

PRESS RELEASE: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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Olafur Eliasson, *Your rainbow panorama*, 2006-2011. ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Denmark. Courtesy of the artist.

Olafur Eliasson at MIT for 2014 Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts at MIT

“Holding hands with the sun”: public lecture March 13, 2014, 5pm

Award includes artist residency, public events, \$100,000 prize and gala

Cambridge, MA, February 12, 2014 – Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is pleased to announce that Olafur Eliasson, 2014 Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts at MIT recipient, will be at MIT on March 12-14, 2014 to accept the prestigious honor. A distinctive feature of the award -- beyond the \$100,000 prize, public programs and gala -- is a residency in which the artist interacts with MIT students, faculty and staff in a range of academic disciplines on campus.

Eliasson’s collaboration with MIT focuses upon his art and social business enterprise Little Sun, a portable, solar powered lamp, which he calls “a work of art that works in life.” Renowned for his large-scale public art projects and architectural works, Eliasson’s Little Sun is perhaps his

most ambitious work of art to date, as it forms the architecture of a vast global network, bringing together people, places and resources towards the common goal of more equitably distributing the world's power, both literally and figuratively.

The artist's activities on campus will center around discussions of sustainable development, community engagement, design, product engineering and social entrepreneurship in developing economies. He will engage with the MIT Energy Initiative (MITei), a multidisciplinary, Institute-wide research program working to find secure, economically viable, and environmentally sustainable energy sources, the MIT D-Lab (Development through Dialogue, Design and Dissemination), the Sloan School of Management; the MIT Center for Civic Media, and the MIT Museum, among others.

Uniting MIT's pioneering research with Eliasson's attention to the sensory and subjective, the residency reconceptualizes the field of sustainable development beyond the merely functional. The project asks: How can we create an affordable global energy system that factors in human emotion, creativity, and desire? Connecting an acclaimed artist such as Eliasson with MIT's rich culture of innovation presents a profound opportunity to radically expand the discussion around issues of sustainable energy as well as collectively imagine new and inventive solutions for the future.

Campus Residency Events and Programs

Public Programs

Olafur Eliasson Artist Lecture

"Holding hands with the Sun"

Thursday, March 13 | 5:00pm

MIT Lecture Hall 10-250

77 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA

Free and open to the public but reservations strongly recommended:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/olafur-eliasson-holding-hands-with-the-sun-tickets-4436740410>

Second Fridays at the MIT Museum

"The Art and Science of Solar Lights"

Olafur Eliasson with Harald Quintus-Bosz, Chief Technology Officer, Cooper Perkins

Friday, March 14 | 5:00pm

265 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge,

MA MIT Museum, Building N51

Free and open to the public

Little Sun installations around campus

The public and the MIT community can experience an installation of over one hundred Little Suns at the MIT Museum. Also on display in the lobby of the MIT List Visual Arts Center, Building E15 is a four-channel installation of videos about light, life, and Little Sun made by eighteen filmmakers from all over the world in response to an invitation from Eliasson.

Gala

A private gala will be held on the MIT campus in which Eliasson will be presented the Eugene

McDermott Award in the Arts at MIT. The gala's honorary hosts include diplomats from Denmark, Iceland and Germany, Agnes Gund of MoMA PS1, Anne Hawley, director of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and others.

About Little Sun

Little Sun is a portable solar-powered LED lamp, developed by artist Olafur Eliasson and engineer Frederik Ottesen, to provide clean, affordable, reliable light to the 1.6 billion people worldwide without access to electricity.

About Olafur Eliasson

Olafur Eliasson represented Denmark at the 50th Venice Biennale in 2003 and later that year installed *The weather project* at Tate Modern, London, which was seen by more than two million people. *Take your time: Olafur Eliasson*, a survey exhibition organized in 2007 by San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), traveled until 2010, stopping in New York at MoMA and the Dallas Museum of Art. *Seu corpo da obra* (Your body of work, 2011) engaged with three institutions around São Paulo and spread out into the vast metropolis. Projects in public space include *The New York City Waterfalls*, commissioned by Public Art Fund in 2008 with the support of Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Harpa, the Reykjavik Concert Hall and Conference Centre, for which Eliasson created a crystalline façade, was inaugurated in August 2011 and received the European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture Mies Van Der Rohe Award in 2013. Little Sun, developed with Frederik Ottesen, was shown at Tate Modern as part of the London 2012 Festival and at Common Ground, La Biennale di Venezia: 13th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice.

