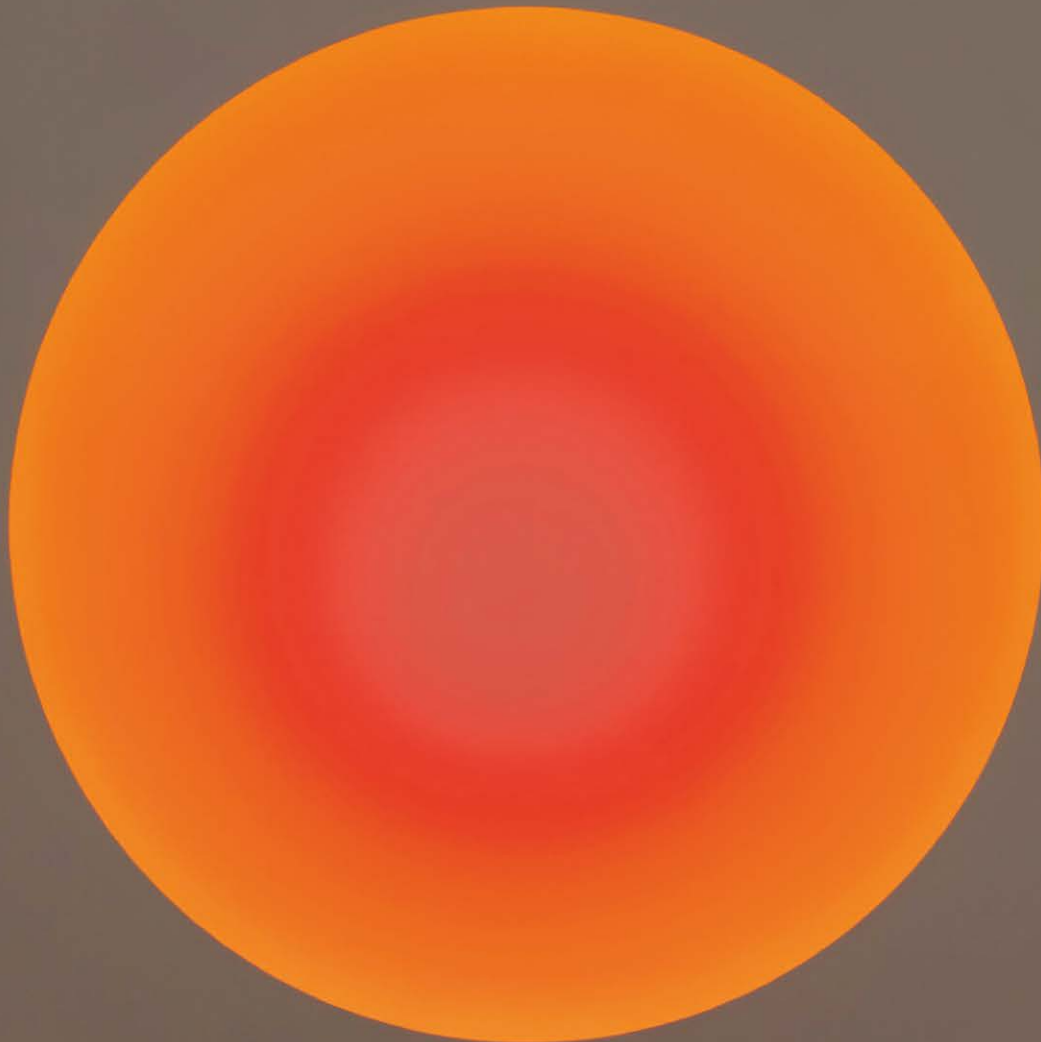


# LIGHTING JOURNAL

Professional best practice from the Institution of Lighting Professionals

February 2020



## **IMMATERIAL GAINS**

Master artist James Turrell is bringing his passion for the 'immateriality' of light to London

