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olafur eliasson

*The lure of looking through a polarised window of  
opportunities, or seeing a surprise before it's  
reduced, split, and then further reduced*

may 3 - august 9, 2025

christinenstrasse 18 - 19, 10119 berlin

opening friday, may 2, 6 - 9 pm

Olafur Eliasson's ninth solo exhibition with neugerriemschneider, *The lure of looking through a polarised window of opportunities, or seeing a surprise before it's reduced, split, and then further reduced*, marks 30 years of collaboration with the gallery. The presentation builds on Eliasson's ongoing exploration of the relativity of perception and features a new body of works that engages with the physical properties of light.

Over the last three decades, Eliasson has examined our modes of seeing and encountering the world. The current exhibition extends this investigation with installations and complex geometric sculptures, using simple means to reveal the complexity of light and the contingency of what we see.

The artworks on display share a common set of materials and principles. They all explore polarization - optical filters that allow light waves of a specific orientation, or polarity, to pass through them while blocking all other waves. Polarization filters are commonly found in photography, where they are used to reduce lens flares. Eliasson reimagines this conventional function with his latest series of works, using these filters instead to create unexpected optical effects. A new installation resembles an experimental setup constructed from simple materials: spotlights, sheets of plastic and polarizing filters. Two spotlights shine through a polarized window into the gallery rooms. The light falls onto two rotating, equally polarized sculptural forms, producing vibrant colors that dissolve and reemerge. This phenomenon results from a quality of the material known as birefringence, in which the transparent surface splits light waves into rays that move at slightly different angles and speeds. The combination of the birefringent material and the two polarizing filters conjures multiple colors through an analytic process, whereby the white light is reduced, split, and then further reduced. As in much of the artist's practice, the act of viewing takes on a dynamic, embodied dimension. While some elements of the artwork are in motion, it is primarily the viewers' own movements and the changing angles of their bodies that activate the artwork. By moving around and assuming a different angle of view, they alter what they see. The works come to life through their engagement. Eliasson's concept of polarization suggests a shift from rigid oppositions to a more fluid and inclusive perspective. By revealing the inner workings of perception, the exhibition challenges and reorganizes preconceived notions, turning these mechanisms into ways to reconsider our environment.

Olafur Eliasson (b. 1967) is currently the subject of a series of institutional solo exhibitions staged throughout Southeast Asia. Inaugurated at Singapore Art Museum in 2024, before traveling to Auckland Art Gallery and later that year, it will continue to Taipei Fine Arts Museum (2025); Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Nusantara, Jakarta (2025 - 2026); and Museum of Contemporary Art and Design, Manila (2026). The artist has also been the subject of solo exhibitions at international museums and institutions including The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2024); Istanbul Modern, Istanbul (2024); National Museum of Qatar, Doha (2023); Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin (2022); Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi, Florence (2022); Fondation Beyeler, Riehen/Basel (2021); Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Tokyo (2020); Kunsthau Zürich, Zurich (2020); Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Bilbao (2020); Tate Modern, London (2019); Serralves, Porto (2019); Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2018); Red Brick Art Museum, Beijing (2018); Leeum Museum of Art, Seoul (2016); Château de Versailles, Versailles (2016); Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2015); Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin (2010); Museum of Modern Art and PS1 Contemporary Art Center, New York (2008); Tate Modern, London, (2003); Kunsthau Bregenz, Bregenz (2001); and Kunsthalle Basel, Basel (1997). Eliasson lives and works in Copenhagen and Berlin.

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