

# Serpentine Gallery

Press Release

## Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2009 designed by Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa of SANAA

12 July – 18 October 2009

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The Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2009 is designed by Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa of leading Japanese architecture practice SANAA. The Pavilion, which is sponsored by NetJets Europe, opens on 12 July on the Serpentine Gallery's lawn where it will remain until 18 October.

Describing their structure the architects said: 'The Pavilion is floating aluminium, drifting freely between the trees like smoke. The reflective canopy undulates across the site, expanding the park and sky. Its appearance changes according to the weather, allowing it to melt into the surroundings. It works as a field of activity with no walls, allowing uninterrupted view across the park and encouraging access from all sides. It is a sheltered extension of the park where people can read, relax and enjoy lovely summer days.'

Sejima and Nishizawa have created a stunning Pavilion that resembles a reflective cloud or a floating pool of water, sitting atop a series of delicate columns. The metal roof structure varies in height, wrapping itself around the trees in the park, reaching up towards the sky and sweeping down almost to the ground in various places. Open and ephemeral in structure, its reflective materials make it sit seamlessly within the natural environment, reflecting both the park and sky around it.

The Pavilion will be the architects' first built structure in the UK and the ninth commission in the Gallery's annual series of Pavilions, the world's first and most ambitious architectural programme of its kind that annually gives preeminent architects their debut in this country and brings the best of contemporary architecture to London for everyone to enjoy.

*Continued overleaf*

There is no budget for the Serpentine Gallery Pavilion commission. It is paid for by sponsorship, sponsorship help-in-kind, and the sale of the finished structure through Knight Frank, which does not cover more than 40% of its cost. The Serpentine Gallery collaborates with a range of companies and individuals whose support makes it possible to realise the Pavilion.

Julia Peyton-Jones, Director, and Hans Ulrich Obrist, Co-Director, Serpentine Gallery, said: 'Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa's design embraces the parkland around the Serpentine Gallery as never before with an extraordinarily innovative design, which reveals the subtle play on light and perception so characteristic of their work. This Pavilion will be a wonderful addition to London's landscape this summer. It is our dream come true.'

Separate areas within the Pavilion contain spaces for a café and an auditorium, where the *Park Night* events programme will be presented, including performances, talks, film screenings and the *Serpentine Gallery Poetry Marathon*.

Sejima and Nishizawa's pioneering buildings have created an architecture that marries aesthetic simplicity with technical complexity, defining a new architectural language which plays with light and perception. Sought after by high-profile clients the world over, from the Louvre Museum in Paris, France, to the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, USA, SANAA's projects are open stages which make visible the connection between the built structure, the users and the natural environment. Sejima, who in her early days studied at the Japan Women's University and worked with architect Toyo Ito, designer of the Serpentine Gallery Pavilion in 2002, began collaborating with Nishizawa in 1995. The architects are working with the structural design and engineering firm SAPS, led by Mutsuro Sasaki, and with the Arup team, led by David Glover and Ed Clark with Cecil Balmond, to realise this project.

NetJets Europe is the title sponsor for the Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2009. Mark Booth, Executive Chairman, said: 'Sejima and Nishizawa's design for the Serpentine Pavilion 2009 is truly breathtaking. The incredible light and openness of the concept will make for a stunning structure which will raise the bar even higher for the much-anticipated Pavilion. Design is an area that we're passionate about at NetJets: we're firmly focussed on how we can bring world-class design to our customers' flight experience; just as the Serpentine Pavilion brings world class architecture to London. We're delighted to be a partner in this project and are looking forward to seeing the finished Pavilion.'

Arup Partner Ed Clark commented: 'Arup's eighth year of commitment to the Serpentine Pavilion reflects our belief in the project and the positive experience our teams get from collaborating with some of the most exciting architects of our time. This year's Pavilion does not disappoint and reflects the exciting dynamism that SANAA bring to all of their projects.'

Peter Rogers, Director of Stanhope plc, will donate his expertise to all aspects of the Pavilion. He said: 'The Serpentine Pavilion is a unique project whose innovative and challenging designs transcend normal building projects as well as fusing art and architecture in an exciting built form.'

