

LACMA FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXHIBITION: *JAMES TURRELL: A RETROSPECTIVE*

ON VIEW: MAY 26, 2013—APRIL 6, 2014

LOCATION: BCAM LEVEL 2 AND RESNICK PAVILION

**LACMA PRESENTS FIRST MAJOR RETROSPECTIVE OF JAMES TURRELL IN
NEARLY THIRTY YEARS**

**RETROSPECTIVE AT LACMA IS COMPLEMENTED BY JAMES TURRELL EXHIBITIONS AT THE
MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON AND SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, NEW YORK**



(IMAGE CAPTIONS ON PAGE 4)

(Los Angeles—May 2, 2013) The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) presents *James Turrell: A Retrospective*, the first major U.S. survey of Los Angeles-native James Turrell since 1985. The exhibition features approximately fifty works tracing five decades of the artist's career. In addition to early light projections, holograms, and an entire section devoted to his masterwork-in-progress, the Roden Crater project, the exhibition features numerous immersive light installations that address our perception and how we see. LACMA's retrospective is complemented by concurrent, independently curated exhibitions at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH) (June 9—September 22, 2013); and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (June 21—September 25, 2013). Additional Turrell exhibitions on view this year include the Academy Art Museum, Easton (April 20—July 7, 2013); and Villa Panza, Varese, Italy (October 24, 2013—May 4, 2014).

"The theme of light has preoccupied artists for centuries," says Michael Govan, CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director of LACMA and exhibition co-curator. "No one, however, has so fully considered the 'thing-ness' of light itself—as well as how the experience of light reflects the wondrous and complex nature of human perception—as James Turrell has for nearly five decades."

Christine Y. Kim, exhibition co-curator and Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at LACMA adds, "There is nothing quite like the experience of a Turrell work, which is truly about and for the viewer and his or her perception. Perception is the medium for Turrell, as his work provokes viewers to see themselves see."

Turrell's revolutionary use of light in art makes for an experience that is both physical and optical—requiring visitors to spend anywhere from five to twenty minutes with one artwork, often alone in a gallery or with a limited number of fellow viewers.

Exhibition Overview

In the mid-1960s, James Turrell was inspired by a beam of light from a slide projector while sitting in the darkened room of an undergraduate art history class at Pomona College. The sight provoked a question: what if light wasn't the tool that enabled people to see something else but rather became the thing people look at? Thus began an inquiry that has led to a vast, prolific career.

James Turrell: A Retrospective comprises works that range in scale from an intimate watercolor made in 1969 to a 5,000-square-foot "Ganzfeld" installation—designed to entirely eliminate the viewer's depth perception—offering visitors multiple entry points into Turrell's practice. Evident in the array of works is the artist's interest in perception, psychology, religion, astronomy, meditation, and science.

The exhibition also draws connections between the artist's light installations, architectural projects, and his famous masterwork-in-progress at Roden Crater, in the high desert of Arizona. *James Turrell: A Retrospective* presents the most expansive installation of Roden Crater works shown to date, presented in the form of models, drawings,

photographs, holograms, and other documents from the 1980s through the present.

Exhibition Organization

The work of James Turrell requires a vast amount of exhibition space. *James Turrell: A Retrospective* presents nearly fifty works exhibited in 33,000 square feet populating two venues across LACMA's campus: the 2nd floor of the Broad Contemporary Art Museum (BCAM) and the east galleries of the Lynda and Stewart Resnick Exhibition Pavilion (Resnick Pavilion).

BCAM's east galleries begin with works that Turrell completed at his Mendota Studio in Santa Monica from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s, followed by a succession of full-room installations that feature projections, holograms, a "Shallow Space"—a large room designed to challenge a viewer's depth perception—and a "Cross Corner Projection," in which light is projected in a way that suggests weight and mass. A subsequent gallery contains information and media highlighting a selection of site-specific projects and commissions around the world. BCAM's west wing is populated with a "Magnatron" work—consisting of an aperture in the shape of an old television screen—followed by three full-scale installations: *Key Lime*, a "Wedgework" in which the illusion of walls are created through light and architecture; a "Wide Glass," a type of work that adds a temporal element to Turrell's light-based installations; and *St. Elmo's Breath*, a "Space Division Construction," which appears to be a flat surface but upon closer inspection reveals itself to be light emitted from a seemingly bottomless cavity in the wall.

Upon entering the Resnick Pavilion, visitors first encounter work that resulted from Turrell's collaboration with artist Robert Irwin and Dr. Ed Wortz as part of the Art and Technology program at LACMA in 1969, namely a "Perceptual Cell" called *Light Reignfall*; *Dark Matters*, a "Dark Space" that presents a seemingly blacked-out room with only a minimally perceivable trace of light; and *Breathing Light*, a "Ganzfeld." The Resnick Pavilion also holds an expansive gallery dedicated to the Roden Crater project, including large-scale mixed media drawings and a model contoured with actual cinder from the crater, as well as other models for autonomous spaces.

