials, he investigates the tensions and elemental link that exists between human civilisation and the landscapes it inhabits.

The idea of the *Towards No Earthly Pole* project arose in 2017 when Charrière was invited on board a ship of Russian researchers passing through the Drake Passage that runs between Cape Horn and the Southern Shetland Islands. The powerful impression made on him by the Antarctic landscape and his readings of early 20th-century exploration gave rise to the work, which subsequently took him to the Rodano and Aletsch glaciers in Switzerland, Mont Blanc, Iceland and Greenland.

The title of the show and project is taken from a verse that the English poet Alfred Tennyson dedicated to John Franklin – who died along with his entire team during his famous polar expedition of 1845 – and creates an immediate association with the world of exploration of the 19th and early 20th centuries. During that period, the Poles and glaciers were the last regions of the Earth to be conquered and mapped; the last frontiers, they were mysterious and gruelling to cross. Today they are considered fragile ecosystems that need to be protected and are fundamental symbols of the Anthropocene, yet they are also the planet's most alien places where life is extremely difficult. Although only a minuscule fraction of the human population has ever visited them, the North and South Poles are a fixed feature of the collective imaginary with a power of fascination generated by photographs, historic accounts and literature.

The exhibition at MASI has been conceived as a diorama that visitors can enter. With a projection at its centre, Charrière has created an environmental installation that transforms the entire exhibition space into a setting associated with the central subjects and themes of the videowork. The aim of the artist is to intensify the visitor's involvement – by means of a sensory experience – as well as the rapport between the observer and the landscape represented.

The Arctic and glaciers are extremely different from our everyday world. The sounds, light and matter experienced during exploratory journeys in these places are fundamental elements of the process of discovery. They form a set of sensations that imbue the landscape with an ancient force and mystery, partly beautiful but also partly threatening, that emphasise each place's individual existence despite not being free of man's presence, as though to remind us that human activities today rival the power of the forces of nature, skewing the relationship between culture and nature, and the romantic poetics associated with them.

Alongside reinterpretations of previous works in the environmental installation, there will be new works produced by the artist for the MASI exhibition, for which he has included in his research local subjects and natural resources, and on which he has worked with Ticinese craftsmen.

Through his research, Charrière recreates a dialogue with the landscape and endeavours to rediscover the feeling of astonishment that ancient man felt confronted by nature: in the same way that man acts upon nature, nature acts upon man, and the place where this occurs is the setting for the birth of a work of art.

Julian Charrière – Towards No Earthly Pole has been made possible by the museum's primary partner, Credit Suisse, by its scientific partner the IBSA Foundation for scientific research, by the exhibition sponsor La Prairie, and by the support of Pro Helvetia, Göhner Stiftung, the Stanley Thompson Foundation, Fondation Coromandel, Volkart Stiftung and Erna und Curt Burgauer Stiftung.

Biographical notes

Born in Morges (Switzerland) in 1987, Julian Charrière lives and works in Berlin.

In 2011 he studied at the Institut für Raumexperimente (Institute for Spatial Experimentation) where he was taught by Olafur Eliasson.

During his career, Charrière has exhibited both individually and as a member of the Berlin collective Das Numen in museums and institutions around the world, among which: the Parasol Unit Foundation for Art in London (UK); Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts in Lausanne (Switzerland); Centre Culturel Suisse in Paris (France); Palais du Tokyo in Paris (France); Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin (Germany); Kunsthalle Wien in Vienna (Austria); Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin (Germany); Reykjavik Art Museum in Iceland; Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo (Japan); the Kochi-Muziris Biennial in India; the 12th Biennale de Lyon (France); the 57th Venice Biennale (Italy). His first solo exhibition in an Italian institution (*All We Ever Wanted Was Everything and Everywhere*) is currently being held at the MAMbo – Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna.

Julian Charrière has won many important prizes, including the Kiefer Hablitzel Award during the Swiss Art Awards of 2013 and 2015, and the Kaiserring Stipendium für junge Kunst in 2016.

Event La Scienza a regola d'Arte

In November Julian Charrière will be featured in the sixth encounter between representatives of the worlds of science and art in *La Scienza a regola d'Arte*, conceived and organised by the MASI and the IBSA Foundation for scientific research. The encounters provide the two institutes with an opportunity to take further their areas of interest, using as a vehicle themes that are apparently remote from their mandates, upholding a reality in which the relationships between art, science, technology and research have become so close that they are often inseparable.

Upcoming location

Julian Charrière – Towards No Earthly Pole
Aargauer Kunsthhaus, Aarau



16 May 2020 - 16 August 2020

MASI Lugano

Founded in 2015, after just a few years the Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana (MASI Lugano) has become one of the most visited art museums in Switzerland. It forms a cultural bridge between the north and south of the Alps, between Latin and Germanic Europe. Through its two locations – the LAC cultural centre and the historic Palazzo Reali – it offers a rich programme with temporary exhibitions and changing collection presentations as well as a comprehensive, multilingual educational programme for visitors of all ages. The offer is complemented by the close collaborations with the Collezione Giancarlo e Danna Olgiati, which is part of the MASI network, entirely dedicated to contemporary art. MASI is one of the Swiss museums to be directly supported by the Swiss Federal Office of Culture and is also one of the “Art Museums of Switzerland”, the group of museums selected by Switzerland Tourism to promote the country's cultural image worldwide.

Current exhibitions

Sublime

Light and landscape around Giovanni Segantini

LAC, 25.08.2019 through 10.11.2019

William Wegman. Being Human

LAC, 08.09.2019 through 06.01.2020

Marisa Merz

Geometrie sconnesse palpiti geometrici

Collezione Giancarlo e Danna Olgiati, 22.09.2019 through 12.01.2020

Upcoming exhibitions

La collezione

Palazzo Reali, 13.12.2019 through 14.02.2021



Information

Venue

LAC Lugano Arte e Cultura
Piazza Bernardino Luini 6
CH- 6901 Lugano

Opening hours

Tuesday - Sunday: 10:00 - 18:00
Open until 20:00 Thursdays
Monday closed

Admission

Admission fees and a complete list of discounts and special conditions available on the museum's web site.

Online ticket sales

www.masilugano.ch
www.luganolac.ch

Contact information

Visitor information

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Guided tours and creative workshops

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Main Partner MASI Lugano



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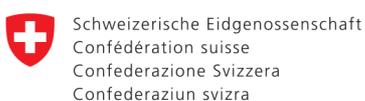
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Captions

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Julian Charrière
Towards No Earthly Pole
2019
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02.
Julian Charrière
Towards No Earthly Pole
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03.
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04.
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05.
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Towards No Earthly Pole, 2017
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06.
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07.

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10.

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