

'OLAFUR ELIASSON: Y/OUR FUTURE IS NOW'**31 July 2019 – 14 June 2020****Serralves Contemporary Art Museum and Serralves Park,
Porto, Portugal****Supported by BPI and 'La Caixa' Foundation**

The Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art, in collaboration with BPI and 'La Caixa' Foundation, are pleased to present *Olafur Eliasson: Y/our future is now*, the first solo presentation by the Danish-Icelandic artist in Portugal.

Eliasson is renowned for creating artworks that traverse the boundaries of conventional exhibition spaces – like the museum and gallery – in order to assume an active presence in civic space. In this new exhibition, Eliasson invites visitors to navigate a series of recent large-scale installations and sculptures that invoke cycles, arcs, and curves to embody movement.

Placed throughout the Serralves Museum atrium, the central gallery of the Siza building, and the surrounding parkland, artworks are inspired by natural phenomena. Works include **Yellow forest**, 2017, a circular group of birch trees lit by a ring of yellow monofrequency lamps that challenges perceptions of the natural and the artificial; a large pavilion, **The curious vortex**, 2019, which swirls in the shape of a vortex; and three new sculptures, **Human time is movement (winter, spring, summer)**, 2019, a series of black-and-white stainless-steel spirals that were made especially for the exhibition.

"Vortices, cycles, spirals, and currents make up *Y/our future is now* – in the driftwood, sculptures, and pavilion outside; and in the floating rings and circular grove of trees with strangely yellow leaves inside. I hope that in your journey through the exhibition you will feel these movements at a visceral level, and sense how their individual trajectories cross and affect each other."

– **Olafur Eliasson**

Aiming to foster a dialogue between inside and outside, the selection of works play on the strong relationship the Serralves

PRESS RELEASE

foundation has developed between the built environment – in the form of a building conceived by the Pritzker Award winner Alvaro Siza – and the surrounding garden, which makes significant contributions to raising social awareness of the importance of protecting landscape heritage. The foundation brings together heritage spaces with contemporary cultural events, without undermining their integrity and permanence. In recognition of its unique position, Serralves Park has won important awards, like the Henry Ford Prize for the Preservation of the Environment (1997), and was recently identified in “The Gardener’s Garden” (Phaidon) as one of the world’s 250 most remarkable gardens.

Olafur Eliasson: Y/our future is now is organized by the Serralves Foundation – Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art in partnership with Studio Olafur Eliasson, neugerriemschneider, Berlin, and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York / Los Angeles, and is curated by Philippe Vergne, Marta Moreira de Almeida, and Filipa Loureiro.

A publication accompanies the exhibition. Documenting Eliasson’s works at Serralves and including an original contribution by renowned Portuguese novelist Gonçalo M. Tavares, the catalogue provides insight into the ideas behind the works.

Artworks Featured

Inside

In the museum’s central atrium, visitors are invited to walk along a path defined by **Yellow forest** (2017), a work originally conceived in collaboration with landscape architect Günther Vogt. It consists of an artificial forest formed by two groups of birch trees that occupy and redefine the architectural space. Within this circular forest, the light cast by a ring of yellow monofrequency lamps alters visitors’ chromatic perceptions, making them see all colours as shades of grey, yellow, or black. The interference in the viewer’s perception processes, through spatial, chromatic and luminous deconstruction, refers to the idea that the forest is a dreamlike place, a space of connection

between humans and the earth. At the same time, the work is a living organism, in a state of constant change.

Humankind's relationship with the surrounding environment is also addressed in ***The listening dimension (orbit 1, orbit 2, orbit 3)***, 2017, presented in the museum's central gallery. When entering this space, the visitor encounters wall-sized mirrors and large rings that appear to float in space. Seemingly defying the laws of physics and optics, these works produce a destabilizing and disturbing effect. The repetition of the elements via the reflective surfaces expands the room's size and absorbs each visitor, whose individual interaction with the work is fundamental, because his or her movements influence the way that the entire work is understood and experienced. The carefully fabricated effect casts doubt on our linear perception of space, the boundary between reality and representation, the relationship between knowledge and the experience of the visible. This installation opens a dialogue between the exhibition and the sculptures installed in the park.

