

Noguchi Museum Presents *Christian Boltanski, Animitas*

Christian Boltanski's *Animitas*, a sound work consisting of 180 bronze bells, will fill the Noguchi Museum's garden with a "music of lost souls"

May 5, 2021 – September 5, 2021



Christian Boltanski, *La Forêt des Murmures*, 2016. Permanent work, Teshima, Japan.
Courtesy the artist, Benesse Art Site Naoshima, and Marian Goodman Gallery

New York, NY (April 29, 2021) – From May to September 2021, Christian Boltanski's *Animitas*, a sound work consisting of 180 small bronze bells on steel stems, will fill the Noguchi Museum's garden with a "music of lost souls." Boltanski's extended video *Animitas, La Forêt des Murmures* (2016), which documents another, permanent version of the work on the island of Teshima in Japan, will also be on view. noguchi.org/animitas

EXHIBITION

The first incarnation of *Animitas*, a sound installation by Christian Boltanski (b. 1944), appeared in a remote part of the Atacama Desert in 2014. The name comes from the small roadside shrines to the departed found in Chile. In that desolate, high-altitude landscape, now a location for international observatories, Boltanski installed 800 small bronze bells suspended from steel stems of various heights arranged to mimic the position of the stars on the night of his birth. Twisting in the wind, the bells play a gently cacophonous "music of lost souls."



Christian Boltanski, *Animitas, La Forêt des Murmures*, 2016. Video projection, HD color video; 12 hours, 52 min. 21 sec., 16/9 format, stereo sound, hay, flowers. *Christian Boltanski*, Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Art Museum, Japan, 2016. Courtesy the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery. © Christian Boltanski

The temporary version of *Animitas* installed in the Noguchi Museum’s garden will be linked to a permanent example called *La Forêt des Murmures* (2016) on the island of Teshima in Japan by a day-long video of the Japanese installation that will be on view in Area 4 of the Noguchi Museum. (On Teshima, in addition to walking through a ghostly forest of sound, visitors have the option to acquire a bell chime on which to engrave the name of a loved one and become a permanent part of the work.)

Boltanski’s affiliation with Japanese ways of thinking—and in particular his long embrace of the ways the transience of human existence shapes the human condition—is fundamental to his overall perspective. The *Animitas* installations are part of a larger body of work that includes another of Boltanski’s long-term projects, *Les Archives du Coeur* (2008–), an ongoing effort to record and store the heartbeats of people all over the world in a sort of museum of spirits. *Les Archives du Coeur*, to which all are invited to contribute the sound of their hearts, is also based on Teshima and administered by Benesse Art Site Naoshima. Weaving together multiple instances of these gardens, and the souls they memorialize, Boltanski continues to extend the intimate, borderless, ephemeral network of loss and memory that constitutes his life’s work.

RELATED EXHIBITION

Noguchi’s Memorials to the Atomic Dead

June 2–September 5, 2021

Two complementary installations from the Noguchi Museum’s collection and archives will survey Isamu Noguchi’s proposals for memorializing the use of atomic weapons against humanity in Hiroshima and beyond. This will include a reinstallation of the original gallery Noguchi devoted to his *Memorial to the Dead, Hiroshima* (1952, unrealized); and a survey of Noguchi’s postwar memorial projects including *Bell Tower for Hiroshima* (1950, unrealized).

LOCATION

The Noguchi Museum
9-01 33rd Road (at Vernon Boulevard)
Long Island City, NY 11106

Open Weds–Sun, 11 am–6 pm,
by advance reservation: noguchi.org/visit

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SUPPORT

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ABOUT CHRISTIAN BOLTANSKI

Christian Boltanski was born in 1944 in Paris. He currently lives and works in Malakoff. In the 1960s he began to develop a “personal ethnology” marked, among others, by the influence of Claude Lévi-Strauss and Harald Szeemann. At the same time, drawing on museology, Boltanski exhibited inventories of items of anonymous owners. It is often the case in Boltanski’s work that objects (photos, pieces of clothing, bells, flowers) give voice to absent subjects and are an invitation to the viewer to meditate and contemplate.

