

Christian Houge  
(born in Oslo, 1972)

Based in Oslo, Norway, Houge has been making photographic art for over twenty years, and new insights continue to open. Exploring the relationship between Humankind and Nature has been an ongoing theme in his work.

By exploring this relation, the artist investigates Mans` condition with recurring themes such as environmental impacts in the Anthropocene, identity, and the notion of death.

The artist often juxtaposes the visually aesthetic with an underlying sense of uneasiness. This emanates a cognitive dissonance in the viewer to invite personal references and deeper insights.

Houges `Vanitas` series and performance started in 2019 after finishing his ritualistic burning of trophy animals for the series `Residence of Impermanence`. During the past four years rare human skulls used for medical research has been collected and burned in detailed classical `Vanitas` still-life's in the Memento Mori tradition (Latin for `remember you shall die`) inspired by the Dutch masters in the 1600`s.

This cathartic performance evokes the impermanence of life and the vanity of living. A meditation on the Human condition in culture where death has become somewhat of a taboo. This reminder contrasts our self-confirmation through social media which can leave us somewhat detached from ourselves.

By juxtaposing the beautiful and the violent in the hyperrealism of digital photography, these still-lives are meant to inspire on many different levels, as the references to what a skull represents are endless. Creating dialog with thought-provoking art is Houge`s main objective.

In 2021 his series `Residence of Impermanence` (2017-2019) received nine nominations for the sustainability award Prix Pictet with the theme FIRE. This work has exhibited at six museums and several galleries - including a solo show at Fotografiska, Stockholm (2019), and at Galerie Omnius during Les Recontres d'Arles (2019). Furthermore `Residence of Impermanence` is currently touring the US initiated by California Museum of Photography (UCR), Los Angeles with the exhibition `Facing Fire; Art, Wildfire and The End of Nature in the New West`. This exhibition explores the ever-worsening forest fires due to climate change.

Houges series `Death of a Mountain` (2016-2020) has been nominated for this year's Leica Oskar Barnack Award and received an arts grant from the Norwegian Government. The solo show at Buer Gallery received much attention, as well as Oslo Negative Photo Festival and Street Level Photoworks in Glasgow.

His work has been shortlisted for the BMW Prize at Paris Photo (Scout Gallery, London). In 2015/2016, `Paradise Lost` toured China and his work has been published in several books and has been presented at symposiums and Ted talks. Many works from his series are included in major private, public and institutional collections.

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## Selected exhibitions and nominations

2022

`Temple of Light` (`Residence` + `Vanitas`), Bold Gallery, Prague. Solo

`Vanitas`, Oslo Photo Festival

`Death of a Mountain`. House of Photography, Rotterdam. Solo

`Paradise Lost`-selected works, Galleri Balder, Oslo. Solo

2021

`Death of a Mountain`, Street Level Photoworks, Glasgow - Collaborative

OsloNegative Photofestival, Deichmans, Oslo

`In:Human Nature` and `As far as my Eye can Sea – The Expedition Exhibition`  
Rev Ocean, Bomuldsfabrikken Kunsthall, Arendal - Collaborative

`Residence of Impermanence`, Berger Museum, Norway - Solo

Nine nominations to Prix Pictet Award/ `Residence of Impermanence`

`Facing Fire`, Collaborative, UCR ARTS:California Museum of Photography, Los Angeles

Nominated for Leica Oskar Barnack Award/ `Death of a Mountain`

`Death of a Mountain`/ `In;Human Nature`, Buer Gallery, Oslo - Solo

2020

`Facing Fire`, UCR ARTS California Museum of Photography - Collaborative

2019

`Metafysica` and `Residence of Impermanence`, Haugar Kunstmuseum, Vestfold - Collaborative

`Residence of Impermanence`, Fotografiska Museum, Stockholm - Solo

`Helt Dyrisk` Residence of Impermanence`, collaborative, Preus Museum, Horten. Collaborative.

