

### **Public Art Fund Celebrates Final Days of Olafur Eliasson's *The New York City Waterfalls***



OCTOBER 14, 2008 – NEW YORK: The Public Art Fund commemorates the end of *The New York City Waterfalls*, the major work of public art by internationally acclaimed artist Olafur Eliasson, which was on view from June 26 through October 13, 2008. Commissioned by Public Art Fund and presented in collaboration with the City of New York, the exhibition is among the most ambitious works of public art created to date. It succeeded in turning the New York City waterfront into an artistic venue, and its reach went far beyond those who saw it in New York, with countless web pages, blogs and interactive sites created by the public who were captivated by the project.

Throughout the exhibition's 110 days, millions of people were drawn to the Riverfront in Manhattan and Brooklyn, as well as to Governors Island, and given an opportunity to consider artist Olafur Eliasson's vision for integrating nature into the urban environment. The project spoke to art enthusiasts who sought out the Waterfalls, as well as passersby who encountered them unexpectedly; viewers included pedestrians, subway riders, bicyclists, joggers, and drivers across the bridges and riverfront highways in Manhattan and Brooklyn. The partnership of Circle Line Downtown enabled the public to experience the Waterfalls by boat and from the river, which was part of the artist's vision from the outset. In presenting this exhibition, Public Art Fund has fulfilled its mission: to bring artworks outside the traditional context of museums and galleries, and provide a unique platform for an unparalleled public encounter with the art of our time. *The New York City Waterfalls* exponentially expanded art's more traditional audience, and created a viral global response via the internet. The project generated over 3,500 separate media items in some 20 countries; there are over 200 YouTube entries related to *The New York City Waterfalls*, as well as some 6,000 individual entries on the Flickr photo sharing website that document countless personal reactions to the Waterfalls and provided opportunities for people around the world to take part in the project.

"We couldn't be more thrilled," said Susan K. Freedman, President of Public Art Fund. "We endeavored to present the most ambitious project in our 31-year history and it has surpassed our expectations – in terms of artistic expression, public response and feat of engineering. Thanks to Olafur, *The New York City Waterfalls* will forever be remembered as one of the great cultural moments of New York City history."

"The momentum of this project has been inspiring, and I have been thrilled to see the Waterfalls become a part of New York City and elicit a variety of responses throughout the summer and fall," said artist Olafur Eliasson. "I hope they will continue to reverberate in people's minds even after they end, thus emphasizing that art in public spaces really matters."

### **The New York City Waterfalls: An Extended Life – Recycled Materials, Book and Curriculum**

Public Art Fund was able to transform the artistic vision of Olafur Eliasson into this monumental art project by working in collaboration with the City of New York, Tishman Construction Corporation and a team of almost 200 engineers, designers, project managers, consultants, permitting specialists, electricians, construction workers and others who worked on the project for over two years. Following its October 13 closing day, *The New York City Waterfalls* will live on in a number of ways.

Ninety percent (90%) of its construction materials will be re-used in other construction projects. This includes the scaffolding, which was the backbone of the project, as well as the pipes, pumps, steel, and other building materials. Also extending the life of the project will be a fully-illustrated publication documenting *The New York City Waterfalls* published by the Public Art Fund.

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Educators and students will be using curriculum materials developed on the occasion of *The New York City Waterfalls* to expand the ways in which public art can be integrated in various learning opportunities. Public Art Fund produced "Stop, Look and Think: A Guide for Making the Most of Public Art and New York City's Viewing Opportunities," which includes classroom curriculum and lesson plans for grades K-12, as well as an Activity Guide aimed at children ages 6-12 and accompanying adults. The guides teach about the topics of art, history, environmental responsibility, aquatic life, ecology and water conservation. Distributed to every New York City public school, these materials encourage teachers not only to use public art in their lessons but also to closely observe the history, architecture, and urban conditions of the city itself. Both resources are available for download at [www.nycwaterfalls.org](http://www.nycwaterfalls.org). Hard copies are available free of charge upon request by contacting Public Art Fund at [info@publicartfund.org](mailto:info@publicartfund.org).

