

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**The Museum of Modern Art**For Immediate Release
August 2001**PROJECT PLAYS WITH VISITORS' VISUAL PERCEPTIONS****AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART****Visitors to the Museum and Construction in Sculpture Garden****Contribute to Constantly Changing Aesthetic Experience*****Projects 73: Olafur Eliasson—Seeing yourself sensing*****September 13, 2001—May 21, 2002**

In a new **Projects** exhibition opening September 13, 2001, Olafur Eliasson will transform The Museum of Modern Art's Garden Hall into a work of art designed to play on visitors' perceptions. *Seeing yourself sensing* (2001) is an installation in which light, space, the ongoing construction in the Museum's Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden, and visitors themselves become elements that contribute to a constantly changing aesthetic experience. The installation——on view until the Museum temporarily shifts its exhibition program to MoMA QNS in summer 2002——is organized by Roxana Marcoci, Janice H. Levin Fellow/Curatorial Assistant, Department of Painting and Sculpture, and Claudia Schmuckli, Curatorial Assistant, Department of the Chief Curator at Large, The Museum of Modern Art.

Much of Eliasson's work encourages exchange between the viewer, the artwork, and the context that surrounds them. Though the artist creates the environments, it is the viewer's presence that activates them, and his or her visual experience that completes the work. *Seeing yourself sensing* will consist of 50 panes of striped pellucid and mirrored glass fitted into the existing frames of the Garden Hall windows on the first and second floors of the Museum. The viewer's eye alternates between looking out through the transparent glass at the ongoing construction in the Sculpture Garden, and looking back at their reflections and the Museum's interior space fragmented and multiplied in the mirrored glass. The resulting environment unsettles the relationship between interior and exterior, architecture and surroundings, perceiver and perceived.

As the title of the installation suggests, a major component of *Seeing yourself sensing* is self-perception. Visitors observe themselves passing by the glass-covered facade on the first two floors and traveling up the escalators to the galleries. Their movements cause the

reflections and light to shift, altering the visual experience for themselves and other viewers. At the same time, viewers can observe their own reaction to the changing scene—they can see themselves sensing. The ongoing construction activity in the Sculpture Garden also becomes a participant in the spectacle. The constantly changing view of workers and equipment through the glass alters the appearance of the installation. In this way, Eliasson brings the outside indoors and highlights the evolving landscape, a recurring theme in his work.

Eliasson's previous works explore the connections between vision and truth, sensation and interpretation, and the natural and the simulated. Examples include indoor rainbows, artificial sunsets, illusory horizon lines, and ice fields for tropical countries. In *Your now is my surroundings* (2000), for example, Eliasson metaphorically turned the space of a New York gallery inside out by removing the glass panels from the skylight overhead while preserving the latticed metal frame and strategically placing mirrors around the gallery. The resulting fragmented, disorienting space seemed to exist both inside the gallery and outside in the city—visitors could see themselves standing inside the gallery from different angles, endlessly replicated, yet could feel the breeze and hear the sounds of the city.

In *Your natural denudation inverted* (1999), Eliasson created a continuous plume of steam that escaped from the ground of the outdoor sculpture courtyard at the Carnegie Museum

of Art. Though the work appeared to blend into the existing natural surroundings, its artifice was not camouflaged, creating an environment where the real and the artificial complemented each other. For MoMA's *New Photography 14* exhibition in 1998, Eliasson contributed *The ice series* (1997), photographs of the Icelandic landscape that recorded the ice, islands, caves, and other geographical formations characteristic of the terrain.

Eliasson was born in 1967 in Copenhagen, Denmark, and is of Icelandic descent. He was educated at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen (1989—95) and lives and works in Berlin.

Created in 1971 as a forum for emerging artists and new art, the **Projects** series has played a vital part in MoMA's contemporary art programs. Initiated by representatives from all of the Museum's curatorial departments, the series has presented the work of close to 200 artists to date. For the duration of the Museum's Building Project, **Projects** vacates its usual gallery on the first floor of the Museum and presents its exhibition in unconventional spaces, outside the galleries and even off-site. The **Projects** series is organized by Laurence Kardish, Senior Curator, Department of Film and Media.

The Projects series is sponsored by Peter Norton.

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