ICELANDIC ARTIST ÓLAFUR ELÍASSON WINS GREEN GOOD DESIGN AWARD 2015

The creation of a work of art entitled "Little Sun" that brings clean, reliable, affordable light to the 1.2 billion people worldwide without access to electricity

DUBLIN, IRELAND…EARTH DAY, APRIL 22, 2015….Ólafur Elíasson, the Icelandic artist known for sculptures and large-scale installation art employing elemental materials such as light, water, and air temperature to enhance the viewer’s experience, together with the German engineer, Frederik Ottesen, have won a 2015 Green GOOD DESIGN Award for the creation of their not-for-profit, Berlin-based organization called "Little Sun," which distributes a high-quality, solar-powered LED lamp to Third World Countries.

The Green GOOD DESIGN Awards are organized jointly by The Chicago Athenaeum: Museum of Architecture and Design and The European Centre for Architecture Art Design and Urban Studies based in Dublin, Ireland.

GOOD DESIGN was founded in Chicago in 1950 by architects Eero Saarinen and Charles and Ray Eames and remains as the world's most recognized and prestigious prize that annually honors thousands of designers, architects, and manufactures globally for their advancement of visionary innovation and design excellence.

Since 1950, the GOOD DESIGN Award has been bestowed to over 40,000 new products and graphics from a paper clip to a NASA —MORE—
space ship.

In 2007, The Chicago Athenaeum added a special "Green Edition" to the annual GOOD DESIGN awards program to highlight and promote new products, buildings, and urban planning projects that emphasize sustainability, environmental concerns, ecology, energy conservation, and recycling as part of the Museum's public education mission.

"Little Sun," states Christian Narkiewicz-Laine, Museum President of The Chicago Athenaeum, is a human-based social business enterprise and global project addressing the need for light in a sustainable way that benefits communities without electricity, while creating local jobs that generate local profits within its communities, mostly in the Third World."

"Little Sun is truly a visionary scheme of heroic proportions befitting of Chicago architect Daniel Burnham's 'Make no Little Plans' that has huge repercussions to the world's environment in a beautifully subtle, understated way. Our Museum applauds the Eliasson and Ottesen team for their profound contribution to humanitarian and ecological concerns that forward global peace, human rights, and global stability. This global project connects the world through the sharing of light."

The organizational mission of Little Sun is provide clean, solar-powered light to as many people in the world by focusing its reach particularly in off-grid areas, which need light the most. The project strengthens off-grid communities from the inside out, training young local entrepreneurs to become Little Sun sales agents and powering their small businesses with an initial seed capital of Little Sun lamps, which allows them to get their start.

Designed by Eliasson and engineered by Ottesen, Little Sun lamps are an attractive, high-quality solar-powered LED lamp. Little Sun’s unique combination of beautiful design and exceptional engineering has made the lamp popular across the globe. Every Little Sun sold in an area of the world with electricity enables the organization to deliver one Little Sun to an off-grid African community at a locally affordable price.

The Little Sun project was launched in July 2012 at London’s Tate Modern. Since then, the project has distributed over 200,000 Little Sun lamps worldwide and that number is quickly growing. The lamps have been distributed in over 10 African countries, including Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Kenya, Senegal, and Ghana, as well as in Europe, Canada, Australia, Japan, and the United States.

In April 2014, Little Sun received a ground-breaking $5 million impact investment from Bloomberg Philanthropies, making it possible for the organization to dramatically scale its operations across the African continent.

"Little Sun is not a charity, but an inclusive social business," states Narkiewicz-Laine. "Rather than a short-term fix of donating lamps to an area without electricity, the organization works with and trains local entrepreneurs to build profitable local businesses that distribute the Little Sun light. For Eliasson and Ottesen, it’s not just about delivering light to people, but it matters how it gets there."

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Little Sun is one of 100 consumer products, buildings, and urban planning projects selected this year for the 2015 Green GOOD DESIGN Awards. All products and architecture projects can be viewed at The Chicago Athenaeum’s website: www.chi-athenaeum.org.

In June, the Green 100 are featured in an exhibition: 100% Sustainable: Green Good Design 2015, at The European Centre’s Museum, Contemporary Space Athens (74 Mitropoleos Street, Athens, Greece) opening on June 26 and continuing through August 10, 2015.

The exhibition travels to Chicago for the Third Chicago Architecture Biennale in September.

For photographs, publication, and exhibition information, contact Ira Livadioti, Director of Marketing and Administration, at TEL: +30/210 342 8511 or by email atira@europeanarch.eu

The deadline for GREEN GOOD DESIGN 2016 is October 1, 2015. For more information, www.chi-athenaeum.org