About James Turrell

Born in Los Angeles in 1943 to a Quaker mother and father who was a school administrator, Turrell attended Pomona College, where his studies concentrated on perceptual psychology and astronomy. In 1973 he received a Master's degree in art from Claremont Graduate School. His work is represented in numerous public collections including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Tate Modern, London; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; and the Israel Museum, Jerusalem. The James Turrell Museum opened in Colomé, Argentina in 2009. His solo exhibitions include Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1976); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1980); Israel Museum (1982); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (1984); MAK, Vienna (1998-99); Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh (2002-03); Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany (2009-10); and Garage Centre for Contemporary Culture, Moscow (2011).

Exhibition Catalogue

James Turrell has completed hundreds of commissions and site-specific works of varying typologies throughout the world, from Norway to Argentina, from the Middle East to the middle of America. As it is physically impossible to gather all these works into a single exhibition, the catalogue, *James Turrell: A Life in Art*, serves as an integral part of LACMA's retrospective. The 305-page volume, co-published by LACMA and DelMonico Books/Prestel, is edited by Michael Govan and Christine Y. Kim with essays by MFAH curator Alison de Lima Green and Director of the Griffith Observatory E.C. Krupp. *James Turrell: A Life in Art* features full-color photography by Florian Holzherr and is available for \$75.

Tickets and Reservations

Capacity for this unprecedented exhibition is very limited; hence, tickets are timed and small groups will be let into the exhibition every fifteen minutes. Because of the limited capacity, advance reservations are strongly recommended for the exhibition as well as for the immersive "Perceptual Cell" experience, *Light Reignfall*, which can accommodate only three individuals per hour. In *Light Reignfall*, a single viewer lies down in a spherical chamber for approximately twelve minutes to experience what Turrell calls "behind-the-eyes" seeing. Tickets for the "Perceptual Cell" are allocated every twenty minutes for one person at a time, and include same-day admission to the rest of the Turrell exhibition as well as all other exhibitions. A standby line will be available onsite. Tickets went on sale to LACMA members on April 17 and will be available to the general public on May 8. Reservations can be made online (lacma.org/Turrell), by phone at 323 857-6010, or onsite at LACMA's Ticket Office during regular museum hours.

James Turrell: A Retrospective

LACMA members		Free
General public		\$25*
Children under 18		Free
Groups of 10+		\$20 each*

"Perceptual Cell" (Light Reignfall) + James Turrell: A Retrospective

Due to the nature of *Light Reignfall*, capacity is limited to one person every twenty minutes. Children under 18 are not permitted.

LACMA members		\$15
General public		\$45*

*Tickets include same-day admission to Stanley Kubrick between May 26–June 30, 2013 and Calder and Abstraction: From Avant-Garde to Iconic between November 24, 2013–April 6, 2014.

Summer Late Fridays at LACMA

This summer, from July 5–August 30, 2013, LACMA will keep BCAM and the Resnick Pavilion open until 11 pm every Friday. With exhibitions including *James Turrell: A Retrospective* (May 26, 2013–April 6, 2014); *Hans Richter: Encounters* (May 5–September 2, 2013); *The Presence of the Past: Peter Zumthor Reconsiders LACMA* (June 9–September 15, 2013); *Stephen Prina: As He Remembered It* (through August 4, 2013); *Ends and Exits: Contemporary Art from the Collections of LACMA and the Broad Art Foundation* (through August 4, 2013); and Chris Burden's *Metropolis II*; plus Friday Night Jazz and Ray's and Stark Bar, Friday nights at LACMA offer a great way to start your weekend.

Credit

James Turrell: A Retrospective is organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, in conjunction with the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York.

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About LACMA

Since its inception in 1965, LACMA has been devoted to collecting works of art that span both history and geography-and represent Los Angeles's uniquely diverse population. Today, the museum features particularly strong collections of Asian, Latin American, European, and American art, as well as a contemporary museum on its campus. With this expanded space for contemporary art, and innovative collaborations with artists, LACMA is creating a truly modern lens through which to view its rich encyclopedic collection.

Location and Contact: 5905 Wilshire Boulevard (at Fairfax Avenue), Los Angeles, CA, 90036 | 323 857-6000 | lacma.org

Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 11 am-5 pm; Friday: 11 am-8 pm; Saturday, Sunday: 10 am-7 pm; closed Wednesday

General Admission: Adults: \$15; students 18+ with ID and senior citizens 62+: \$10

Free General Admission: Members; children 17 and under; after 3 pm weekdays for L.A. County residents; second Tuesday of every month; Target Free Holiday Mondays

Image captions:

(Left) James Turrell, *Afrum (White)*, 1966, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, partial gift of Marc and Andrea Glimcher in honor of the appointment of Michael Govan as Chief Executive Officer and Wallis Annenberg Director and purchased with funds provided by David Bohnett and Tom Gregory through the 2008 Collectors Committee, M.2008.60, © James Turrell, Photo © 2013 Museum Associates/LACMA

(Center) James Turrell, *Bridget's Bardo*, 2009, Ganzfeld, Installation view at Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany, 2009, © James Turrell, Photo © Florian Holzherr

(Right) James Turrell, *Milarepa's Helmut*, 1989, Cast Hydrocal plaster, 21 x 34 ¾ x 34 ¾ in. (53.3 x 88.3 x 88.3 cm), James Corcoran Gallery, Los Angeles, © James Turrell, Photo courtesy Kayne Griffin Corcoran, Los Angeles

Press Contact: For additional information, contact LACMA Communications at press@lacma.org or 323 857-6522.

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