

ICELAND ARTISTS RESPOND TO PLACE

ICELAND: ARTISTS RESPOND TO PLACE
EXPLORES THE DYNAMIC LANDSCAPE OF ICELAND THROUGH THE
EYES OF ELEVEN LEADING CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

*Featuring contemporary painting, photography, sculpture, installation, and video
from artists Olafur Eliasson, Egill Sæbjörnsson, and Katrín Sigurðardóttir, among others*

Exhibition Opening: Thursday, October 9, 7 - 9 pm

ICELAND: Artists Respond to Place, opening at **Scandinavia House: The Nordic Center in America** on **Thursday, October 9**, is the first exhibition in the United States to focus exclusively on contemporary Icelandic artists and their relationship to the singular geography of their country.

Iceland is one of the youngest and most geologically active landmasses on earth, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the visually stunning works of these artists. Twenty-one works ranging from painting to site-specific installation address not only the concrete features of Iceland, but also the conceptual realms of history, memory, myth, and imagination as they relate to the country's unique environment. With its fiery volcanoes, glacial ice caps, powerful waterfalls, and alternating solar rhythms of summer's unending daylight and winter's unsparing darkness, the austere beauty of Iceland functions as muse and material for many Icelandic artists.

Curated by **Pari Stave**, *ICELAND: Artists Respond to Place* features 11 artists—**Birgir Andrésson**, **Guðrún Einarsdóttir**, **Olafur Eliasson**, **Georg Guðni Hauksson**, **Einar Falur Ingólfsson**, **Guðjón**



Guðrún Einarsdóttir, *Untitled (Efnislandslag/Material Landscape)*, 2011. Oil on canvas, 47 x 47 in. (120 x 120 cm). Listasafn Reykjavíkur / Reykjavík Art Museum © Guðrún Einarsdóttir.

Ketilsson, Eggert Pétursson, Ragna Róbertsdóttir, Egill Sæbjörnsson, Katrín Sigurðardóttir, and Þórdís Alda Sigurðardóttir—and covers a broad range of formal approaches and media, including painting, photography, sculpture, and video installations.



Einar Falur Ingólfsson, *Vatnsdalur Valley*, from the series *Skjol/Shelters*, 2010. C-print, 30 x 40 in. (76 x 102 cm). Courtesy of the artist © Einar Falur Ingólfsson.



Katrín Sigurðardóttir, *Haul IV*, 2004. Plywood, polystyrene, vatican stone, landscaping materials, hardware, transit labels. Closed crate 14 x 13 x 9 in. (35 x 33 x 23 cm). Private Collection, New York. © Katrín Sigurðardóttir

Egill Sæbjörnsson's witty, surreal video installation imagines lava rocks as living beings, a sly reference to the myth of *huldufólk*, or hidden folk, who live in the land. **Eggert Pétursson's** large tapestry-like paintings focus exclusively on the indigenous flora of Iceland—the minute mosses and flowers that cling to the tundra and lava fields—which he renders with near obsessive attention to detail. In contrast, **Olafur Eliasson's** aerial photographs trace the entire length of an Icelandic river as it meanders from its source in the mountains to the sea, compressing an enormous expanse of terrain into a single view. **Katrín Sigurðardóttir's** series of wooden travel boxes contain generic landscapes inspired by Iceland's treeless topographies; her miniature environments are a dramatic reversal of scale between the human figure and its relationship to the environment. Two artists, **Guðjón Ketilsson** and **Ragna Róbertsdóttir**, will travel from Iceland to create their installations on site in the Scandinavia House gallery. Ketilsson's wall drawing *Stígar/Paths* will be a text-map charting the artist's stream-of-consciousness thoughts as he wanders the streets of Reykjavík, while Róbertsdóttir will compose her minimalist wall sculpture from lava pumice collected from different volcanic sites in Iceland.

