

# PKMGALLERY

## Olafur Eliasson: 숨결의 지구 (*Breathing earth sphere*)

Opening November 15, 2024

(Docho Hydrangea Garden) San 2-1, Jinam-ri, Docho-myeon, Sinan-gun, Jeollanam-do, South Korea.

Icelandic-Danish artist Olafur Eliasson (b. 1967), known for his interests in perception, movement, and embodied experience, will unveil his latest work, 숨결의 지구 (*Breathing earth sphere*), 2024 on Docho Hydrangea Garden, San 2-1, Jinam-ri, Docho-myeon, Sinan-gun, Jeollanam-do, South Korea in November. The installation, part of a larger initiative by Shinan County that celebrates the region's natural beauty, centers around public art projects that draw attention to reimagining the immediate environment.

Shinan County is Korea's largest archipelago – consisting of 1,004 islands. In 2021, the Shinan Tidal Flats – home to more than 2,000 species of flora and fauna – were inscribed as a UNESCO World Natural Heritage site. To pay homage to the region's natural abundance, Shinan County created the *Shinan Art Island Project*, which will feature a museum or artwork on each island. 숨결의 지구 (*Breathing earth sphere*) will mark the first work of this cultural arts project.

Docho Island's distinctive topography – a landscape sculpted by ancient volcanic activity – forms the primary inspiration for the artwork. Arriving at the island, visitors are guided along a tree-lined path to an outlook of the surrounding island. A bench and a single Korean Hackberry tree (*Celtis koraiensis*) invite a moment for contemplation. From here, visitors can follow the path to reach the heart of 숨결의 지구 (*Breathing earth sphere*) via an entrance within the hillside.

The artwork takes shape as a large spherical subterranean space intricately lined with lava stone tiles that respond to the volcanic history of the region. Coloured in reds, greens, and cyan, the coloured tiles are arranged to produce the illusion of three-dimensional forms tumbling through space.

“There are no corners in *Breathing earth sphere*, no sense of horizon or limit. In fact, there are no walls, ceiling, or floor,” explains Eliasson. “Standing there, you may feel, simply, a sense of presence, here and now, within the sphere. Transitioning from red at the bottom to green at the top, the tiles relate intuitively to the earth, to the soil, and to the greenery of plant life. The polyhedrons conjured around you may bring associations to the crystals in the soil, the tiny nutrients that give life to us all.”

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In his work, Eliasson seamlessly integrates natural phenomena with human sensory experiences by using elemental forces such as light, water, and air. The *Shinan Art Island Project* resonates with his ongoing exploration of the natural world and particularly with this latest work, which synthesizes the inherent characteristics of Docho Island with his artistic vision.

“If we are to ensure the long-term health of the planet, we need to listen to the earth, to plants, trees, other living species, and to the soil that supports us. We can only really do so by upending the assumption of human domination over all other beings on earth and accepting our status as merely ‘one among many types of life,’” Eliasson said of the work.

Since 1997, Eliasson’s wide-ranging solo shows – featuring installations, paintings, sculptures, photography, and film – have appeared in major museums around the globe. He represented Denmark at the 50th Venice Biennale in 2003 and later that year installed *The weather project*, an enormous artificial sun shrouded by mist, in the Turbine Hall of Tate Modern, London. The work was visited by more than two million people. Eliasson is internationally renowned for his public installations that challenge the way we perceive and co-create our environments including *New York City Waterfalls* (2008), *Your rainbow panorama* (2011), and *Ice Watch* (2014-2018). In 2020, the global artwork *Earth Speakr* invited kids to speak up for the planet. In 2022, Eliasson opened ‘*Shadows travelling on the sea of the day*’, a cluster of large site-specific mirror pavilions that draw attention to the delicate habitat of the Qatari desert outside Doha.

Eliasson’s artworks can be found in permanent collections of globally renowned cultural institutions, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, Tate Modern in London, Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris, and Leeum Museum of Art in Seoul.

In 2019, Eliasson was named UNDP Goodwill Ambassador for climate action. In 2023, he received the Praemium Imperiale from the Japanese imperial family for outstanding contributions to the development, promotion, and progress of the arts.

Located in Berlin, Studio Olafur Eliasson comprises a large team of craftspeople, architects, archivists, researchers, administrators, cooks, art historians, and specialised technicians.