

Press Release

SERPENTINE AND ACUTE ART PRESENT CHRISTO AND JEANNE-CLAUDE'S *LONDON MASTABA* THIS SUMMER IN AR

Artists' final large-scale public artwork recreated in Augmented Reality by Acute Art in collaboration with the Serpentine Galleries



Christo and Jeanne-Claude, still for *The London Mastaba AR (Hyde Park)*, 2020. Courtesy of Acute Art.

From 8 July 2020, visitors to Hyde Park can virtually summon up one of the best loved public artworks of recent years, **Christo and Jeanne-Claude's** *London Mastaba*, on their mobile phones. The launch of ***The London Mastaba AR (Hyde Park) (2020)*** brings this iconic sculpture back to the Serpentine via the free Acute Art app.



Christo (1935–2020) and Jeanne-Claude (1935–2009) are among the world’s most celebrated artists, known for their ambitious, large-scale works of art that have altered both the physical form and visual appearance of sites for a short period of time, before returning environments to their original states. *The London Mastaba AR (Hyde Park)* will be an exact virtual replica of the physical sculpture installed in 2018. It is best experienced from the North bank of the lake, opposite the Serpentine lido.

The London Mastaba, Serpentine Lake, Hyde Park, 2016-2018, a temporary sculpture made of colourful stacked barrels, was the artists’ first major public work in the UK. *The London Mastaba AR (Hyde Park)* will evoke the memory of the sculpture, which floated on the Serpentine lake for just over three months in 2018 and was accompanied by an exhibition of the artists’ work at the Serpentine Galleries, supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Planned before Christo’s death in May 2020, this is an opportunity to share the last public work realised in Christo’s lifetime with a global audience and celebrate the memory of his and Jeanne-Claude’s visionary projects.

‘Christo and Jeanne-Claude were truly extraordinary artists. Art for them was not a profession but their existence. Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s genius exists in the transfer between the irrepressible ephemerality of their work and the indelible memories each project produced in everyone who experienced them. It is an honor to present this project as an everlasting, virtual translation of their otherworldly vision.’

Bettina Korek, CEO, and Hans Ulrich Obrist, Artistic Director, Serpentine Galleries

‘The democratising power of new immersive media will bring Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s unique artistic vision to wide and diverse audiences across the globe. And it is always a joy to collaborate with the extraordinary team at the Serpentine Galleries.’

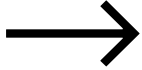
Daniel Birnbaum, Artistic Director, Acute Art

The translation of the Mastaba into Augmented Reality gives audiences a chance to play at being the artist, placing the sculpture within the landscapes of Kensington Gardens and beyond. The Augmented Reality Mastaba in Kensington Gardens joins Jakob Kudsk Steensen’s *The Deep Listener* (2019), an ecological trail in Augmented Reality through the Park; both works offer audiences a way to engage differently with their surroundings, whether natural or man-made.

The London Mastaba AR (Hyde Park) (2020) will be an exact virtual replica of the physical sculpture installed in 2018. Accessible via the free Acute Art app, viewers will be able to explore a virtual version of the installation through their mobile phones when they visit The Serpentine Lake.

In addition to the site specific AR work, Acute Art will also develop a version that users can place at home or wherever they are, *The London Mastaba AR* (2020). Viewers will be able to place and interact with the piece without travelling to Hyde Park, allowing the project to reach a truly global and diverse audience.

The London Mastaba on the Serpentine lake from June 19 to September 9, 2018 was inspired by ancient mastabas – benches with two vertical sides, two slanted sides and a flat top – which originate from the first urban civilisations of Mesopotamia. It consisted of 7,506 horizontally stacked barrels on a floating platform,



20m in height, 30m wide x 40m long. The sides of the barrels, visible on the top and on the two slanted walls of the sculpture, were red and white. The ends of the barrels, visible on the two vertical walls, were blue, mauve and a different hue of red. The sculpture's total weight was 600 metric tonnes and its footprint took up approximately 1% of the total surface area of the lake.

This AR project is the latest in a series of collaborations between Acute Art and the Serpentine Galleries, which include a Virtual Reality version of the Mastaba in 2018 and a remarkable new VR experience by Cao Fei, *The Eternal Wave*, part of her exhibition *Blueprints* which reopens on 4 August 2020. In response to restrictions necessitated by COVID-19, Acute Art has also developed an Augmented Reality version of the kitchen space in which *The Eternal Wave* begins. This new artwork, visible through visitors' smartphones, represents the second chapter in Cao Fei's recent exploration of virtual possibilities.

