

PLEASE DO NOT ENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PRESENTS

CHRISTOPHE COPPENS:
50 MASKS MADE IN AMERICA

FIRST PRESENTATION IN LOS ANGELES
MAY 11-JULY 16 2016

Opening reception, Wednesday May 11, 2016, 6PM-8PM
Christophe Coppens will be present

PLEASE DO NOT ENTER, 549 SOUTH OLIVE STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90013



Trump Mask by Christophe Coppens, photo Javier Barcala

Los Angeles, Calif. –Please Do Not Enter will present the first Los Angeles exhibition of new works by Belgian artist, former milliner, and fashion icon, Christophe Coppens. *50 Masks Made in America*, will feature 50 new, mixed-media sculptural masks, made by hand especially for the exhibition by the now Los Angeles-based Coppens. These wearable objects are informed by the artist's unique background at the intersection of couture and performance, and present surreal observations and commentary on his recent relocation to Los Angeles from a European perspective.

"I've been raised with American culture and pop culture, but now that I've been living here for three years I see so many faces, so many layers. These masks accompany my journey, far from home, making a new home in a place that feels so familiar and yet so incomprehensible."

Theatrical masks have figured prominently as recurring themes and formal structures in Coppens' largely fashion and theater based career. He has made them for couture shows, theatre, and musical artists. Coppens created costumes and accessories for Irish singer Roisin Murphy's 2008-2009 world tour and made twenty masks for her more recent 2015-2016 tour. Coppens is fascinated by the mask as a physical metaphor. A performative extroversion of interior and symbolic experience, it becomes a physical manifestation of identity and affect. At times protective and apotropaic and at others seductive and exhibitionist, the mask carries a complex cultural and social legacy of ritual and meaning.

Coppens adds, *"For thousands of years, masks have played an important role in rituals, religion and the performing arts. What could be the role of masks today? Disturbing or grotesque, beautiful or intriguing, you could use a mask to express yourself, share your opinion, create a new identity, hide behind it or wear it as a mirror to reflect what's going on inside your mind and soul. They can affirm your power, make you part of a new urban tribe or distance you from the world around you."*



Initially trained as a theater director, Christophe Coppens started his own label as an accessories designer at the age of 21, a career that would span over 20 years. In 2010 he was named Royal Warrant Holder in Belgium, a recognition that came after more than 15 years making accessories for the Belgian Royal Family. He has opened outlets in Belgium and Japan, presenting his collections twice a year during Fashion Week in Paris and Japan. He has worked on fashion show collaborations for renowned designers such as Manish Arora, JuunJ, Guy Laroche and Issey Miyake and has created memorable performance accessories for pop stars including Beth Ditto, Grace Jones, Roisin Murphy, Rihanna and Scissor Sisters.



ABOUT CHRISTOPHE COPPENS

Christophe Coppens presented his first couture accessories collection in 2006 during Paris Fashion Week, displaying spectacular theatrical skills and the surreal undertone that has become his signature style. At the end of 2011, to celebrate his career and 20 year anniversary as a milliner and artist, Coppens opened an exhibition to show and auction some of his most outstanding couture pieces and artworks, hosted by Pierre Berge & Associates in Brussels. In early 2012, he launched a retrospective book *Homework* featuring pieces from the 2011 exhibition and other highlights of his career. The book was listed among the New York Times' "Summer's 2012 must-reads."

In 2012, Coppens' label was sold in 140 shops worldwide and he had become arguably one of the most important milliners of his generation. After 21 years of making work on the edge of art and fashion, Coppens decided to close his company to focus exclusively on his work as an artist, experimenting with a variety of media. Since then, Coppens has worked on four different solo art shows, traveling to Tokyo, New York, Belgium and The Netherlands, including the prestigious Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum in Rotterdam.

ABOUT PLEASE DO NOT ENTER

Please Do Not Enter is a one-of-a-kind curated store in the heart of Downtown Los Angeles. This unique space features an eclectic array of exclusive timeless contemporary pieces, including contemporary design, high fashion, luxury accessories and contemporary art. Carefully selected and curated, most pieces are unique or part of small editions.

Being contemporary art and design collectors themselves, the two French founders, Nicolas Libert and Emmanuel Renoird, have amassed an important outdoor sculpture garden on the grounds of their unique country home in Normandy, France. Their contemporary collection includes site-specific works by artists such as Saadane Afif, Karsten Födinger, Vincent Lamouroux, Guillaume Leblon, Arik Levy, Vincent Maudger, Richard Nonas and Andra Ursuta. Libert and Renoird extend their passion as art patrons to Please Do Not Enter, viewing it as a supportive platform for contemporary creation, and as a conduit through which to sponsor and produce outdoor installations and commissioned works for special projects.

<http://www.pleasedonotenter.com/>

Image credits: Roisin Murphy wearing mask by Christophe Coppens, photo by Ilona Henne. Portrait of Christophe Coppens by Sofie Middernacht & Maarten Alexande.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Lyn Winter: lyn@lynwinter.com or **Livia Mandoul:** livia@lynwinter.com