## **SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS**

Understanding 'the social' behind the lighting of urban spaces

## **TRAINING DAZE**

The challenges of attracting young people into lighting, and then keeping them



The publication for all lighting professionals

## 06 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS

As lighting professionals, how well do we understand the urban spaces we're lighting, how they're used, why and by whom? Sociologist Dr Don Slater is working to improve how the industry thinks about 'the social' in lighting, as he explained at LuxLive in November

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Evidence-based design is a relatively new concept within lighting, but can potentially enable a lighting designer to better understand 'softer' design considerations, such as how people interact with the lit environment. Dr Navaz Davoodian outlines its thinking

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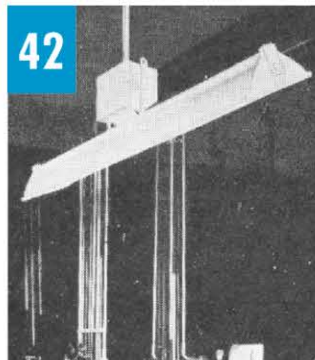
A lucky group of ILP volunteers was given the chance in December to experience a solo exhibition of works by Leo Villareal, the American artist behind the capital's mammoth 'Illuminated River' art project

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A major solo exhibition of the master artist James Turrell is on show in London from this month. His work with light, sense, space, colour and perception – the immateriality of light itself – has always fascinated lighting professionals. We look at what visitors can expect



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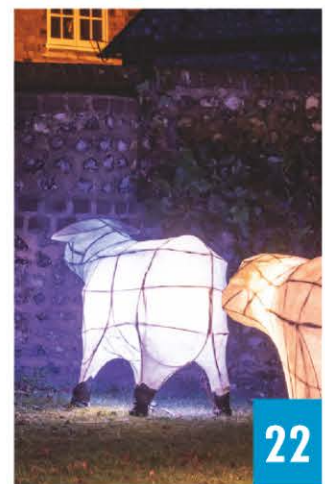
Layers of light are at the heart of a new LED scheme for Norwich Cathedral by Speirs + Major. The scheme needed to celebrate the cathedral's soaring architecture, maximise its natural daylight and yet have minimal impact on its historic physical fabric

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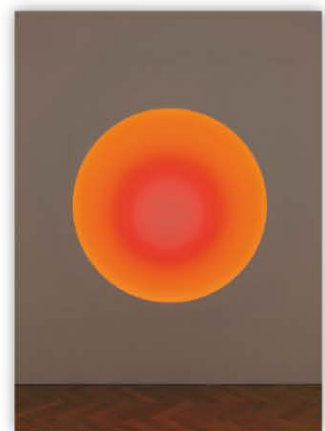
A panel discussion at the ILP's Lightscene CPD event in October attempted to unpick some of the challenges facing the profession when it comes to attracting and bringing young talent into lighting



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## ▲ COVER PICTURE

*Aquarius, Medium Circle Glass*, 2019, by James Turrell, courtesy of the Pace Gallery. A new solo exhibition by the master artist, who plays with light, sense, space, colour and perception is coming to London's Pace Gallery from this month. Turn to page 27 for full details

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# 'FROM THE COSMIC TO THE ATOMIC'

*A lucky group of ILP volunteers was given the chance in December to experience a solo exhibition of works by Leo Villareal, the American artist behind the capital's mammoth 'Illuminated River' art project. But if you didn't manage to catch it, never fear, there is an upcoming important exhibition by seminal light artist James Turrell to look forward to as well*

By Nic Paton

**M**esmerising', 'breath-taking', 'you could get lost in the twirls and motions of the lights'.

These were just some of the comments from ILP members who were given the opportunity in December to visit the Pace Gallery in Mayfair, London – totally for free, as guests of the gallery – and experience its first solo exhibition of works by the American light artist Leo Villareal.

The trip was a 'thank you' by the ILP to members who had volunteered their time

and expertise last year, including some of those who have been working with Villareal on 'Illuminated River', the ambitious project with Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands and The Illuminated River Foundation to create the world's largest free public art project by illuminating up to 15 London bridges.