Outside

In the roundabout on the Liquidâmbares, ***The curious vortex***, 2019, is linked to Eliasson's research on geometry and the construction of spaces and creation of environments, as well as his social and cultural reflections. The large, stainless-steel pavilion's shape is inspired by the swirling movements of a vortex, a natural phenomenon created by a spinning mass of wind and water. The artist relates this phenomenon to the work of museum institutions in contemporary society: just as the force of a whirlwind develops around a rotating centre, museums also have the ability to channel thoughts, ideas, feelings, affections. This work invites visitors to think about their relationship with the multiple potentialities of the museum and the world itself – the fact that everything is in perpetual motion, in permanent change. The placement of this work in an outdoor space, exposed to the elements and the cycle of day and night, highlights the relation between the observer, movement, change and temporality.

In the Yew Glade we find the works ***Human time is movement (winter, spring, summer)***, 2019. Mathematics is the basis for the

design of these three black-and-white stainless-steel spirals, which form lines that develop in space as if they were three-dimensional drawings. Variations on a Clelia curve, a line created by tracing a point as it moves along two axes of a sphere simultaneously, the strikingly different forms communicate the passage of time as embodied by movement.

Returning to a typology of works already presented in other contexts, Eliasson distributed driftwood logs, for the artwork **Arctic tree horizon**, 2019, in the park around the museum building as if the driftwood logs had washed ashore there. Iceland has few trees, and no forests, but plentiful logs can be found along the country's coasts, where they have been transported from Siberia by sea currents and drifting polar ice. Eliasson collects these logs, salted by the ocean and bleached by the sun, and redistributes them in foreign locations that lend them new meaning. For this exhibition, the artist coated the wood with black paint that suggests tar – a material formerly used for sealing ships against seawater – creating landmarks in the landscape that evoke thoughts about migration, circulation, and the larger ecological system we inhabit.

Notes to Editors

About Olafur Eliasson

Olafur Eliasson (b.1967) grew up in Iceland and Denmark. In 1995, he founded Studio Olafur Eliasson in Berlin, which today comprises more than one hundred team members, including craftsmen, architects, archivists, researchers, administrators, cooks, programmers, art historians, and specialized technicians. Since the mid-1990s, Eliasson has realised numerous major exhibitions and projects around the world. In 2003, *The weather project*, installed in the Turbine Hall of Tate Modern, was seen by more than two million people; his solo exhibition *In real life* opened in Tate Modern's Blavatnik building in July 2019. Eliasson's projects in public space include *Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2007*, designed with Kjetil Thorsen for London's Kensington Gardens; *The New York City Waterfalls*, 2008; and *Ice Watch*, for which Eliasson and geologist Minik Rosing transported massive blocks of glacial ice from Greenland to

Copenhagen (2014), Paris (2015), and London (2018) to raise awareness of climate change. In 2012, Eliasson founded the social business Little Sun, and in 2014, he and architect Sebastian Behmann founded Studio Other Spaces, an office for art and architecture.

Visit olafureliasson.net; studiootherspaces.net; or littlesun.com or follow @olafureliasson on Twitter; @studioolafureliasson and @soe_kitchen on Instagram; and @studioolafureliasson on Facebook.

About the Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art

The Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art is the foremost museum for contemporary art in Portugal, and one of Europe's most renowned institutions for contemporary art and culture. Uniquely sited on the grounds of the Serralves Foundation in Porto (which also comprises an 18-hectare Park and the Serralves Villa, a landmark art deco building), the Museum designed by Álvaro Siza opened in 1999. Through its exhibitions, collection, publications, performing arts and public programmes, Serralves fosters the understanding and appreciation of contemporary art and culture in Portugal and around the world.

About BPI and "La Caixa" Foundation

BPI and "La Caixa" Foundation: €20 million for 2019

"La Caixa" Foundation began its activities in Portugal in 2018, after BPI's entry into CaixaBank. Last year the Foundation allocated € 12 million to social, research, educational and cultural and scientific outreach projects. Its total investment in 2019 will be € 20 million. Support for people with advanced diseases and their families is one of the plan's strategic action lines, which also includes promoting employment for vulnerable groups, supporting research projects and disseminating culture and science.