

Press Release

The 13th Austrian Frederick Kiesler Prize for Architecture and the Arts goes to Junya Ishigami

The Austrian Frederick and Lillian Kiesler Private Foundation is delighted to announce that the Japanese architect Junya Ishigami has been awarded the Frederick Kiesler Prize for Architecture and Art, one of the most highly endowed international prizes in this field.

Born in Kanagawa Prefecture in 1974, Junya Ishigami is one of the most exceptional talents on the international architecture scene. After spending many years in the office of the Pritzker Prize laureate Kazuyo Sejima, SANAA, he established his own firm, junya.ishigami+associates, in 2004. The uniqueness of his work and the unconventional way in which he approaches his projects led to swift recognition and the award of many prizes. In 2009, he became the youngest ever recipient of the Architectural Institute of Japan Prize; in 2010, he received the Golden Lion of the Architecture Biennale in Venice; and in 2019 he was the first winner of the newly created Obel Award. He has taught at Tohoku University in Japan since 2010 and was appointed Kenzo Tange Design Critic at Harvard Graduate School of Design (USA) in 2014.

For Ishigami, architecture is an open field of infinite possibilities that extends into every area of life, raises all the essential questions, and should be considered from a perspective that is as scientific as it is artistic. Apparently liberated from the rules and constraints of architecture, Ishigami predominantly finds the context for his projects in nature. And he has a continuing focus on the reinterpretation of the boundary between landscape and architecture. His conceptual thinking is shaped by an urge to interweave architecture with the “natural” and to stretch the existing frontiers between design, architecture, and the environment. With his visionary designs, whose aesthetic is characterized by their concentration, transparency, and simplicity, Ishigami is embarking upon a holistic search for an architecture for the future, in which the life of society is structured according to organic principles.

Ishigami's major projects include KAIT Workshop for the Kanagawa Institute of Technology (Atsugi/Japan, 2008); the House of Peace in Copenhagen (Denmark, 2014); the Chapel of the Valley in Shandong (China, 2016); the Art Biotop Water Garden (Tochigi/Japan, 2018); and his pavilion for the Serpentine Gallery (London/England, 2019).

I am honoured to receive the esteemed Frederick Kiesler Prize for Architecture and the Arts, and want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Foundation and the jury. This acknowledgment inspires me to continue pushing the boundaries of architecture in the pursuit of excellence, says Junya Ishigami in a first statement.

In his architecture, Junya Ishigami has a masterly understanding of the shaping of fluid transitions between inside and outside. Kiesler's idea of endlessness and of the flux of nature, whose movement should be transposed into art, corresponds in the work of Ishigami to a dissolution of the boundaries between environment and interior. I am delighted that we have found such a worthy recipient of the Kiesler Prize as Junya Ishigami, whose organic

architectural visions fascinate us just as much as they create harmony between nature and the human-made, emphasized Vienna's Executive City Councillor for Cultural Affairs and Science Veronica Kaup-Hasler.

Junya Ishigami is an outstanding visionary on the contemporary international architecture scene. His designs, which defy traditional boundaries and conventions, and consistently focus on the relationships between people and their surroundings and between the works of nature and of humankind, make him a true kindred spirit of Frederick Kiesler. Ishigami's structures – such as his pavilion for the Serpentine Gallery in London or the House of Peace in Copenhagen – have a surreal, almost dreamlike quality. He is constantly reexamining our fundamental ideas about what a building really is, and he incorporates elements of the natural world – such as landscape, water, clouds, and forest – into his works in ways that have never been seen before. Thanks to this unique and groundbreaking architectural approach, Junya Ishigami is an extremely deserving winner of the Frederick Kiesler Prize, says Andrea Mayer, Secretary of State for Arts and Culture.

The Austrian Frederick and Lillian Kiesler Private Foundation is particularly delighted about the choice:

Junya Ishigami is one of the most interesting architects of the younger generation. Both his persistent attitude and his visionary work make him the perfect Kiesler Prize winner. His poetically sculptural building designs are always at the interface of architecture, art and social design and take the discipline to a new level. While the building industry has taken over the ownership of what architecture should look like, with a focus on commercial aspects, Ishigami follows his own uncompromising path in realizing his visionary projects. Each of his idiosyncratic projects is unique in its aesthetics and refers to the individual circumstances and problems of our time. Thereby he continuously expands and transcends the boundaries of his profession and sets new standards for the future.
(Elke Delugan-Meissl, President of the Foundation)

The decision of the Jury

The high-profile jury of the Frederick Kiesler Prize - consisting of Leonor Antunes (artist, Berlin), Céline Condorelli (artist, London/Mailand), Harald Gründl (designer, Wien), Anupama Kundoo (architect, Berlin) as well as jury chairman Kjetil Thorsen (architect, Oslo) - explains its decision as follows:

The jury is pleased to award this year's Kiesler Prize to Junya Ishigami, who stands out in today's architecture practice for his inspirational and unique approach to building design. His extraordinary projects are pushing the boundaries of the building industry and thus show strong parallels to Frederick Kiesler's experimental and innovative attitude by transcending

the borders of the traditional disciplines. Ishigami adds a fascinating new facet to the many outstanding artists and architects who have previously received the award.

Ishigami's "free space" philosophy, seeking harmony between man-made structures and those that already exist in nature, correlates with Kiesler's thinking that "[t]he new designer will learn to understand the methods by which nature builds ... but he will not imitate her methods" (On Correalism and Biotechnique, 1939). Known for his designs with dreamlike qualities that frequently incorporate elements from the natural world, such as forests or caves, Ishigami focusses on the human being as part of nature and thereby stands in line with Kiesler's holistic theory of "Correalism" reflecting "the dynamics of continual interaction between man and his natural and technological environments".