`Residence of Impermanence`, Galleri Fineart, Oslo - Solo

2017

`Shadow Within/Rituals` Gulden Kunstverk, Drammen - Solo

Commission, MAAEMO restaurant. `In;Human Nature`

`Mirror,Mirror` Hosfelt Gallery, San.Fran. Collaborative w/Ed Ruscha, Adam Fuss, Liliana Porter

2016

`In;Human Nature`, TM51 Gallery, Oslo - Solo

Fotofever/ParisPhoto, Louvre, Paris

Cornette de Saint Cyr, Auction, Paris

2015

Three Shadows Photography Art Center, Beijing, China. `Paradise Lost` .  
`Arctic Technology/Barentsburg` / Shadow Within - Solo

Fotofever (ParisPhoto), Artistics Art Gallery, Paris - Collaborative

How Art Museum, Wenzhou, China. `Paradise Lost`  
Arctic Technology/Barentsburg/Shadow Within - Solo

Redtory, Guangzhou, China. `Paradise Lost`  
Arctic Technology/Barentsburg/Shadow Within. Solo

2014

Fineart Gallery, Oslo `Shadow Within` 2010-2013 / `Darkness Burns Bright`  
2013/2014. Solo

Beyond Earth Art • (contemporary artists and the environment)  
Johnson Museum of Art, New York. Shadow Within. Collaborative  
(incl. Olafur Eliasson, Edward Burtynsky, Mathew Brandt, Yun-Fei Ji amongst others)

The El Paso Museum of Art, Texas. `Arctic Technology`. Collaborative

Glenbow Museum, Alberta. `Arctic Technology`. Collaborative

LIFF (Lofoten International Photofestival)  
`Shadow Within` w/speaking. Solo

2013

Nominated for the Prix Pictet Award/ `Shadow Within`.

Hosfelt Gallery, San.Fran. USA. `Shadow Within`. Solo  
Accompanied by Call of the Wild` ( Joseph Beuys, Ed Ruscha, Patricia Piccinini and  
Alan Rath)

Carnegie, Oslo, Arctic Technology` series. Commission.

`Vanishing Ice` Tour, USA/Canada, Whatcom Museum 2013-2015.  
Publication `Vanishing Ice`, Alpine and Polar Landscapes in Art, 1775-2012  
Author: Barbara Matilsky.

Altered Landscapes: Photographs of a changing environment (Impact of human  
activity on natural landscapes)  
by Ann M. Wolfe. Rizzoli Publications.

2012

Vanishing Ice, Whatcom (Museum of Washington), USA, 2012.  
`Arctic Technology`. Collaborative

Public speaking, Ambassadors residence, London. `Shadow Within`.

2010

Akershus Kunstsenter, Oslo. `Arctic Technology`. Collaborative

`In full color`, Hosfelt Gallery, New York.  
Arctic Technology/ Barentsburg. Collaborative

2009

Nominated for the Prix Pictet Award with the series `Barentsburg`.

Hosfelt Gallery, San. Fran, `Arctic technology/Barentsburg`. Solo

AntArctica, Haugar Kunstmuseum. Collaborative

`The coldest winter`, Hosfelt Gallery, San. Fran. Collaborative

2008

`Arctic technology` Hosfelt Gallery, New York, USA, Solo

Gardemoen Airport, 10-year Anniversary Oslo. Public(Arctic Technology)

Oslo Sentral Station/Rom for Kunst, Oslo. Public (Arctic Technology)

2007

ArtBasel/Scout Gallery, London, Miami. Collaborative

PhotoLondon Fair, Zebra Gallery London. Collaborative

Annual Grants exhibition Kunsternes Hus, Oslo. Collaborative

Annual grants exhibition Fotogalleriet, Oslo. Collaborative

Defence Ministry H.Q. Oslo. Commission(Arctic Technology)

2006

Sotheby's London. Collaborative auction

Zebra One, London. Collaborative

Annual Grants exhibition, Oslo. Collaborative

Defence Ministry H.Q. `Arctic Technology. Oslo. Commission

2005

Scout Gallery, London. `Arctic Technology`, Solo

BMW Awards, Paris Photo. `Arctic Technology`. Collaborative

Paris Photo, Louvre, Paris, Scout Gallery (London). Collaborative  
Arctic Technology/ Barentsburg

PhotoLondon Fair (Scout Gallery, London). Collaborative

2003

Annual grants exhibition, Kunstnerenes Hus, Oslo. Collaborative

Økokrim, Oslo, Commission. Public

Eiendommspar, Oslo. Commission. Public

2002

Autumn grants exhibition, Kunstnerenes hus, Oslo. Collaborative