



8TH EDITION OF THE SOCLE DU MONDE BIENNALE  
2021 IN HERNING/DENMARK –  
“WELCOME BACK MY FRIENDS TO THE SHOW THAT  
NEVER ENDS”

JUNE 12TH – OCTOBER 31TH 2021

Elia Inside, Photo: Ole Jørgensen

## PARTICIPATING ARTISTS:

ANTONY GORMLEY, ALIGHIERO BOETTI,  
JANNIS KOUNELLIS, [REDACTED],  
BERLINDE DE BRUYCKERE, [REDACTED],  
BJØRN POULSEN, CHARLES LEDRAY,  
CHRISTIAN MEGERT, EL ANATSUI, [REDACTED],  
EMILIO PRINI, EVA STEEN CHRISTENSEN,  
GILBERTO ZORIO, GIOVANNI ANSELMO,  
GIULIO PAOLINI, GIUSEPPE PENONE,  
HERMAN DE VRIES, JAUME PLENSA,  
JOËL ANDRIANOMEARISOA, [REDACTED],  
KARI ANNE HELLEBERG BAHRI, KIMSOOJA,  
KLAUS MUNCH, LUCIANO FABRO, [REDACTED],  
MAHSA KARIMZADEH, MARIA ROOSEN,  
MARIO MERZ, MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO,  
MURIEL GALLARDO WEINSTEIN, [REDACTED],  
PAUL GADEGAARD, PIER PAOLO CALZOLARI,  
PIERO MANZONI, PINO PASCALI, [REDACTED],  
SPENCER TUNICK, SVEN DALSGAARD

“The Biennale’s title has, and will at the opening, acquire a new significance. The pandemic, we hope, has imparted us with a new modesty and acknowledgement of our mental and physical needs for our fellow human beings. “Welcome Back My Friends to the Show that Never Ends” has thus a greater meaning than initially intended, which has led to the expansion of the exhibition, granting more collaborations.” We believe that our Biennale is the appropriate mark of a new, post-COVID world, in which age-old notions of warmth, openness, commitment, and debate has new meanings and relevance.” [Holger Reenberg](#), director of HEART Museum in Herning

INTENDANT: Tijs Visser

CURATED BY: Holger Reenberg, René Schmidt,  
Sara Duborg Døssing, Bruno Corá

## FOCUS OF THE BIENNALE

Planned originally for last year, the 8th edition of the Socle du Monde Biennale 2021 “Welcome Back My Friends to the Show that Never Ends” is finally opening this summer. The show’s title originally did not refer to a post-pandemic opening of art exhibitions, but has since gained another significance. Established in 2002, Socle du Monde is the oldest Danish Biennale of contemporary art. The central focus of this year’s edition is the integration and embedment of the City space. As a result, the three museums, a former high school, a church, parks, public and private buildings are transformed into showplaces for site-specific exhibitions. Hereby linking past, present and future by fostering an exchange between different generations of international artists, as well as connecting historical works by Arte Povera with new emerging positions. Furthermore, a highlight of this year’s Biennale is the Open Call, which is occurring for the first time, inviting artists from various fields to join in with their works.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

The juxtaposition of the public and the private is examining interpersonal interaction and communication, be it between close friends, or generations. Spencer Tunick’s performance, in which thousands of naked strangers join into a unitary whole, exemplifies how the artist explores social frameworks, community and intimacy. Jaume Plensa anchors mutual tolerance in everyday life with a public intervention, placing aluminium doors throughout Herning that display the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Antony Gormley’s 35,000 miniature clay figures are questioning our responsibility facing the world. “With architectural interventions, playful objects and installations, thought provoking images and sound,

Socle du Monde 2021 invites visitors to participate in a festival-like experience where the real and the artistic life merge, where geographic and artistic boundaries are blurred, and where old and new friends meet. Welcome back my friends!” Tijs Visser, Intendant of Socle du Monde Biennale



HEART Museum, Photo: Iwan Baan

## ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Herning was once a city well known for its booming textile industry and trade. Today, the traditional industry blends in with the experience-oriented industry, which includes the arts. For the Biennale, the whole city is involved, which includes numerous locations and venues like the HEART - Herning Museum of Contemporary Art, Carl-Henning Pedersen og Else Alfelts Museum, Textile Museum, Saint Johannes Church, school buildings such as the Herning Højskole and parks, as well as the downtown area of Herning and the surrounding areas in Birk.

