

Taipei Fine Arts Museum Press Release
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Press Kit

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Olafur Eliasson: Your curious journey

June 21, 2025 to September 21, 2025

Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Galleries 1A & 1B

This summer, Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM) presents *Olafur Eliasson: Your curious journey*, the first solo exhibition of Icelandic-Danish artist Olafur Eliasson in Taiwan. Running from June 21 to September 21, the exhibition takes place in TFAM’s main lobby and first-floor galleries, showcasing over three decades of art since the 1990s. This retrospective features 17 artworks across a spectrum of media including installation, painting, sculpture and photography. These works center on themes such as perception, collaborative participation, ecology, and non-human perspectives—an expression of the artist’s exploratory spirit that pushes the boundaries of artistic practice. For the first time, a comprehensive introduction of Eliasson’s creative energy is shared with viewers in the Asia-Pacific region.

Bringing together new and old works, the exhibition prioritizes the subjective participation of the viewer, shaping a perceptual journey that starts with “you.” The concept of a “journey” references the importance of the movement of both visitors and the artworks, and it also symbolizes the unfolding of thought and exploration. Eliasson uses natural phenomena, light, color and motion to heighten our sensitivity and awareness of our own surroundings.

A creative voyage across borders, *Olafur Eliasson: Your curious journey* is co-organized by art museums in five cities across the Asia-Pacific in collaboration with Studio Olafur Eliasson. This is Eliasson’s first major traveling exhibition in Southeast Asia and New Zealand. It debuted at the Singapore Art Museum

in 2024, followed by a widely acclaimed presentation at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. TFAM is hosting a significant stop of the tour in 2025, after which it will move to the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Nusantara, Indonesia, before concluding in the autumn of 2026 at the Museum of Contemporary Art and Design in Manila, Philippines. Spanning three years, the exhibition is promoting dialogue and connections in contemporary art among cultural audiences.

Exhibition Highlights

Eliasson’s art transforms natural elements like light, air and water into sensory experiences that stir reflection on our relationship with the environment. On entering Taipei Fine Arts Museum, visitors will encounter an electric fan suspended in the air above the main lobby, swaying unpredictably. This is *Ventilator (1997)*, which invites us to acknowledge the invisible fluctuations of air that defines the space. At the entrance, visitors are greeted by *Double spiral (2001)*, a rotating structure resembling DNA, which creates an optical illusion of rising and falling. Another work that challenges perception is *Object defined by activity (then) (2009)*, which uses the steady flickering of a strobe light to capture a water fountain in frozen moments of time, challenging our perceptions of motion and stillness.

Interaction and embodied experience are key to the exhibition. One of Eliasson’s early works, *Beauty (1993)*, presents a curtain of colourful light shimmering inside a darkened space. Eliasson is interested in the fact that no two viewers see the same rainbow as the phenomenon depends on the relationship between the light, the droplets, and the eyes of the observer. One of the most expansive areas in the exhibition, *Room for one colour (1997)*, bathes the gallery in monochromatic yellow light, stripping our visions of color variation and reshaping visual experience. By limiting the range of colors perceptible to the eyes, it leads us to rethink the nature of visual experience and enhances our sensitivity to the surrounding space. This work was featured in the Danish Pavilion at the 50th Venice Biennale. *Multiple shadow house (2010)* juxtaposes light and projection, transforming viewers into part of the artwork.

The themes of climate and changing nature run throughout the exhibition, prompting reflection on living in symbiosis with our environment. *Moss wall (1994)* brings Icelandic reindeer moss into the museum, allowing visitors to perceive the contrast between artificial and natural environments through sight and smell. *Wind writings (2023)* and *Sun Drawing (2023)*, both originally site-specific works created for the National Museum of Qatar, turn wind and sunlight into tools for painting, recording invisible climatic signals and bear witness to the passage of time. *The last seven days of glacial ice (2024)*, bronze sculptures depict stages of melting ice, while glass spheres represent the swelling water volume that results, reminding us of the accelerating crisis of climate change.

A special project carried out as part of this touring exhibition, *The seismographic testimony of distance (2024–2025)* reflects on the “journey” of the exhibition itself. Six drawing machines, packed inside transport crates, recorded the subtle bumps and vibrations that occur during the transportation of the works to the museum by ship. The result is an evolving series of works that documents the journey through a unique set of visual lines. The artwork sheds light on the global transportation networks that make exhibitions possible, prompting reflection on the interconnectedness of humans and our impact on the natural world. Alongside this, Eliasson and his studio have demonstrated their commitment to reducing the exhibition’s carbon footprint by using lightweight, locally-sourced materials and modular packing systems.

