

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki to present solo exhibition and new commission by international contemporary artist Olafur Eliasson



Image credit: Olafur Eliasson, *Beauty*, 1993; Installation view: Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 2015; Photo: Anders Sune Berg; Courtesy of the artist; neugerriemschneider, Berlin; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York / Los Angeles. © 1993 Olafur Eliasson

Auckland Art Gallery is delighted to announce the upcoming exhibition *Your curious journey* by globally renowned artist Olafur Eliasson, marking the first solo showcase of the Icelandic-Danish artist in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Opening on Saturday 7 December 2024, this retrospective highlights over 30 years of Eliasson’s practice, featuring installations, sculptures, and photographs that explore themes of human perception, experimentation, and environmental awareness.

Eliasson describes the exhibition as a collection of diverse artworks that invite visitors to embark on their own journeys. “What fascinates me is how the different ways we observe natural phenomena can connect us, not just to each other, but also to the larger world around us. That’s something I try to work with in my art: experiences that welcome everyone.”

Tātaki Auckland Unlimited, Director of Auckland Art Gallery Kirsten Lacy, reflects on the significance of the exhibition: “Eliasson’s work invites visitors to engage with critical environmental themes in a way that is both personal and collective. Audiences are drawn to his ability to create rich experiences that challenge their perceptions and connections to the world around them. We hope visitors will leave with a renewed sense of connection to their surroundings and an appreciation for how art can provoke thought and dialogue about the important environmental issues we face in Auckland and New Zealand.”

Senior Curator Global Contemporary Art Natasha Conland adds: “Eliasson’s background as an Icelandic artist, gives him a unique relationship with the arctic circle, which mirrors New Zealand’s inverse relationship with Antarctica and the shifting ice field.”

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A highlight of the exhibition is the special commissioned piece *Under the weather* located in the Gallery's Te Ātea | North Atrium. This work includes a suspended 11-meter elliptical disc that flickers and changes as visitors move around the space. The Moiré pattern created by overlapping grids invites reflection on perception and movement, altering visitor's perceptions of the surrounding architecture.



Image credit: **Olafur Eliasson**, *Under the weather*, 2022; Installation view: 'Olafur Eliasson: Nel tuo tempo', Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi, Florence, 2022; Photo: Ela Bialkowska, OKNO Studio; Courtesy of the artist; neugerriemschneider, Berlin; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York / Los Angeles © 1993 Olafur Eliasson

Eliasson elaborates on the nature of his work: “The Moiré patterns central to *Under the weather*, 2022 – much like the shimmering rainbow in *Beauty*, 1993 – exist primarily within your eyes and brain, although both are based on observable phenomena in the world. These works are always independent and yet site-specific – or you might even say viewer-specific. They seek to make the invisible visible, whether it’s the relativity of our colour perception in *Yellow corridor*, 1997, or the magnetic field that wraps the globe in *Adrift compass*, 2019.”

The exhibition also highlights the logistical journey of Eliasson’s artworks, showcasing drawings derived from the crates used for transport, underscoring the environmental considerations in their creation. “The artworks have completed a journey to meet you. Each bears the marks of its creation and the challenges that led to the particular form in front of you,” Eliasson notes.

Olafur Eliasson: Your curious journey has been developed in collaboration with Studio Olafur Eliasson and leading art institutions across Asia. The exhibition was first presented at Singapore Art Museum (10 May–22 Sep 2024). Following its visit to Auckland, the exhibition will travel to Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan (21 June–21 Sep 2025); Museum MACAN, Jakarta, Indonesia (21 Nov 2025–5 April 2026); and Museum of Contemporary Art and Design, Manila, Philippines (28 June–October 2026).

Olafur Eliasson: Your curious journey is supported by the Auckland Art Gallery Foundation. The exhibition is presented in association with Te Ahurei Toi o Tāmaki Auckland Arts Festival 2025.

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foundationTE AHUREI TOI O TĀMAKI | AUCKLAND
ARTS FESTIVAL**Exhibition Details:**

Olafur Eliasson: Your curious journey
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
Saturday 7 December 2024 – Sunday 23 March 2025

Admission:

Adults \$24.50, Members FREE, Children 12 and under FREE, with concessions available.
Tickets on sale in November.

Previous works at the Gallery:

Eliasson's work has previously been featured at the Gallery, including the *Cubic Structural Evolution Project* (2014-15) and *Stardust Particle in Light from Tate: 1700s to Now* (2023), both of which received positive feedback.

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Notes to editor**About Olafur Eliasson**

The works of Icelandic-Danish artist Olafur Eliasson (b. 1967) explore the relevance of art in the world at large. Since 1997, his wide-ranging solo shows – featuring installations, paintings, sculptures, photography, and film – have appeared in major museums around the globe.

Eliasson is internationally-renowned for his exhibitions and public installations that challenge the way we perceive and co-create our environments. In 2003, he made 'The weather project', a glowing indoor sun shrouded in mist at Tate Modern's Turbine Hall in London. In 2008, Eliasson constructed four expansive artificial waterfalls along the Manhattan and Brooklyn shorelines for 'The New York City Waterfalls'. He has also explored art's potential to address climate change: for 'Ice Watch', he brought large blocks of free-floating glacial ice to the city centres of Copenhagen in 2014, Paris in 2015, and London in 2018. Passers-by could touch fragments of the Greenlandic glacial ice and witness its fragility as it disappeared before them. On the occasion of the 2020 German Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Eliasson created 'Earth Speakr' together with children around the world and support from the German Federal Foreign Office; the global artwork invites kids to speak up for the planet. In 2022, Eliasson opened 'Shadows travelling on the sea of the day', a cluster of large site-specific mirror pavilions that draw attention to the delicate habitat of the Qatari desert outside Doha.

In 2012, Eliasson started the social business Little Sun, and in 2014, he and Sebastian Behmann founded Studio Other Spaces, an office for art and architecture. In 2019, Eliasson was named UNDP Goodwill Ambassador for climate action. In 2023, he received the Praemium Imperiale from the Japanese imperial family for outstanding contributions to the development, promotion, and progress of the arts.

Located in Berlin, Studio Olafur Eliasson comprises a large team of craftspeople, architects, archivists, researchers, administrators, cooks, art historians, and specialised technicians.

About Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, part of Tātaki Auckland Unlimited, is the largest and most inspiring visual arts experience in New Zealand. Its collection and loan collections currently number over 18,000 artworks. They include major holdings of New Zealand historic, modern and contemporary art. Alongside outstanding works by Māori and Pacific artists, they represent significant international painting, sculpture and print collections.

aucklandartgallery.com

About Tātaki Auckland Unlimited

Tātaki Auckland Unlimited is Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland's cultural and economic agency committed to making our region a desirable place to live, work, visit, invest and do business.

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki is one of the substantive cultural institutions that Tātaki Auckland Unlimited owns, operates and maintains for the benefit of Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland.

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