As *Lighting Journal* reported back in September (*London Pride*, vol 84 no 8), the first four bridges – London, Cannon Street, Southwark and Millennium – have now been unveiled to the public, and the ILP's team of volunteers played an important role

in working with Villareal to make it a reality.

The exhibition at the Pace Gallery ran from November until the middle of January and is due to be followed – from 11 February through to 27 March – by a major exhibition of new works by seminal light artist James Turrell. Turn to page 27 for more details on this, as it is an exhibition not to be missed.

### 'UNDULATING FIELDS OF PATTERNED LUMINESCENCE'

At the centre of Villareal's exhibition was *Detector* (2019), (main image pictured above)



Leo Villareal's *Detector*, 2019. All images on this page and overleaf courtesy of Damian Griffiths

a monumental work spanning more than 10m and featuring, as Pace described it, 'undulating fields of patterned luminescence, suggesting the sifting of stars, galaxies, and other astral phenomena. Signals penetrate through fields of noise as clusters of particles expand and collide, conjuring antipodal forms from the cosmic to the atomic.'

Two works then flanked *Detector*, titled *Optical Machine I & II*. These, the gallery explained, served 'as portals into the visual manifestation of Villareal's rule-based software, which engages chance through the concepts and computational techniques of artificial life and emergent behaviour.'

'Employing a highly synthetic process, Villareal's works nevertheless echo the ubiquitous systems that produce organic behaviours found throughout nature', the gallery added.

The exhibition also included six pieces from Villareal's *Instance* series, which function both as individual artworks and as part of an orchestrated whole.

For the Pace exhibition, Villareal networked together two groups of three works from the series, so 'allowing the individual panels to act alone while at times performing in synchronicity with interconnected works', the gallery explained.

It added: 'Existing simultaneously as both standalone objects and nodes in a larger system, the works convey the interdependence between their digital and physical forms while incorporating new levels of complexity in their visual behaviour.'

'Linked together, they produce

malleable synchronies wherein the possibility of order, however fleeting and subtle, flashes briefly into existence before gradually dissipating into a state of entropy.

'Villareal's use of the triptych underscores the importance of art-historical precedent in his work, alluding to a format originally associated with Renaissance altarpieces, but which recurs throughout the history of painting,' the gallery said.

So, what did our volunteers make of it?

### 'LEO'S WORK HAS AWOKEN SOMETHING IN ME'

Guus Ketelings, lighting design technician at CU Phosco Lighting and one of the *Illuminated River* volunteers was left speechless. 'How do you put it into words?! The artwork he has created is a big LED mesh; he's very good at creating mesmerising, all-absorbing patterns that completely transform and transport you into a different world; they absorb you,' he told *Lighting Journal*.

'What lots of people were comparing it to was space and how elements move through space, such as stars and galaxies. I was taken aback, to be fair. It was utterly beautiful, truly.'

'It was something that appeared so simple but once you sat down and you looked at it for give or take five minutes you just started appreciating, "my god, this is absolutely phenomenal". That's the thing, that is what he's trying to evoke - it is something you could look at for an hour and just meditate while you are looking at it.'

'Along with *Illuminated River*, Leo's work has awoken something in me; I am starting to appreciate the architectural/artistic side of lighting far more than I did when I started in the industry. It is making me reflect as to what I want to aspire to further my life in terms of career possibilities. The opportunities the ILP provides, it has been just fantastic,' Guus added.

'The wall [for *Detector*] was alive, almost pulsating away from the middle of the screen. This was by far my favourite piece; you could quite literally stand there and get lost in the twirls and motions of the lights pulsating and fading on and off the piece,' agreed Perry Hazell, business manager, asset management services, at London Borough of Southwark.

'The exhibition also had smaller pieces that, when sited in a triptych, looked like the paintings were talking to you. It was a very surreal and peaceful place to be.'

'As part of my role within the London Borough of Southwark, we have our day-to-day responsibilities for ensuring the highway is lit and maintained to a standard, but rarely do we get the chance to take a step back and think about how can we improve the public realm in a way that will impact the end user and create a safe and inviting place to come.'