## Notes to Editors:

### **Serpentine Gallery Pavilion Commission**

The Serpentine Gallery Pavilion commission was conceived by Serpentine Gallery Director, Julia Peyton-Jones, in 2000. It is an ongoing programme of temporary structures by internationally acclaimed architects and designers. 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 England. The Pavilion architects to date are: Frank Gehry, 2008; Olafur Eliasson and Kjetil Thorsen, 2007; Rem Koolhaas and Cecil Balmond, with Arup, 2006; Álvaro Siza and Eduardo Souto de Moura with Cecil Balmond, Arup, 2005; MVRDV with Arup, 2004 (unrealised); Oscar Niemeyer, 2003; Toyo Ito with Arup, 2002; Daniel Libeskind with Arup, 2001; and Zaha Hadid, 2000. Each Pavilion is sited on the Gallery's lawn for three months and the immediacy of the process – a maximum of six months from invitation to completion – provides a peerless model for commissioning architecture.

*Park Nights*, the Gallery's acclaimed programme of public talks and events, will take place in Sejima and Nishizawa's Pavilion, and will culminate with the *Serpentine Gallery Poetry Marathon* in October, the latest in the series of the Gallery's annual *Marathon* events. In 2006 the *Park Nights* programme included the now legendary 24-hour *Serpentine Gallery Interview Marathon*, convened by Hans Ulrich Obrist and architect Rem Koolhaas, which was followed, in 2007, by the *Serpentine Gallery Experiment Marathon* presented by artist Olafur Eliasson and Obrist, which featured experiments performed by leading artists and scientists. In 2008, Obrist led over 60 participants in the *Serpentine Gallery Manifesto Marathon*.

### **SANAA**

SANAA, the collaborative office of Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa, was established in 1995. The firm, based in Tokyo, Japan, operates internationally with an aim toward a broad range of architectural projects, landscaping, planning, interiors, exhibitions, furniture and product design.

SANAA's buildings allow for unrestrained movement between spaces that are often free of structure, and that have no hierarchy of purpose. While their practice may appear to have a relationship to essentialist minimalism, their buildings are not a construction of ideal forms, but instead reveal a desire to make the components and spaces explicit. Their built structures often appear nearly virtual, aspiring to the immaterial; viewers are invited to explore their relationship with their surroundings through transparent or natural boundaries. There is often accessibility from many sides, resisting the location of a primary façade or entrance, and the buildings appear weightless and open, embodying the characteristics of lightness and transparency.

### **Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa**

Kazuyo Sejima (b. 1956, Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan) studied architecture at the Japan Women's University before joining the practice of architect Toyo Ito. She launched her own practice in 1987 and was named the Japan Institute of Architects' Young Architect of the Year in Japan in 1992. In 1995, Sejima, with Ryue Nishizawa (b. 1966, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan), founded the Tokyo-based firm SANAA (Sejima + Nishizawa and Associates). Nishizawa studied architecture at Yokohama National University and, in addition to his work with Sejima, has also maintained an independent practice since 1997. He holds professorships at prestigious institutions such as Yokohama National University. Sejima and Nishizawa were jointly awarded the Golden Lion at the 9th Venice Architecture Biennale in

2004. Sejima teaches as a Visiting Professor both at Tama Art University and Keio University in Tokyo. SANAA's numerous celebrated buildings include Louvre Museum in Lens, France; Toledo Museum of Art's Glass Pavilion in Toledo, Ohio, USA; the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, USA. In Japan, SANAA's work includes the N-Museum in Wakayama; the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa, and Dior Omotesando.

**View previous Serpentine Gallery Pavilions at:  
[www.serpentinegallery.org/architecture](http://www.serpentinegallery.org/architecture)**

**Images**

[www.serpentinegallery.org/press](http://www.serpentinegallery.org/press)

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# Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2009

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2009 marks NetJets Europe's second year as headline sponsor of the Serpentine Pavilion. The company has a long history of involvement in the arts and design world, most recently recruiting Pritzker Prize-winning architect, Lord Norman Foster, to design its newest and most technologically advanced aircraft, the NetJets Falcon 7X. NetJets also supports Art Basel and TEFAF, two of the world's leading art fairs. [www.netjetseurope.com](http://www.netjetseurope.com)

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The pure and sophisticated design of the lights will create a harmonious synergy with the flowing lines of the pavilion.

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