### **About *The New York City Waterfalls***

Commissioned by Public Art Fund, and presented in collaboration with the City of New York from June 26 through October 13, 2008, *The New York City Waterfalls* consists of four monumental, man-made waterfalls temporarily installed at sites along the waterfront in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Governors Island: one on the Brooklyn anchorage of the Brooklyn Bridge, one between Piers 4 and 5 below the Brooklyn Heights Promenade, one in Lower Manhattan at Pier 35 north of the Manhattan Bridge, and one on the north shore of Governors Island. The 90- to 120-foot-tall Waterfalls were erected on the shoreline and were designed to protect water quality and aquatic life. They operated seven days a week and were lit after sunset.

### **Project Support**

***The New York City Waterfalls* by Olafur Eliasson is presented by Public Art Fund, in collaboration with the City of New York.** This project is presented in partnership with Tishman Construction Corporation, with Water Tours provided by Circle Line Downtown, and assistance from Consolidated Edison and Weil, Gotshal & Manges, LLP. **It is made possible in part by** the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, which is funded through Community Development Block Grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. **Lead supporters include** Bloomberg LP, Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro, Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, and The Rockefeller Foundation. **Major support has been provided by** The Wachovia Foundation, Carson Family Charitable Trust, Charina Endowment Fund, CIT, Forest City Ratner Companies, The Leonard and Evelyn Lauder Foundation, The Silverweed Foundation and Ann Tenenbaum and Thomas H. Lee. **Generous support has been provided by** Fiona and Stanley Druckenmiller, Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, Debra and Leon D. Black, Cindy and Tom Secunda, Anonymous, Danish Ministry of Culture, The Diller-von Furstenberg Family Foundation, Kathy and Richard S. Fuld, Jr., Danielle and David Ganek, Marc Haas Foundation, Mimi and Peter Haas, Hamleys, Jennifer and Matthew Harris, Jill and Peter Kraus, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, Peter Norton Family Foundation, Steven Rattner, David Rockefeller, Judy and Michael Steinhardt, Tiffany & Co., Tishman Speyer, and Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP, **with additional funds** from Vital Projects Fund, Inc., American Express, Donald A. Capoccia, Deloitte, James R. Dinan and Elizabeth R. Miller, Judy and Jamie Dimon, Lauren and Martin Geller, The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, Mary & Michael Jaharis, Robert W. Johnson IV Charitable Trust, Leonard Litwin, Nancy and Duncan MacMillan, Donald B. Marron Charitable Trust, Merrill Lynch & Co. Foundation, Inc., The New York Mets Foundation, Inc., Nancy and Morris W. Offit, Peter Peterson, Jack Resnick & Sons, Inc., The Marshall Rose Family Foundation, Aby Rosen/RFR Holding LLC, Stephen M. Ross/The Related Companies, Steven Roth, Structure Tone, David Teiger, Van Wagner Communications, LLC, The Walt Disney Company, Joan and Sanford Weill, Merryl and Charles Zegar Foundation, Ark Restaurants/Sequoia, ICAP North America, The ABNY Foundation, Brookfield Properties, Elise and Andrew Brownstein, The Durst Organization, EMC Corporation, Eugene M. Grant & Co., LLC, Extell Development Company, Gilder Foundation, Goldman Sachs, The William and Mary Greve Foundation, IBM, International Integrated Solutions, Nastasi & Associates Inc., Anna Marie and Robert F. Shapiro, Larry A. Silverstein/Silverstein Properties, Carmen and John Thain, The Jonathan M. Tisch Foundation, Laurie M. Tisch Illuminations Fund, The Steve Tisch Foundation, Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz, Barbara J. Fife, General Growth Properties, Inc, Daniel and Estrellita Brodsky Family Foundation, Melva Bucksbaum, Creative Link for the Arts, Constellation NewEnergy, Egg Electric, Fifth Floor Foundation, Nathalie and Charles de Gunzburg, Danny Meyer's Hudson Yards Catering, Ann and Gilbert Kinney, Holly and Jonathan Lipton, Ninah and Michael Lynne, Audrey and Danny Meyer, Edward John Noble Foundation, Nortel, Donna and Benjamin M. Rosen, Jonathan Sobel & Marcia Dunn, and David Wine and Michael MacElhenny. **Assistance has been provided by** Cisco/ePlus, Inc. SEAL Security LLC, A-Val Architectural Metal Corporation, BP Mechanical Corp., Cosmopolitan Decorating Co. Inc., Hugh J. Freund, Glenn Fuhrman, Furthermore: a program of the J.M. Kaplan Fund, Elizabeth S. and Steven B. Gruber, Iceland Naturally, George and Mariana Kaufman, Movado Group, NBC