'So I think these new and exciting concepts are where engineers like myself and others can start to gather ideas,' Perry added.

'The show was absolutely breath-taking, each composition through LED and coding bringing the magic of light to life,' enthused April Dorrian, studio manager at Zumtobel.

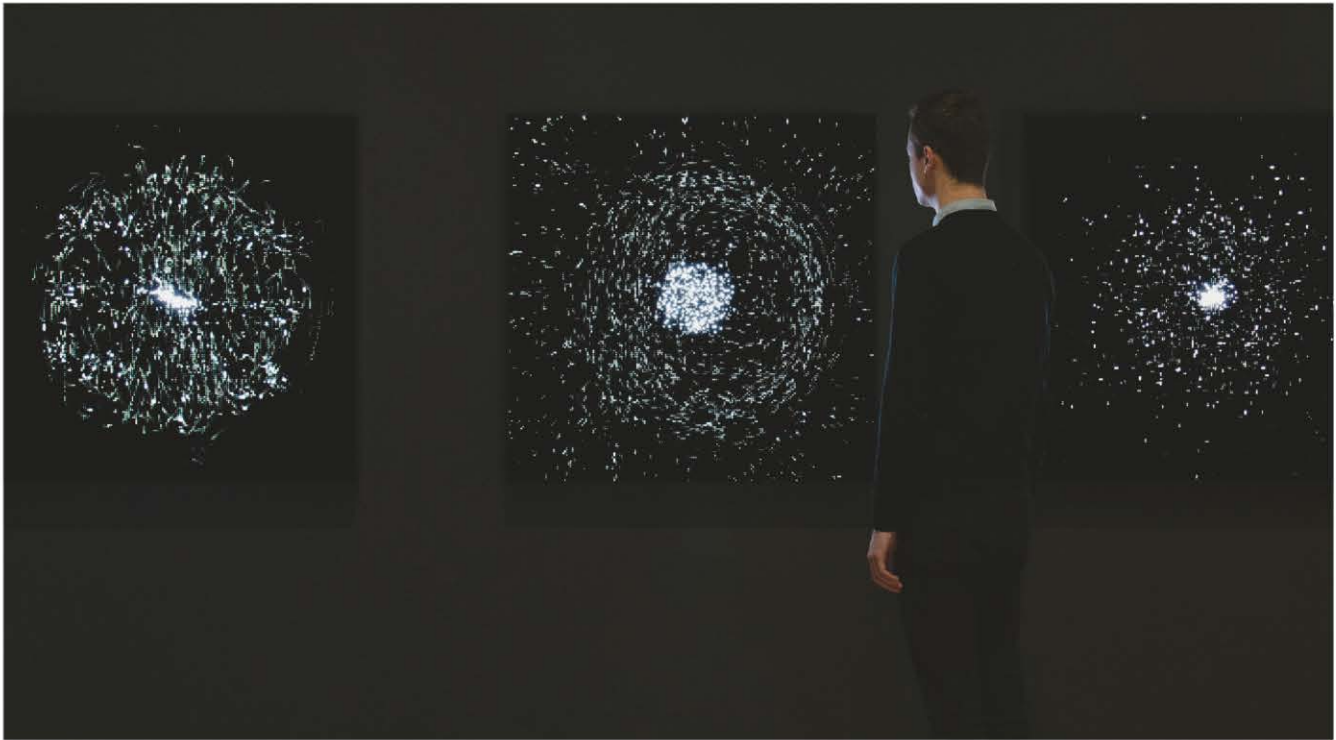
'Within minutes of entering the space, I was transported into a calm, quiet, cosmic world. It was a really beautiful show. Huge thanks to Jess [Gallacher, ILP engagement and communications manager] and the ILP "How to be brilliant" team [Zumtobel was the 2019 sponsor] for organising this experience,' she added.

