



In celebration of its 15th anniversary, the PHI Foundation for Contemporary Art is pleased to present

YAYOI KUSAMA

DANCING LIGHTS THAT FLEW UP TO THE UNIVERSE

Exhibition:

July 6, 2022—January 15, 2023

Press Visit: July 5, 2022

(details to come)

Free admission · Reservations required

CURATED BY

Cheryl Sim

PHI FOUNDATION



Born in Matsumoto, Japan, in 1929, Yayoi Kusama is one of the most popular living contemporary artists in the world today. Over the past seven decades, she has created painting, sculpture, installation, drawing, and film, as well as performance, fashion, design, literature, and immersive installations such as her celebrated *Infinity Mirrored Rooms*. Bolstered by social media and the artist's acclaim, these works have drawn massive audiences globally over the last ten years. However, beyond the intensive publicity surrounding the installations, Kusama's practice has consistently engaged with the vastness of the cosmic realm and her—as well as our—place within it: a concept imbued with both disquiet and wonder.

This exhibition will introduce visitors to the spiritual and philosophical depth of the artist's work. Since her early forays into painting, sculpture, and performance, Kusama has long explored the conceptual and formal aspects of phenomenology and immersion in her work. At a time when the digital and virtual have overwhelmed our sensibilities, Kusama's environments proffer analog experiences that both situate viewers within and beyond our universes. The exhibition in Montréal will present three of her signature bronze pumpkin sculptures in different sizes, two new 'peep-in' mirrored rooms, a grid of her vibrant *My Eternal Soul* paintings, as well as two striking *Infinity Mirrored Rooms*. *Infinity Mirrored Room - DANCING LIGHTS THAT FLEW UP TO THE UNIVERSE* (2019), from which the show takes its title, is filled with hanging light globes that alternate colors before abruptly going dark. The viewer is absorbed into darkness for a moment before the glowing spheres slowly flicker back on, initiating again a cycle akin to life and rebirth.

Yayoi Kusama, *INFINITY MIRRORING ROOM - DANCING LIGHTS THAT FLEW UP TO THE UNIVERSE*, 2019. Mirrored glass, wood, LED lighting system, metal, and acrylic panel. Courtesy of David Zwirner.

The exhibition will also include a reading room with a historical timeline of the artist's life and career. Kusama has made prodigious contributions to the history of art through her work, and she continues to operate as a key figure in contemporary art. At this difficult and turbulent time, compounded by the isolation and uncertainty of the last two years, her body of work facilitates feelings of comfort and peace.

This will be the artist's first solo exhibition in Québec. We expect that this will be a highly anticipated event for the Montréal and Québec public, as well as a major draw for local and international tourists.

While admission is free, a reservation for timed entry will be required in order to ensure low waiting times and a pleasant passage through the exhibition.

With special thanks to Yayoi Kusama and the team at David Zwirner and Ota Fine Arts.

PHI FOUNDATION FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

Established in 2007 by Phoebe Greenberg, the PHI Foundation for Contemporary Art is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing impactful contemporary art experiences to the public. Our programming is international in scope, responsive to the local context, and free of charge to reinforce a commitment to accessibility and inclusion. The Foundation is driven by a desire to break down entrenched perceptions of what contemporary art is and who it is for, with the fundamental belief that art is for us all. The Foundation endeavours to make a home for art, artists and the public we serve, devoted to nurturing convivial exchanges that celebrate art as part of our everyday lives.