The Biennale’s name Socle du Monde (The World’s Pedestal) originates from one of the central pieces of the HEART - Herning Museum of Contemporary Art collection by conceptual artist, Piero Manzoni. The museum houses the world’s largest collection of his works. The Danish shirt manufacturer and collector Aage Damgaard created the foundation for the museum’s art collection and donated the building and the art works.

**IN 7 STAGES (PLUS PROLOGUE)  
THE BIENNALE TRAVELS THROUGH TIME  
AND DIFFERENT LOCATION.**

- PROLOGUE- the Biennale starts with Piero Manzoni and artists such as Sven Dalsgaard, Asger Jorn, Carl-Henning Pedersen being invited to Herning by Aage Damgaard in the 1960ies to create new works in Herning – the starting point of a vivid artistic activity in the City.



Antony Gormley, American field, 1991, Courtesy: the artist, photo: Joseph Coscia Jnr.

**STAGE 3**

-THE PRESENT - Piero Manzoni and his generation wish to show the authentic life at the museum, however also wish to bring art into the public sphere - away from the atmosphere of a museum. Jaume Plensa has created an art piece with 21 doors, for Herning City, in which the unexpected enriches the daily life in the city. On every door, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is engraved. The doors are placed throughout the city in a path that connects the HEART locations to Højskolen, through Herning City, and finally ending at the Textile Museum.



Michelangelo Pistoletto, La Venere, 1973, Photo: Niels Fabæk

**STAGE 1**

- THE PAST - shows an exhibition with iconic works by Arte Povera artists Giovanni Anselmo, Alighiero Boetti, Pier Paolo Calzolari, Luciano Fabro, Jannis Kounellis, Giulio Paolini, Pino Pascali, Giuseppe Penone, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Emilio Prini and Gilberto Zorio.

**STAGE 2**

- THE PAST EXTENDED - presents artists who continue to use traditional materials in their practise. Antony Gormley has been solicited to display his work American Field, with over 10.000 small handcrafted clay figures. Kimsooja shows a version of the installation work Archive of the Mind. Hereby, Gormley and Kimsooja invite the public to physically get involved and become part in the creation of their works. As a single-day event the visitors are invited to join Spencer Tunick`s installation with naked human bodies, or add a clay work of art to the installation of Kimsooja.



Spencer Tunick, Socle du Monde, 2017, Courtesy: the artist

## STAGE 4

-THE NEVER ENDING - Not all art pieces are static, some are bound to develop and others are ever-changing. A prime example of this is Herman de Vries' Sanctuarium, Eva Steen Christensen's untitled and Christian Megert's mirror installation. By placing their installation works in natural environments, the artists leave the future of the pieces to nature.



Kari-Anne Helleberg Bahri, *Bundle of...*, 2018/19,  
Courtesy: The Artist, Photo: Liv Øvland

## STAGE 5 & 6

-THE PAST AND THE FUTURE - Kari Anne Hellberg, Charles LeDray, Jöel Andrianomearisoa, Berlinde De Bruyckere, Mahsa Karimizadeh, Muriel Gallardo Weinstein and MariaRoosen are using textiles in their works and will exhibit these at the Textile Museum by referring to the city's history of cloths production. The Ghanaian artist El Anatsui will show a large "blanket" consisting of thousands of aluminum pieces sourced from alcohol recycling stations and sewn together.

## STAGE 7

- THE FUTURE - OPEN CALL - HEART invites Danish artists to propose art works, which will be exhibited at the Herning Højskole and the Deep Forest Art land - whether it is painting, sculpture, music, performance, embroidery, etc. The purpose of the exhibition remains to act as a sort of "incubator", which provides freedom to experiment and develop new artistic practices with no limitations. This new format lends to a broader group of potential participants.

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