The cubic structural evolution project (2004)—presented exclusively in Singapore and Taipei—is an

open-ended, participatory work that invites visitors to collaborate in building an imaginary cityscape using white LEGO bricks. It has no predetermined ending and constantly evolves as each participant considers how the future may be shaped and rewritten.

About Olafur Eliasson

Born in 1967, Olafur Eliasson was raised in Iceland and Denmark. He studied at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts from 1989 to 1995. His father was an artist and a chef who worked on a fishing trawler, while his mother was a seamstress. Inspired by the natural environment from a young age, Eliasson also became interested in breakdancing during the mid-1980s, which shaped his thinking on space and perception.

After graduating in 1995, he moved to Berlin, where he founded Studio Olafur Eliasson, a large team of artists, artisans, architects, archivists, researchers, administrators, chefs, art historians, and technicians. Since 1997, Eliasson has had solo exhibitions in major museums and public spaces around the world. His artworks include installation, painting, sculpture, and photography. He currently lives and works in Berlin.

Eliasson is internationally renowned for works that challenge perception. His installations transform intangible phenomena, challenging how we perceive and understand the world around us. Eliasson's engagement with social and environmental issues resonates powerfully with contemporary audiences.

Notable projects include *The weather project* at Tate Modern in London and *The New York City Waterfalls* and *Ice Watch*, all of which address climate change and ecological fragility. In 2019, he was appointed UNDP Goodwill Ambassador for Climate Action, advocating for global environmental consciousness and communication through art.

Eliasson personally attended the exhibition's opening ceremony in Taipei, remarking: "The diverse artworks in *Your curious journey* reflect ideas and concerns that have accompanied me for the last three decades. They have all completed their own journeys to meet you. Each bears the marks of its creation and the challenges that led to the particular form in front of you. You also bring your own associations to the artwork when you encounter them, expanding their meaning for you and potentially for others. The artworks are never complete until you, the viewer, engage with them. Many are in fact entirely dependent on you to make them possible." TFAM deputy director Chiang Yu-Fang stated, "Taipei Fine Arts Museum is deeply honored to present 'Olafur Eliasson: Your curious journey.' This is a major milestone in collaboration among art museums of the Asia-Pacific region and a bridge connecting Taiwan to the world. It presents a vision that connects humankind with the present era. We hope this exhibition will enlighten everyone and make them more inquisitive about the environment, society, and themselves."

Five Public Programs and a Catalogue Release

In April this year, TFAM published Issue 214 of *Modern Art*, centered on the theme of "sustainability." Drawing inspiration from Eliasson's work, it focuses on artistic action in the face of the climate crisis, taking a deep dive into how art can integrate awareness of sustainability into projects and daily life. In June, coinciding with the opening of *Your curious journey*, TFAM is releasing the tour's only bilingual catalogue (in Chinese and English), *Olafur Eliasson: Your curious journey_Our Sea of Islands*. In it, the theme of a "journey" serves as a thread connecting islands, language, memory, migration and perception, establishing parallels between Taiwan and the artist's homeland of Iceland. Alongside comprehensive documentation of the exhibition, the catalogue features a dynamic conversation with the artist that explores the concepts behind the works. Two contributing essays by Taiwanese sociologist Chang Chun-mei and accomplished Taiwanese writer Hsu Chen-fu, respond to the exhibition's themes from an island perspective, while addressing the subjects of interspecies co-creation and migratory

convergence, respectively. These texts are translated by prominent translators Sylvia Li-chun Lin and Howard Goldblatt, who have rendered numerous acclaimed Mandarin literary works. The essays deepen the cultural and philosophical dimensions of the exhibition by ruminating on the profound entanglement of human and non-human in the context of global migration.

On the exhibition's opening day, June 21, a public talk between Olafur Eliasson and Taiwanese artist Mali Wu will take place from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m., moderated by independent curator Eva Lin. This dialogue will focus on the role of art in environmental awareness and sustainability activism. While elaborating upon the artist's vision, it will also invite reflection on art, society and the future.

During the exhibition period, from July through September, TFAM will also hold a series of programs both for families and for visitors of all ages, centered on the theme **“Curious Journey.”** **Programs include “Observing Natural Phenomena,” “Perceiving the Poetic,”** and **“Sustainability in Thought and Action.”** These invite viewers to embark on their own explorations, reconnecting with their senses and creativity through art. The programs offer many different forms of guidance, from printed self-learning map to online co-learning guide, and interdisciplinary workshops to family tours. These include digital and print co-learning map designed by three professional instructors from different disciplines, which have also been transformed into interactive workshops, led by artist **Shu-Yu Lin**, poet **Yu-Hsuan Wu**, and artist **Tsai Pou-Ching**, in collaboration with environmental expert Wang Shun-Te. This series of events will begin in July.

For detailed information, please visit TFAM's official website (www.tfam.museum) or follow TFAM on Facebook or Instagram.