Ishigami's work is highly diverse, acknowledging the fact that the demands of today are multi-dimensional. Rather than finding the one solution, he sees it as the core task of the contemporary architect to find a variety of different solutions in relation to a specific location and a specific task. Ishigami is thereby producing a wide range of outstanding and very idiosyncratic projects, such as the KAIT Workshop at Kanagawa Institute of Technology (Atsugi/Japan, 2008), the Museum Park of the Polytechnic Museum in Moscow (Russia, 2019) or the House & Restaurant (Ube/Japan, 2022). His highly-recognized Serpentine Pavilion (London/England, 2029), a cave-like space realized as temporary installation in London's Kensington Gardens, constitutes a refuge for contemplation. The jury was especially impressed by the Art Biotop Water Garden (Tochigi/Japan, 2018), seeing a whole forest moved and saved from destruction, resulting in a place of surreal beauty where people can relax and get lost.

The jury acknowledges Ishigami's uncompromising and exceptional body of work and his capacity to inspire, presenting a visionary and poetic alternative to the economically driven pragmatism of today's mainstream architecture. Transcending and expanding traditional genres, he is adding a radical new perspective to the discipline of architecture.

About Junya Ishigami

Junya Ishigami was born in Kanagawa Prefecture in 1974 and belongs to the younger generation of Japanese architects that emerged from the circle around Toyo Ito and Kazuyo Sejima. Ishigami received his master's degree in architecture and planning from Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music in 2000. He worked with Kazuyo Sejima at SANAA between 2000 and 2004, the year in which he established his own office, junya.ishigami+associates.

Ishigami prefers to find the context for his architectural projects in nature – landscapes, clouds, forests –, which enables him to remove the boundary between the outside world and the interior space. Seemingly free of rules and constraints, Ishigami embeds his projects in their surroundings and transforms the world of dreams into an integral element of his oeuvre. The uniqueness of his work ensured that it received rapid recognition and he has been awarded numerous prizes, including

the Golden Lion of the Architecture Biennale in Venice (2010), the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture (2010), the Swiss Architectural Award (2016), and the Obel Award (2019).

His projects are extraordinarily diverse: the construction of KAIT Studio for the Kanagawa Institute of Technology (Atsugi, Japan, 2008), which is remarkable due to its light and airy spaces and the interweaving of inside and outside; the garden of the Polytechnic Museum Moscow (Moscow, 2019); the House of Peace in Copenhagen (2014), a huge building in the form of a cloud, which rests upon the water and is understood as a symbol of peace; Art Biotop Water Garden (Tochigi/Japan, 2018); the design of the Summer Pavilion for the Serpentine Gallery (London, 2019), a structure that appears to have grown from the lawn and recalls a hill formed from rocks, and which seeks to augment traditional architecture with modern methods and concepts.

Ishigami's work was presented in numerous exhibitions, et al:

Junya Ishigami: Freeing Architecture, Fondation Cartier (Paris/France, 2018), *Junya Ishigami: How Small? How Vast? How Architecture Grows*, deSindel (Antwerp/Belgium, 2013), und *Junya Ishigami: Architecture as Air*, Barbican Art Gallery, Barbican Centre (London/England, 2011).

<http://jnyi.jp/>

Der Österreichische Friedrich Kiesler-Preis für Architektur und Kunst

The *Austrian Frederick Kiesler Prize for Architecture and the Arts*, one of the most highly endowed international prizes in this area, has been presented this year for the 13th time. The prize for outstanding achievement, which is endowed to the value of 55,000 euros, serves to celebrate the visionary work of the artist, designer, set designer, and architect Frederick Kiesler (1890 – 1965), who was born in Czernowitz in 1890 and emigrated to the USA in 1926. It honors “extraordinary work in architecture and the arts that relates to Frederick Kiesler’s experimental and innovative approach and his theory of ‘*correlated arts*’,” which transcends the boundaries between and unites the disciplines of architecture and the arts. (Extract from the statutes to the *Frederick Kiesler Prize*)

The high-profile jury included Leonor Antunes (artist, Berlin), Céline Condorelli (artist, London/Mailand), Harald Gründl (designer, Wien), Anupama Kundoo (architect, Berlin) and jury chairman Kjetil Thorsen (architect, Oslo).

Since it was established in 1997, the *Frederick Kiesler Prize* has been awarded to Frank O. Gehry (1998), Judith Barry (2000), Cedric Price (2002), Asymptote Architecture / Hani Rashid + Lise Anne Couture (2004), Olafur Eliasson (2006), Toyo Ito (2008), Heimo Zobernig (2010), Andrea Zittel (2012), Bruce Nauman (2014), Andrés Jaque (2016), Yona Friedman (2018) and Theaster Gates (2021).

The prize is awarded and endowed alternately every two years by the Republic of Austria and the City of Vienna and organized by the Vienna-based Austrian Frederick and Lillian Kiesler Private

Foundation. The official presentation of the award by Andrea Mayer, state secretary at the Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sport is scheduled for June 2024.

Further information on the Frederick and Lillian Kiesler Private Foundation as well as the detailed programme of events 2024 can be found at: <https://www.kiesler.org/en/>

Press contact:

Press Download Service:

<https://www.kiesler.org/en/press/>

Press contact:

Susanne Haider, Brigitte Auer

art:phalanx – Culture & Urbanity, Vienna

Tel: +43 (0)1524 98 03 – 11 / Mobile: +43 (0)6991 205 1700

E-mail: presse@artphalanx.at