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May 2008

Olafur Eliasson – Your mobile expectations: BMW H₂R project.

Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen and The Neue Sammlung – State Museum of Applied Arts and Design

Press preview: 28.05.2008, 11.00 a.m.

Opening: 28.05.2008, 7.00 p.m.

Duration of exhibition: 29.05.–20.07.2008

Munich. At his only museum exhibition in Germany this year, the Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson (*1967) will present his project developed over the past three years and entitled »Your mobile expectations: BMW H₂R project« at the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich.

Your mobile expectations: BMW H₂R project.

The final version of the 16th BMW Art Car, the outer shell of which Eliasson replaces with a fragile skin of ice, will be celebrating its premiere in Munich. This Eliasson-designed automobile, the BMW H₂R, is a racing car powered by hydrogen that has been developed by BMW to achieve speed records and at the same time point to the future in terms of sustainable mobility. Eliasson's work will be exhibited inside an accessible cooling chamber at a temperature of minus 10 degrees Celsius. It holds around two dozen people and blankets are available to keep the visitors warm. The energy used for the duration of the exhibition is »ecological electricity«. This supports the use and distribution of regenerative energy sources.

Olafur Eliasson, whose works are currently being presented in a comprehensive overview exhibition at the MoMA and the P.S.1 in New York, describes the debate relating to the hydrogen powered racing car in context with his artistic ideas: »By bringing together art, design, social and environmental issues, I hope to contribute to a different way of thinking-feeling-experiencing cars and seeing them in relation to the time and space in which we live. Fundamentally speaking, I don't believe that objects exist in isolation. They are always part of a complex set of physical and mental relationships; they change according to the context and depend on the user's values and expectations. They embrace relativity and the passing of time.«

Olafur Eliasson has removed the outer covering of the H₂R prototype and replaced it with a complex skin of two reflecting layers of superimposed metal spanning the body of the car. This shape is covered with fragile layers of ice. Thus Eliasson transforms an object of advanced automobile technology and industrial design into a work of art reflecting themes of

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mobility, temporality, renewable energies and the relationship between car production and global warming in a sophisticated and poetic way.

As a work of art located in time, Olafur Eliasson's transformation of the H₂R–automobile is a design provocation that opens up debates about the profound impact of art and design in their contemporary social setting. To create and conserve the car's ice coating, the vehicle is stored in a freezer. Over a period of several days Eliasson had the car's exposed frame sprayed with some 2000 litres of water to gradually produce the layers of ice. This sculpture, which is in constant interplay with the room temperature surrounding it, is around 1.5 m high, 5.25 m long and 2.5 m wide. The mono frequency light located inside the sculpture attracts the eye to the interspace containing the icescape which is exposed to a continuous melting and freezing process.

In Eliasson's sculptures and atmospherically unmistakable installations one senses not only the conditions under which they come about and the impact of their energy but also the beauty of natural phenomena. It is not until they enter the perceptions of the viewer that they complement each other.

The exhibition is curated by Corinna Rösner and Bernhart Schwenk.

Presentation: chezweitz & roseapple

An exhibition in close collaboration with BMW

The BMW Art Car Collection.

Established in 1975, the BMW Art Car Collection now includes 16 works by prominent artists – including David Hockney, Jenny Holzer, Roy Lichtenstein, Frank Stella, Robert Rauschenberg, and Andy Warhol – each making a unique artistic statement about the appearance and meaning of cars in our time. It was the French racing driver Hervé Poulain who first commissioned an artist – his friend Alexander Calder – to paint his BMW racecar in the early 1970s, and this was the spark that led BMW to develop the Art Car program. Apart from being permanently displayed at the BMW Museum in Munich, cars from the collection have been exhibited by numerous museums and galleries worldwide, including the Louvre in Paris, the Palazzo Grassi in Venice, the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney, and the Guggenheim museums in New York and Bilbao.

In April 2005, BMW selected Eliasson for its 16th Art Car commission, with input from an international board of curators comprising Bruce W. Ferguson, dean of Columbia University in New York; Pi Li from the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Peking; Suzanne Pagé, director of the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; Larry Rinder, dean of California College of the



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Arts in San Francisco; Donna de Salvo, chief curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; and Carla Schulz-Hoffmann, assistant head curator of the Bavarian State Picture Collections. The board of curators met at the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich for two days in April 2005.

Dr. Norbert Reithofer, Chairman of the Board of the BMW AG, commented on the three-year cooperation with the artist: »While working on his Art Car Project, Olafur Eliasson had been engaged in an intensive exchange of ideas with our engineers and designers for a number of years. Within the framework of the BMW Group's long-term commitment to art and culture, the intense discussion between the artist and our company reached beyond the boundaries of purely cultural engagement. Eliasson's work poses questions also raised by our company. Our corporate vision of sustainable mobility is based on innovative research, new technologies and the use of regenerative energy, which also secures our company's prospects for the future. We believe solutions can only be achieved when politics, industry and society all work together. And the BMW Group is proud to promote such a joint effort.«

The publication.

Lars Müller Publishers have published a 336-page comprehensive publication accompanying the exhibition. The book was designed by Olafur Eliasson and his studio as an integral part of the project and documents many discussions, interviews and the two »Life in Space« symposiums. Dialogue partners during the »Your mobile expectations: BMW H₂R project« include Chris Bangle, Ib Chorkendorff, Yona, Friedmann, Jens Hjorth, Adrian van Hooydonk, Caroline A. Jones, Bart Lootsma, Ricardo Scofidio, Peter Weibel and Sabine Zemelka.

(Price: approx. Euro 34.90, ISBN 978-3-03778-117-3)

Please apply for accreditation for the press conference being held at

11 a.m. on 28.05.2008 at the following address:

press@neumann-luz.de



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