



Carsten Höller, 'Dice', 2014, 'Half Mirror Room', 2006-2015 and 'Snake', 2014 © Carsten Höller, 'Installation view' Carsten Höller | 'Decision', Hayward Gallery, London 2015, courtesy of the artist, photo Linda Nylind

Carsten Höller at Hayward Gallery, London

ABOUT CAUSES AND THEIR EFFECTS

With 'Decision', Carsten Höller hones his field of interests, which spans perception, choice, chance, experience, doubt, and more recently doubting (or divisions). Should I stay or should I go? What happens if we go this way instead of that? Should we

prominent views of The London Eye, marking the sightline delimiting the Royal Festival Hall as this urban fairground's midway. Not surprisingly, these twin exits route visitors through the gift shop, which is chock full of super-cool, Höller-like decision-making tools. I only wish they sold his special toothpaste that one can blend to prompt a mix of male, female, and child-like dreams.

Surprising for a survey, sixteen out of twenty-four works are dated 2015, though several like 'Pill Clock' (2011/2015) and the 3-D video 'The Forests' (2002/2015) are duplicates, again a kind of doubling-up required for artworks suffering deterioration due to repeat handling. Were one to compare 'Decision' to 'Glück' (Happiness) (1996), Höller's first museum show, one would notice several old favorites, but such similarities seem superficial. Although 'Glück' featured an indoor flying machine, most were too stily to try flying back then. These days, twin machines are especially necessary since people no longer expect to have both feet planted on the ground when they experience art and pairs seek simultaneous thrills. 'Two Flying Machines' (2015) facilitate eastern views of London, extending from St. Paul's Cathedral to the Shard, including an electronic sign advertising 'wee' adventures on National Rail!

Although there are still actions to be performed and experiences to be had, doubling effects now reverberate everywhere and visitors' changed energies magnify memories. 'Divisions (Wall Painting with Aphids)' (2015) mimics reproductive doubling, beginning with a white square, then doubling that area in pale pink and so forth until an entire wall is covered with ever-reddening rectangles hosting a giant aphid giving birth.

When viewed in the 'Half Mirror Room' (2008/2015), three jungle-gym 'Dice' (White Body, Black Dots)' (2014) appear surrounded by eight snakes

and three pill boxes. Nearby, a black and white photograph (1996/2015) depicts him reflected in her eyes, and vice versa. One next strolls through a video corridor presenting seven pairs of female twins, chatting back and forth in as many languages (2005-2015). Downstairs, twin beds magically roam a gallery, while flickering colored electronic discs appear to chase one another across and around the walls enclosing 'Fara Fara' (2014). The brilliant sound system used for this dual-channel video installation, which features Papa Wemba narrating a musical face-off in Kinshasa, seems amped to compel dancing.

Smell has often been integral to Höller's work, but it doesn't figure here, leaving sight and touch to reign as the senses whose outcomes predominate. One's decisions here engender dramatically different consequences. One begins by choosing one's entrance, which ends up being the most important decision. One either experiences a totally frightful, annoying, endless walk in the dark or one is turned out in the middle of the exhibition, just a few minutes after entering. And if the latter happens, one misses 'Flying Mushrooms' (2015), the best version yet of his suspended mushrooms; loses the chance to swallow potentially mood-altering pills, and escapes time. Although it is recommended that visitors try everything at least once, most people find the upside down glasses totally overwhelming. Inexplicably, walking around with one's eyes closed is lots easier than viewing the world turned upside down, though Höller ensures that one thing appears right-side up. The most enigmatic object is 'Half Clock' (2014), a neon globe suspended like a basketball hoop that mysteriously transcribes clock hands' revolutions into 12 colorful neon arcs of light.

Carsten Höller, 'Decision' through 6 September in Hayward Gallery, London, UK
www.southbankcentre.co.uk/venues/hayward-gallery