



**Greetings
from the President of Iceland
Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson**

Once again, Japanese artists have embarked on a voyage to Iceland. They bring us works which reflect, with great originality, the interaction of ancient tradition and modern stylistic sensibility.

We welcome them to Iceland and thank them for honouring us with their presence.

In recent years artists from Japan and Iceland have woven strong bonds of friendship. Their cooperation has increased our understanding of the harmony that is produced when Japanese and Icelandic works of art are, within close reach of each other, engaged in a creative dialogue.

I recall two exhibitions in Iceland last autumn, in the Nordic House in Reykjavík and at Gerðarsafn, the Kópavogur Municipal Art Museum. Both proved to be influential contributions to the Icelandic cultural scene. Now, Hafnarborg Arts Centre in Hafnarfjörður invites us to a third banquet of art.

All these exhibitions, held within a single cultural season, reflect the flourishing and growing cultural cooperation between Iceland and Japan.

The people of Iceland deeply appreciate the goodwill and friendship shown by Mr. Yoshihiko Tsuchiya, Governor of Saitama Province. They have been a source of energy which in recent years has enriched relations between Iceland and Japan. We cherish such friendship and magnanimity.

I welcome the Japanese artists to Iceland and hope that their stay in our country and acquaintance with Icelandic nature and culture will give them as tokens of our gratitude both pleasant memories and new experiences.