Since his first exhibition at Le Ranelagh cinema in 1968, Boltanski’s work has been shown in numerous countries. Recent solo shows have been at Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (2019); Espace Louis Vuitton Tokyo, Japan (2019); The National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan and the National Art Gallery, Tokyo, Japan (2019); The Israel Museum, Jerusalem (2018); The Power Station of Art, Shanghai, China (2018); the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2017); Museo d’Arte Moderna di Bologna, Italy (2017); The Museum of Contemporary Art of Monterrey, Mexico (2016); Instituto Valenciano Arte Moderno (IVAM), Spain (2016); Mac’s Grand Hornu, Belgium (2015); and Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Santiago, Chile (2014).

Boltanski has been recognized with several awards, including the Praemium Imperiale Award (2006) and the Kaiser Ring Award (2001). He has participated in Documenta (1977 and 1972) and numerous Venice Biennales (2011, 1995, 1993, 1980, and 1975).

mariangoodman.com/artists/33-christian-boltanski | [@boltanskichristian](https://twitter.com/boltanskichristian)

ABOUT THE NOGUCHI MUSEUM

Founded in 1985 by category-defying artist Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988), The Noguchi Museum in Queens, New York was the first museum in the United States to be established, designed, and installed by a living artist to show their own work. Itself widely viewed as among the artist's greatest achievements and holding the world's largest collection of his works, the Museum features open air and indoor galleries in a repurposed 1920s industrial building and a serene outdoor sculpture garden. Since its founding, it has served as an international hub for Noguchi research and appreciation. In addition to managing the artist's archives and catalogue raisonné, the Museum exhibits a comprehensive selection of Noguchi's material culture, from sculpture, models, and drawings to his personal possessions.

Provocative installations drawn from the permanent collection, together with diverse special exhibitions and collaborations with contemporary practitioners across disciplines, offer a multifaceted view of Noguchi's art and illuminate his enduring influence as an innovator.

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Christian Boltanski, Animitas

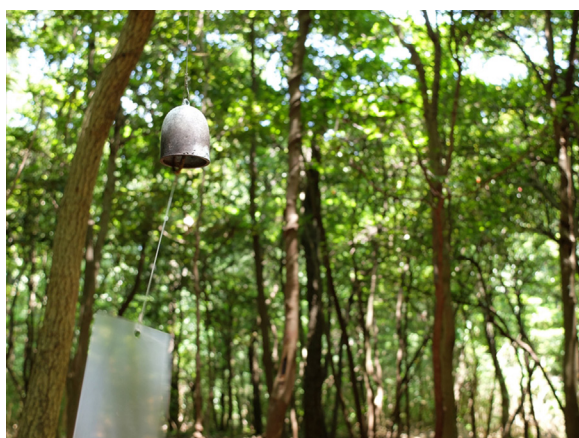
The Noguchi Museum, NY

May 5 – September 5, 2021

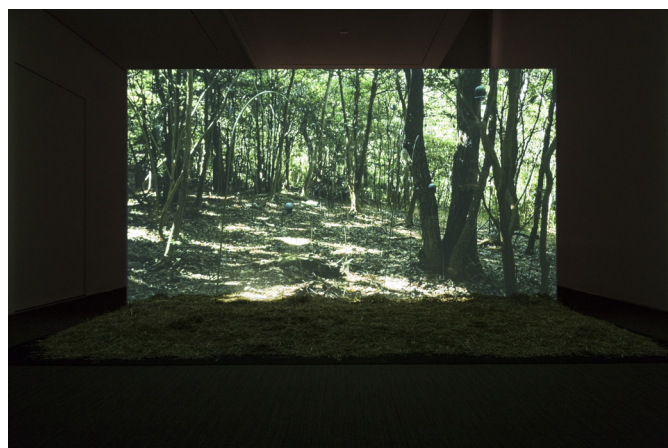
Press Images



Christian Boltanski, *La Forêt des Murmures*, 2016.
Permanent work, Teshima, Japan. Courtesy the artist,
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Christian Boltanski. Photo: Didier Plowry