



CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES

PRESS RELEASE

2016, January 28th

OLAFUR ELIASSON AT THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES IN 2016

FROM JUNE TO NOVEMBER 2016

OLAFUR ELIASSON IS THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES' GUEST ARTIST FOR THE SUMMER OF 2016.

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THE WORK OF INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED VISUAL ARTIST OLAFUR ELIASSON (IS/DK, 1967)

investigates perception, movement, embodied experience, and feelings of self. He is best known for striking installations such as the hugely popular *The weather project* (2003) in the Turbine Hall of Tate Modern, London, which was seen by more than two million people, and *The New York City Waterfalls* (2008), four large-scale artificial waterfalls which were installed on the shorelines of Manhattan and Brooklyn.

SINCE 2008 the Palace of Versailles has put on a number of exhibitions dedicated to French or foreign artists, each one lasting a few months. Jeff Koons in 2008, Xavier Veilhan in 2009, Takashi Murakami in 2010, Bernar Venet in 2011, Joana Vasconcelos in 2012, Giuseppe Penone in 2013, Lee Ufan in 2014 and Anish Kapoor in 2015: these artists have all created a special dialogue between their works and the Palace and Gardens of Versailles. Since 2013 Alfred Pacquement is the curator of these exhibitions.

"With Olafur Eliasson, stars collide, the horizon slips away, and our perception blurs. The man who plays with light will make the contours of the Sun-King's palace dance" says Catherine Pegard, President of the Château de Versailles.

"I am thrilled to be working with an iconic site like Versailles. As the palace and its gardens are so rich in history and meaning, in politics, dreams, and visions, it is an exciting challenge to create an artistic intervention that shifts visitors' feeling of the place and offers a contemporary perspective on its strong tradition. I consider art to be a co-producer of reality, of our sense of now, society, and global togetherness. It is truly inspiring to have the opportunity to co-produce through art today's perception of Versailles" explains Olafur Eliasson.

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BIOGRAPHY

OVER THE YEARS, ELIASSON HAS HAD SIGNIFICANT EXHIBITIONS IN FRANCE, from *Chaque matin je me sens différent, chaque soir je me sens le même* (2002), at the Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris, to *Contact* (2014), the first solo exhibition at the newly built Fondation Louis Vuitton, where Eliasson also created the permanent installation *Inside the horizon* (2014). On the occasion of the COP21 United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Paris in December 2015, Eliasson made climate change tangible by leaving twelve massive blocks of Greenlandic glacial ice to melt in the Place du Panthéon for the installation *Ice Watch*.

IN 2012, Eliasson and engineer Frederik Ottesen founded *Little Sun*. This social business and global project provides clean, affordable light to communities without access to electricity; encourages sustainable development through sales of the *Little Sun* solar-powered lamp and mobile charger, designed by Eliasson and Ottesen; and raises global awareness of the need for equal access to energy and light. Earlier this month in Davos, Eliasson received the prestigious Crystal Award for ‘creating inclusive communities’ – a tribute to his work with *Little Sun*.

FROM 2009 TO 2014, Eliasson ran the Institut für Raumexperimente (Institute for Spatial Experiments), an innovative model for art education affiliated with the Berlin University of the Arts. A comprehensive archive of the institute’s activities can be found online.

IN 2014, together with architect Sebastian Behmann, Eliasson founded *Studio Other Spaces*, an international office for art and architecture. As an architectural counterpart to Studio Olafur Eliasson, *Studio Other Spaces* focuses on interdisciplinary and experimental building projects and works in public space.

ESTABLISHED IN 1995, ELIASSON’S STUDIO today employs ninety craftsmen, specialised technicians, architects, archivists, administrators, and cooks. They work with Eliasson to develop and produce artworks and exhibitions, as well as to archive and communicate his work, digitally and in print. In addition to realising artworks in-house, the studio contracts with structural engineers and other specialists and collaborates worldwide with cultural practitioners, policy makers, and scientists.
