

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

James Turrell (born 1943) focused on psychology and mathematics at Pomona College. It was only later, in graduate school, did he pursue art. Turrell's work involves explorations in light and space that speak to viewers without words, impacting the eye, body, and mind with the force of a spiritual awakening. Informed by his studies in perceptual psychology and optical illusions, Turrell's work allows us to see ourselves "seeing." Whether harnessing the light at sunset or transforming the glow of a television set into a fluctuating portal, Turrell's art places viewers in a realm of pure experience. Situated near the Grand Canyon and Arizona's Painted Desert is *Roden Crater*, an extinct volcano the artist has been transforming into a celestial observatory for the past thirty years. Working with cosmological phenomena that have interested man since the dawn of civilization and have prompted responses such as Stonehenge and the Mayan calendar, Turrell's crater brings the heavens down to earth, linking the actions of people with the movements of planets and distant galaxies. His fascination with the phenomena of light is ultimately connected to a very personal, inward search for mankind's place in the universe. Influenced by his Quaker faith, which he characterizes as having a "straightforward, strict presentation of the sublime," Turrell's art prompts greater self-awareness through a similar discipline of silent contemplation, patience, and meditation. His ethereal installations enlist the common properties of light to communicate feelings of transcendence and the Divine. James Turrell is a recipient of several prestigious awards such as Guggenheim and MacArthur Fellowships. He was born in Los Angeles and received an MFA in art from Claremont Graduate School in Claremont, CA.