"ICELAND: Artists Respond to Place offers a unique and very timely look at the visual arts in

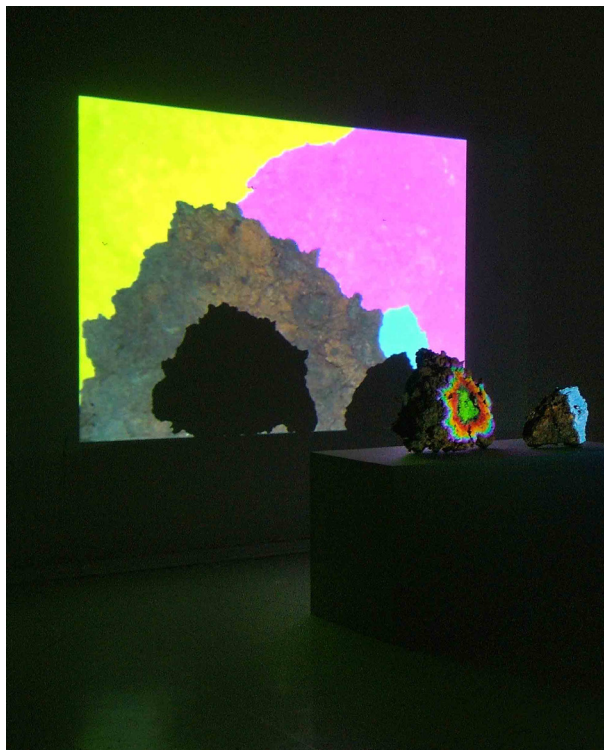
Iceland today, providing a compelling overview of the highly varied, sometimes idiosyncratic artistic visions to be found there. We are delighted to add this to the long list of exhibitions presented at Scandinavia House over the past 14 years that explore the contemporary Nordic art scene," says **Edward P. Gallagher, President of The American-Scandinavian Foundation (ASF).**

Curatorial Credits

ICELAND: Artists Respond to Place is curated by Pari Stave and organized by the Katonah Museum of Art. Stave is an independent curator based in New York. Her recent exhibitions include *MUNCH | WARHOL and the Multiple Image* (Scandinavia House, 2013; co-curated with Patricia G. Berman); *New Wave Finland: Contemporary Photography from the Helsinki School* (Scandinavia House, 2013; co-curated with Timothy Persons); and the exhibition *Magnetic North: Artists and the Arctic Circle* (1285 Avenue of the Americas Art Gallery, 2014). From 2011-2013 she served as Consulting Curator for Scandinavia House/The ASF.

Support

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Egill Sæbjörnsson, *Pleasure Stones*, 2008. Installation: lava stones, pedestal, single-channel video projection, sound; dimensions variable. Private Collection, Düsseldorf, Germany © Egill Sæbjörnsson.

The American-Scandinavian Foundation

The American-Scandinavian Foundation (ASF) is the leading cultural and educational link between the United States and the Nordic countries. An American nonprofit organization, the ASF works to build international understanding through an extensive program of fellowships, grants, intern/trainee sponsorship, publishing, and membership offerings. Headquartered at Scandinavia House, in New York City, the ASF celebrated its centennial in 2011.

For more information: amscan.org

Scandinavia House: The Nordic Center in America

As the headquarters of The ASF, Scandinavia House presents contemporary Nordic culture through a wide range of programs that encompass the visual arts, music, and literature, as well as business, finance, and technology. Offerings include art, design, and historical exhibitions; films; concerts; lectures and literary programs; symposia; language courses; and programs for children and families.

For more information: scandinaviahouse.org | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter @ScanHouse](#) | [#IcelandArt](#)

Exhibition Organizer

Accredited by the American Association of Museums, the Katonah Museum of Art (KMA) originates ten to twelve exhibitions annually, covering a broad range of art and humanities topics. From the beginning, the KMA was committed to presenting exceptional art from all cultures and time periods. The founders' decision to be a non-collecting institution resulted in a dynamic and flexible exhibition program, which remains one of the most distinctive features of the KMA. The KMA offers lectures, films, workshops, concerts, and other events for a general audience; and presents innovative and substantive programs for over 100 member schools.

For more information: katonahmuseum.org | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter @katonahmuseum](#)

Hours and Admission

Admission is free to the Scandinavia House 3rd Floor Gallery; open Tuesday through Saturday from 12–6 pm (Wednesday until 7 pm).

Media Contacts

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