

21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa  
5th Anniversary Exhibition

## Olafur Eliasson *Your chance encounter*



Olafur Eliasson *Slow-motion shadow in colour*, 2009  
HMI lamps, colour-effect filter glass (yellow, orange, red, magenta, blue, green), steel  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Koyanagi, Tokyo  
Photo: Studio Olafur Eliasson © 2009 Olafur Eliasson

Exhibition Title	<i>Your chance encounter</i>
Period	November 21 (Sat), 2009 to March 22 (Mon), 2010 10:00 - 18:00 (until 20:00 on Fridays and Saturdays) / January 2 - 3, 10:00 - 17:00 Note: Tickets available until 30 minutes before closing  Closed: Mondays (except November 23, January 11, and March 22) Also closed November 24 (Tue), December 29 (Tue) to January 1 (Fri), January 12 (Tue)
Venue	Galleries 6 to 12 & 14, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa
Admission	General: ¥1,000 (¥800*); College students: ¥800 (¥600*); Elem/JH/HS: ¥400 (¥300*); 65 and older: ¥800 (*Advance and group ticket fees)
Organized by	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa [Kanazawa Art Promotion and Development Foundation]
Supported by	Embassy of Federal Republic of Germany
Sponsored by	THE HOKKOKU BANK, LTD., KAZUYO SEJIMA+RYUE NISHIZAWA / SANAA, NIPPON TELEGRAPH AND TELEPHONE WEST CORPORATION
Cooperated by	ZUMTOBEL, Champagne Ruinart, Kanazawa Institute of Technology Research Laboratory for Affective Design, The Rock Corporation
	Authorized project by Association for Corporate Support of the Arts, Japan
For your enquiry	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa Tel: +81-(0)76-220-2800

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## About the Exhibition

In marking its fifth anniversary, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa will hold a large-scale solo exhibition structured around new works by the Danish/ Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson titled *Your chance encounter*.

Olafur Eliasson is known for his exploration of the human perception. His works, often using light, shadow, color, fog, wind, waves, and other phenomena of nature as materials, make apparent to the viewer the mechanisms employed in their presentation. Contrary to what might be expected, this enables people to enjoy more purely the act of seeing, as they discover and experience their surroundings. For example, in *Your atmospheric colour atlas, 2009*, a large gallery is filled with artificially produced fog, imbued with color emanating from fluorescent tubes of red, green and blue. By moving about in the locations where the colors blend, viewers endlessly create their own color spectrum.

Based on a profound understanding of SANAA's design for this museum, both architecturally and functionally, Eliasson boldly engages the factors that constitute 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa. In *Eye activity line, 2009*, 317 canvases of different colors, each about the size of an A5 sheet of paper, are installed on the wall of a long corridor. As our eye follows along the work, which is like a full palette of colors, we are freshly awakened to the character of the space. In such ways, Eliasson explores the Museum's unique features, displaying works not only in galleries but also in corridors and rest areas, so as to give play to the Museum's meandering layout and horizontal character, and endeavoring through his artworks to bring interior and exterior into close connection. As they move through the museum building, visitors may be surprised at how Eliasson has transformed the familiar art museum spaces.

Eliasson is interested in how 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa—an art museum designed with the functions of a new generation of museums—fulfills a social role as a museum opened to the city. Through this exhibition, he is re-proposing the art museum, not simply as a facility for viewing art in a context removed from society but as a public space having the potential to deeply engage in the society and the urban environment.

## Exhibition Features

### 1. An internationally acclaimed artist will transform 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa with vibrant new artworks!

An artist frequently invited to major exhibitions, Olafur Eliasson has won international critical acclaim. *La situazione antispettiva*, first shown in the Danish pavilion at the 2003 Venice Biennale is now in the collection of 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa. (The work will not be displayed this time). A survey exhibition organised by San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 2007, travelled to several venues in North America and continues to Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney in 2009-2010. He has additionally engaged in a number of projects in public space. This exhibition will feature his most recent works.

