

Press Release

Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2007 designed by Olafur Eliasson and Kjetil Thorsen

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Design Studio Olafur Eliasson
Snøhetta 

Advisors ARUP
STANHOPE

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Structural Engineering Dr Switbert Greiner

Steel Construction 

Wood Construction **NÜSSLÍ**

The Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2007, designed by the internationally acclaimed artist Olafur Eliasson and the award-winning Norwegian architect Kjetil Thorsen, of the architectural practice Snøhetta.

The Serpentine Pavilion 2007 is a spectacular and dynamic building. The timber-clad structure resembles a spinning top and brings a dramatic vertical dimension to the more usual single-level pavilion. A wide spiralling ramp makes two complete turns, ascending from the Gallery's lawn to the seating area and continues upwards, culminating at the highest point in a view across Kensington Gardens and down into the chamber below.

The Pavilion acts as a 'laboratory' every Friday night with artists, architects, academics and scientists leading a series of public experiments. The programme, conceived by Eliasson and Thorsen with the Serpentine, began on **31 August** and will culminate in two extraordinary **24-hour Serpentine Gallery Experiment Marathons**, first in the Pavilion in London during Frieze Art Fair (**13 -14 October**), then in Reykjavik, Iceland in Spring 2008 in association with the Reykjavik Arts Festival and Reykjavik Art Museum.

Danish-Icelandic artist **Olafur Eliasson** is based in Berlin where he established Studio Olafur Eliasson, a laboratory for spatial research. His work explores the relationship between individuals and their surroundings, as experienced in his awe-inspiring large-scale installation *The weather project*, 2003, at Tate Modern. Publisher of a new magazine that melds artistic and architectural experimentation, Eliasson is currently involved in numerous architectural projects such as the Icelandic National Concert and Conference Centre in Reykjavik (design of the building envelope).

He is collaborating with the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C., on a project that reconsiders the Museum's communicative potential, and he recently won the competition for a large rooftop extension at ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Denmark.

Kjetil Thorsen is co-founder of Snøhetta, one of Scandinavia's leading architectural practices, with offices in Oslo and New York. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Egypt, 1995 - 2001, is the commission that brought Snøhetta to international acclaim. Thorsen is responsible for the design of award-winning public buildings globally, and has collaborated with Eliasson several times, including the National Opera House, Oslo, currently under construction. He is a founder of Galleri Rom, Oslo, which focuses on the intersection of architecture and art, and is a member of the Norwegian Architectural Association (NAL) and the American Institute of Architects (AIA). He is also Professor at the Institute for Experimental Studies in Architecture at the University of Innsbruck, Austria.

The Serpentine Gallery Pavilion commission, now entering its eighth year, is an ongoing programme of temporary structures by internationally acclaimed architects and individuals. It is unique worldwide and presents the work of an international architect or design team who, at the time of the Serpentine Gallery's invitation, has not completed a building in the UK. The Pavilion architects to date are Rem Koolhaas and Cecil Balmond, with Arup, 2006; Álvaro Siza and Eduardo Souto de Moura with Cecil Balmond, Arup, 2005; MVRDV with Arup, 2004- (un-realised); Oscar Niemeyer, 2003; Toyo Ito with Arup, 2002; Daniel Libeskind with Arup, 2001; and Zaha Hadid, 2000.

As part of the expansion of the Serpentine Gallery's programme, the architecture strand this year also included *Lilas*, an installation commissioned from Zaha Hadid Architects and designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Zaha Hadid, and Patrik Schumacher, on the occasion of the Gallery's world-renowned fundraiser The Summer Party, which took place on 11 July.

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For more press information please contact:

Rose Dempsey/Tom Coupe 020 7298 1520/8

rosed@serpentinegallery.org or tomc@serpentinegallery.org

Erica Bolton, Bolton and Quinn 020 7221 5000 erica@boltonquinn.com

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