Eliasson's extraordinary work encompasses a broad range of creative practices spanning art, science, and psychology, supported by a prodigious studio. He has made strikingly original contributions to public art, architecture, and, most recently, social entrepreneurship. In Eliasson's enormously popular installation, *The weather project*, an immense artificial sun produced a *sui generis* immersive environment, transforming the cavernous halls of London's Tate Modern with ethereal light and fog. Through such philosophical investigations of light, color, atmosphere, and water, Eliasson probes the nature of space and human perception.

Established in 1995, his studio today numbers about seventy craftsmen, architects, geometers, and art historians. In April 2009, as a professor at the Berlin University of the Arts, Olafur Eliasson founded the *Institut für Raumexperimente* (Institute for Spatial Experiments), a five-year experiment in arts education located in his studio in Berlin.

About the Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts at MIT

Now celebrating its 40th anniversary, [The Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts at MIT](#) was established in 1974 by the Council for the Arts at MIT. The Award recognizes innovative talents in any arts discipline and offers its recipient a \$100,000 cash prize and a campus residency. The selection process reflects MIT's commitment to risk taking, problem solving, and the idea of connecting creative minds across disciplines. The Award honors Eugene McDermott, cofounder of Texas Instruments and long-time friend and benefactor of MIT.

About the Council for the Arts at MIT

The Council for the Arts at MIT is a volunteer group of alumni and friends who support the arts at

the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Since its founding in 1972 by MIT President Jerome B. Wiesner, the Council for the Arts at MIT has bestowed the award upon 33 individuals who work in performing, visual, and media arts, as well as authors, art historians, and patrons of the arts. Appointed by the President of MIT to three-year terms, Council members continuously fulfill their mission “to foster the arts at MIT and to act as a catalyst for the development of a broadly based, highly participatory program in the arts.”

Award Selection Committee Members for 2013-14

Rick Stone, Chair, Council for the Arts at MIT
Ellen Berman, Member, Council for the Arts at MIT
Bill Booziotis, Member, Council for the Arts at MIT
Susan Cohen, Director, Council for the Arts at MIT
Margaret Anne Cullum, Council for the Arts at MIT
Michael Cuthbert, Homer A. Burnell Career Development Professor of Music
Brit d’Arbeloff, member, Council for the Arts at MIT
Deborah Fitzgerald, Kenan Sahin Dean of the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences
Paul Ha, Director, MIT List Visual Arts Center
Philip S. Khoury, Associate Provost and Ford International Professor of History, MIT
Leila W. Kinney, Executive Director of Arts Initiatives, MIT
Flora Major, Council for the Arts at MIT
Nick Montfort, Associate Professor of Comparative Media Studies
Jane Pappalardo, Chair, Council for the Arts at MIT
Susan Poduska, Council for the Arts at MIT
Adèle Naudé Santos, Dean, MIT School of Architecture and Planning
Jay Scheib, Professor and Head of Theater Arts
Nader Tehrani, Professor and Head of Architecture
Peter Wender, Council for the Arts at MIT

Past Recipients

2011: Robert Lepage, performance and media artist
2010: Gustavo Dudamel, conductor
2009: Bill Viola, artist
2006: Suzan Lori Parks, playwright/novelist
2005: Santiago Calatrava, engineer/architect
2004: Libby Larsen, composer
2003: Vinie Burrows, activist/actress/writer
2001: Isaac Julien, filmmaker
2000: CORE Ensemble
1999: Diller + Scofidio, architects
1998: Junot Díaz, author
1997: Toni Dove, video artist
1996: Kenny Leon, theater director
1995: Jeff Wall, photographer
1994: Tan Dun, composer
1993: Thomas Hanrahan & Victoria Meyers, architects
1992: Richard Preston, author
1991: Rebecca Purdum, artist
1990: Agnes Denes, artist

1989: Ida Ely Rubin, art historian
1988: Yulla Lipchitz, photographer
1986: Richard Leacock, filmmaker
1985: Harold E. Edgerton, photographer
1984: I.M. Pei, architect
1983: Albert R. Gurney, Jr., playwright
1982: Roy Lamson, arts administrator
1981: Henry Moore, sculptor
1980: Luis A. Ferre, arts patron
1979: Jerome B. Wiesner, President of MIT, arts patron
1978: Catherine N. Stratton, Founder, Council for the Arts, arts patron
1977: James R. Killian, Jr., President Emeritus, MIT
1976: Paul Tishman, Founder, Council for the Arts, arts patron
1975: Klaus Liepmann, conductor, founder of the music program at MIT
1974: György Kepes, artist, founder of the Center for Advanced Visual Studies at MIT (CAVS)

For more information on the Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts at MIT, please visit <http://arts.mit.edu/mcdermott/>

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