### 2. Through their experiences, viewers will confront their own perceptions

Many of Eliasson's works concern perceptual experience and move us to think about our experience of our surroundings—perceptions we usually take to be self-evident. Also presented are works that unfold in the entire exhibition space. Such works draw us, the viewer, into their space and make us an integral part of the work.

### 3. Eliasson's collaboration with the architecture of SANAA

Eliasson has created numerous site-specific works. In this exhibition, he will interpret, architecturally and functionally, the Museum's building designed by KAZUYO SEJIMA + RYUE NISHIZAWA / SANAA. Rather than simply displaying works, he will engage with the Museum's special architecture, in an exhibition that includes the museum building within its scope.

## Related Events

### Pre-opening Event

#### Special Talk: *Your chance encounter*

#### Olafur Eliasson with Eve Blau and Kazuyo Sejima

**Date/time:** November 19 (Thu), 2009; 6:30 – 8:30 pm (Doors open 6:15 pm)

**Venue:** Theater 21 / 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

**Admission:** No charge

**Capacity:** 130 (Priority given to prior applicants and first arrivals)

**Prior application:** Taken by e-mail from November 3

Note: For details, please see our homepage ([www.kanazawa21.jp](http://www.kanazawa21.jp)).

\*Closing the books as of November 6

**Guest appearance:** Olafur Eliasson

Eve Blau (Adjunct Professor in the Department of Architecture at the Harvard University  
Graduate School of Design)

Kazuyo Sejima (Architect)

Note: A consecutive translator will be engaged.

**Artist's Statement*****Your chance encounter***

For the exhibition, I am developing a sequence of spatial experiments in order to challenge the visitors' sense of movement and orientation within and around the museum building. Through these means, I hope to make people (re)consider the potential of the museum as a public space for critical engagement with art and reality. To me, it is important to regard museums as a part of reality. They do not offer discrete neutral spaces for the contemplation of art, removed from everyday issues and concerns, from politics and social interaction. Rather, museums offer – or should ideally offer – the possibility of engaging intensely with society and the urban surroundings. The 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art is itself a model of what a city could look like: its individual exhibition spaces have different spatial qualities that are linked by the visitors, making their way through the network of walkways. Whatever happens within the Museum thus has a relation to the city of Kanazawa, its inhabitants and visitors, its built environment as well as its more inexplicit and intangible structures.

It is my ambition to exhibit both the artworks and the structure of the museum, not least the patterns of art communication facilitated by the institution; the context of the artworks is as central to the exhibition as the works themselves. Thus, not only will the Museum galleries be used, but also its corridors and courtyards. These will be integrated into what I consider a comprehensive artistic project that will explore movement, perception, colour and light. Organised in spatio-temporal sequences, the artworks – often of an ephemeral nature – will seek to expand the core concepts of the SANAA museum architecture. They will suggest that movement is crucial to the visitors' experience of art; that time should be considered integral to the artworks and the building alike.

I have tried to give different sections of the museum a more palpable spatial volume by offering visitors tools with which to measure space. In this way, through eclipsing the traditional points of spatial reference, I hope to make explicit the ways in which people orient themselves. A number of new artworks are being developed specifically for the exhibition, including light/colour projections and refractions. A colour-spectrum painting based on my recent pigment research will also be installed, spanning the entire museum from East to West. Other tests revolve around water, daylight, fog and air circulation.

By working with different filters to people's experience – colour, light, and various natural phenomena – I hope to set into motion reflections on the museum, the park, and its urban surroundings as constructions themselves, each developed to fulfil one or more ideals. I find this critical re-examination a valuable act. It suggests that the power structures and intentionalities embodied and re-enacted in cities, buildings, and museums can be negotiated and thereby, to some extent, changed. Much has been achieved if art can compel people to do this. And if such action is accompanied by a feeling of responsibility for the situations in which one participates, a new level of criticality has been reached. This can, with little difficulty, be transferred to everyday life: whatever ideas and feelings art arouses, these are intimately connected to life in general. The museum is nothing without its users – the show is ultimately about them.

Olafur Eliasson

**Artist Profile****Olafur ELIASSON**

Born in Copenhagen in 1967. Lives in Copenhagen and Berlin.