A richly illustrated catalogue by TASCHEN was published to accompany *The London Mastaba* and its accompanying exhibition in 2018. It is available from the Serpentine shop:
<https://shop.serpentinegalleries.org/collections/publication/products/christo-catalogue>

#Christo

Notes to Editors

To view the *The London Mastaba AR (Hyde Park)* on The Serpentine Lake:

1. Download the Acute Art app on the App Store or Google Play (The devices supported are iPhone X or above, and Samsung Galaxy S8 or equivalent. The app requires a phone with a minimum of 4GB of memory and Apple iOS 11 or Android 8.0 Oreo (API 24) operating system).
2. Walk to the viewing area, which is directly across from the Serpentine Lido, on the bankside walkway on the north side of the lake.
3. Once you're in the viewing area and with the Acute Art app open, select 'start experience'.
4. Click on the 'Artwork Nearby' pop up, which will indicate the direction of the artwork. The work will appear after approximately 20-40 seconds depending on the GPS network.
5. Share photos or videos from the app using #ChristoAR

To view the *The London Mastaba AR* at home:

1. Download the Acute Art app on the App Store or Google Play



(The devices supported are iPhone X or above, and Samsung Galaxy S8 or equivalent. The app requires a phone with a minimum of 4GB of memory and Apple iOS 11 or Android 8.0 Oreo (API 24) operating system).

2. Select Christo & Jeanne-Claude and the *The London Mastaba AR*.
3. Point your smartphone screen towards the floor (you will see it through the camera in your phone).
4. Tap the screen to place the AR work.
5. Share photos or videos from the app using #ChristoAR

Christo and Jeanne-Claude

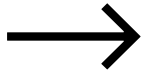
Christo (born 1935 in Gabrovo, Bulgaria, died 2020, New York City, USA) and his wife Jeanne-Claude (born 1935 in Casablanca, Morocco, died 2009, New York City, USA) are renowned for their large-scale environmental projects and temporary sculptures at sites around the world. Their first artistic collaboration was in 1961, where they created *Stacked Oil Barrels and Dockside Packages* at Cologne Harbour; an installation that remained for two weeks. Outdoor temporary projects include: *The Floating Piers, Lake Iseo, Italy, 2014-16*; *The Gates, Central Park, New York City, USA, 1979-2005*; *Wrapped Reichstag, Berlin, Germany, 1971-95*, *The Pont Neuf Wrapped, Paris, France, 1975-85*; *Running Fence, Sonoma and Marin Counties, California, 1972-76*; and *Wrapped Coast, Sydney, Australia, 1968-69*. Christo and Jeanne-Claude have completed several indoor installations, including: *Big Air Package, 2010-13* and *The Wall - 13,000 Oil Barrels, 1998-99*, *Gasometer Oberhausen, Germany*, and *Wrapped Floors and Stairway and Covered Windows, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin, Italy (1998-99)* and *Museum Würth, Künzelsau, Germany (1994-95)*. The projects of Christo and Jeanne-Claude have been the subject of international exhibitions and displays including: Centre Pompidou, Paris (2020); Serpentine Galleries, London (2018); ING, Brussels, Belgium (2017-18); Fondation Maeght, Saint Paul de Vence, France (2016) and Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego La Jolla, California, USA (2014). Christo participated in the Serpentine Miracle Marathon in 2016.

More information available at christojeanneclaude.net

About the Serpentine

Championing new ideas in contemporary art since 1970, the Serpentine has presented pioneering exhibitions for half a century from a wide range of emerging practitioners to the most internationally recognised artists of our time.

Across two sites in London's Kensington Gardens, the Serpentine Galleries present a year-round, free programme of exhibitions, education, architecture, live events and technological innovation, in the park and beyond.



Download the [Bloomberg Connects](#) app to hear from artists, curators and special guests talking in-depth about Serpentine programmes.

Acute Art

Acute Art collaborates with the world's most compelling artists – including Marina Abramović, Olafur Eliasson, Cao Fei, Antony Gormley, Jeff Koons, KAWS, Bjarne Melgaard, Koo Jeong A, Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg – providing access to ever-evolving new technologies that allow them to translate their creative vision into new digital mediums – including virtual, augmented and mixed realities.

The new Acute Art app gives people the opportunity to discover, experience and collect art in a way that's never been done before. You can view augmented reality works through your phone's camera, and share your photos and videos through the app. Download [here](#).

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