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Universal, Patty Newburger and Brad Wechsler, Red Crane Foundation, Joanne and Paul Schnell, Charles Short, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, LLP, Melissa and Robert Soros, Billie Tsien and Tod Williams, Jeanette Sarkisian Wagner, Brennan Brothers Company, Inc., Donnelly Mechanical Corp., Abby Kinsley and Richard Davison, OHM Electrical Corp, Tri-State Dismantling Corp., Randy and Gerald Blitstein, Sara Fitzmaurice and Perry Rubenstein, Anonymous, Peter and Linda Ezersky, Harbour Lights, Marilyn and Ivan Karp, Allen Kolkowitz and Christopher Kusske, The American-Scandinavian Foundation, Joan Feeney and Bruce Phillips, Beatrice and Lloyd Frank, Hilary and Peter Hatch, Jenny Dixon and John Boone, Katherine and Richard Kahan and the Frances and Jack Levy Foundation.

## **About the Artist**

Olafur Eliasson was born in Copenhagen in 1967, and grew up in both Iceland and Denmark. He attended the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen and currently divides his time between his family home in Copenhagen and his studio in Berlin. Studio Olafur Eliasson is a laboratory for spatial research that employs a team of 30 architects, engineers, craftsmen, and assistants who work together to conceptualize, test, engineer, and construct installations, sculptures, large-scale projects and commissions. Recent works reflect Eliasson's increased interest in architecture and the built environment. Since the mid-1990s, he has presented his work in numerous exhibitions and outdoor venues. His work was recently the subject of a major mid-career retrospective at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, which was presented in an expanded exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art and PS 1 Contemporary Art Center in New York, and which will be on view at the Dallas Museum of Art (November 2008 - March 2009) and at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (May – September 2009).

## **About Public Art Fund**

Since 1977, Public Art Fund ([www.publicartfund.org](http://www.publicartfund.org)) has worked with over 500 emerging and established artists to produce innovative temporary exhibitions of contemporary art throughout New York City. By bringing artworks outside the traditional context of museums and galleries, Public Art Fund provides a unique platform for an unparalleled encounter with the art of our time. Current and recent critically acclaimed exhibitions and presentations include James Yamada's *Our Starry Night* at Doris C. Freedman Plaza at 60th Street and Fifth Avenue (through October 28); *Everyday Eden* at the Metrotech Center in Brooklyn (through October 2008); Xaviera Simmons' *Bronx As Studio* in various locations in the Bronx (June 2008), Chris Burden's *What My Dad Gave Me* at Rockefeller Center (2008); Rodney Graham's *The Rodney Graham Band live, featuring the amazing Rotary Psycho-Opticon* at the Abrons Arts Center (2008); Sarah Lucas's *Perceval* at Doris C. Freedman Plaza (2008); Dara Friedman's *Musical* at multiple midtown Manhattan locations (2007); *Alexander Calder in New York* at City Hall Park (2006-7); Sarah Morris's *Robert Towne* at Lever House (2006-7); Anish Kapoor's *Sky Mirror* at Rockefeller Center (2006); Sarah Sze's *Corner Plot* at Doris C. Freedman Plaza (2006); Nancy Rubins's *Big Pleasure Point* at Lincoln Center (2006); William Kentridge's *9 Drawings for Projection* at the Central Park and Prospect Park Bandshells (2005); and Alejandro Diaz's *A Can for All Seasons* on the Grand Concourse in the Bronx (2005).

Public Art Fund is a non-profit art organization supported by generous contributions from individuals, foundations, and corporations, and with funds from National Endowment for the Arts; New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency; and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

## **Current and Upcoming Programs:**

- Jedediah Caesar, Tony Feher, Rob Fischer, Paula Hayes, & Nina Katchadourian in *Everyday Eden*, MetroTech Center, Brooklyn, extended through October 17, 2008
- James Yamada, *Our Starry Night*, Doris C. Freedman Plaza, 60<sup>th</sup> Street & Fifth Avenue, through October 28, 2008
- Klara Hobza, *The New Millennium Paper Airplane Contest*, New York Hall of Science, Queens, November 1, 2008
- Ethan Breckenridge, Francis Cape, Martha Friedman, and Sarah Greenberger Rafferty in a group exhibition at the MetroTech Center, Brooklyn, opening November 7, 2008 through October 2009
- Public Art Fund Talks – Artists Tom Friedman (November 5) & Catherine Sullivan (November 19) at The New School

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