Studied at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen from 1989 to 1995.

Eliasson has held numerous solo exhibitions at major art museums in Europe and North America. His highly successful *The weather project* installed in Tate Modern's Turbine Hall in 2003 is widely known even in Japan. The work is recognized for its capability to undermine the viewer's routine visual perceptions and awareness through the use of light, color, haze, and other natural and artificial elements. *Take your time*, a survey exhibition organised by San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 2007, has travelled to several venues including The Museum of Modern Art and P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, in 2008 and continues to Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, from 2009-2010.

Among his engagements in public space, Eliasson created four artificial waterfalls on the New York City waterfront in 2008, commissioned by Public Art Fund, advocating a dynamic relationship between the city and its surroundings.

Eliasson is also passionately interested in phenomena and physical forms appearing in nature. He has created several multi-faceted sculptures internally covered with mirrors, that viewers enter to enjoy refracted light and kaleidoscopic images. One such work, *La situazione antispettiva* (2003) has been added to the collection of 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa.

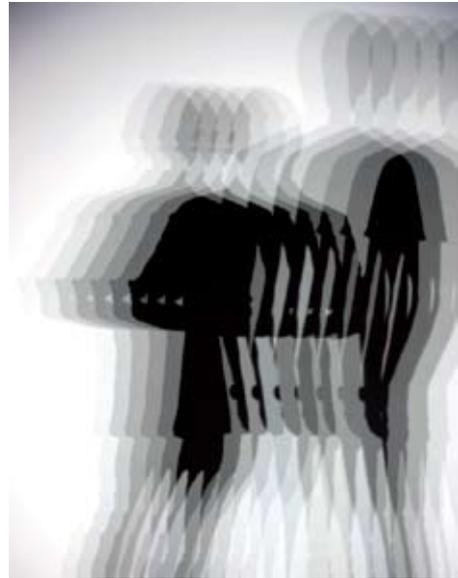
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Olafur Eliasson *Your atmospheric colour atlas*, 2009  
Fluorescent lights, aluminium, steel, haze machine  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Koyanagi, Tokyo  
Photo: Studio Olafur Eliasson  
© 2009 Olafur Eliasson

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Olafur Eliasson *Slow-motion shadow*, 2009  
HMI lamps, steel  
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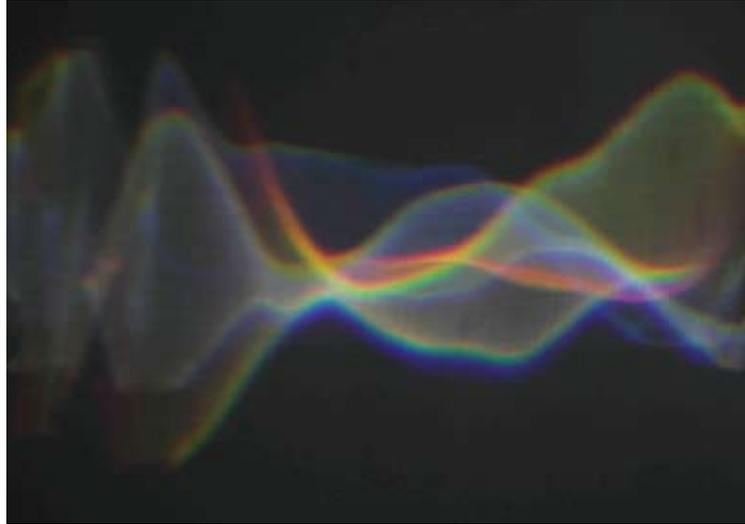


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Olafur Eliasson *Your watercolour horizon*, detail, 2009  
Stainless steel, steel, wood, rubber, water, glass prism, HMI lamp  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Koyanagi, Tokyo  
Photo: Studio Olafur Eliasson  
© 2009 Olafur Eliasson

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Olafur Eliasson *Room for one colour*, 1997  
Monofrequency lights  
Dimensions variable, site specific  
Courtesy of the artist; neugerriemschneider, Berlin; and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York  
Photo: Jen Ziehe  
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