### 'WHERE ART LEADS, DESIGN FOLLOWS'

Villareal's *Detector* also stood out for Mark Ridler, lighting director at BDP. 'It was a really nice exhibition, and it was fantastic of the ILP to give back to the volunteers in that way. It was fascinating to see the work that



## Light art



Above: *Instance 17, 18, 19, 2019*, by Leo Villareal  
Left: Leo Villareal in front of *Detector, 2019*,  
all © Leo Villareal

is going on behind *Illuminated River*, by an artist who is doing such a significant piece of work in the centre of London.

'It was very different in nature, obviously in terms of scale, but also in terms of colour and the kind of patternations there were. There were synergies as well in terms of the way in which we are using LED light as the medium and algorithms as the authoring tool,' said Mark.

'What was really interesting to me was that you could just stare at the pieces for ages and ages in a very contemplative fashion. It was beautiful, really lovely.'

'It was an ongoing demonstration that data and artificial intelligence is going to be an ever-increasing piece of what we do, if not necessarily as explicitly rendered in this way. I don't think all of our lighting will be as kinetic as Villareal showed in this exhibition but where art leads, design often follows. The way in which we control our lights and, perhaps even indeed, author them is going to be an ever-increasingly influenced by these types of techniques,' Mark added.

As well as *Illuminated River*, a further solo exhibition of Villareal's work is due to be held at the Pace Gallery in Palo Alto, California from 02 April.



James Turrell's *Kermandec* 2014, courtesy of the Pace Gallery. This image was taken from a 2014 exhibition by the master artist

# IMMATERIAL GAINS

*A major solo exhibition of the master artist James Turrell is on show in London from this month. His work with light, sense, space, colour and perception – the immateriality of light itself – has always fascinated lighting professionals. Nic Paton looks at what visitors can expect*

A major exhibition of renowned light artist James Turrell is coming to London and will coincide with the gallery's 60th anniversary year.

The Pace Gallery in London's Mayfair will be presenting its second solo exhibition of works by the influential American artist from 11 February to 27 March.

The exhibition will feature new works from Turrell's *Constellation* series staged in site-designed chambers.

The works feature elliptical and circular shapes with a frosted and curved glass surface animated by an array of technically

advanced LED lights, all of which are mounted to a wall and generated by a computer program.

Visitors to the exhibition, which is free to enter, will be able to experience light changes that are subtle and hypnotic, with one colour morphing into the next.

The program runs on a loop imperceptible to the viewer, prompting what has been described as 'a transcendental experience'. Through these new works, Turrell is continuing his exploration of technological possibilities combined with sensory practices and gradient colours.

## Light art

A selection of James Turrell images, all copyright James Turrell and (unless stated otherwise) courtesy of Pace Gallery. Top row, from left: *Peléé*, 2014; *Kermandec*, 2014; and *VARDA (03)*, 2017 (courtesy Kayne Griffin Corcoran). Middle row, from left: all *Peléé*, 2014. Bottom row, from left: *MORS-SOMNUS (07)*, 2019; *Peléé*, 2014; *Aquarius, Medium Circle Glass*, 2019



→ As Turrell himself has commented: "To some degree, to control light I have to have a way to form it, so I use form almost like the stretcher bar of a canvas... When I prepare walls, I make them so perfect that you actually don't pay attention to them. This is true of the architecture of form I use: I am interested in the form of the space and the form of territory, of how we consciously inhabit space."

### SENSE, SPACE, COLOUR AND PERCEPTION

Turrell is recognised as being among the most influential artists of the past 50 years, and his work with light, sense, space, colour and perception – the immateriality of light itself – has long made him popular with lighting professionals.

Since his earliest *Projection Pieces* (1966–69), Turrell's seminal works have included *Skyspaces* (1974–), *Ganzfelds* (1976–) and, perhaps most notably, his *Roden Crater* project (1977–) located near Flagstaff, Arizona.

Representing the culmination of the artist's lifelong research in the field of human visual and psychological perception, *Roden Crater* is a controlled environment for the experiencing and contemplation of light and stars.

For lighting professionals unable to make it to London for this specific exhibition, it is worth recognising that there are a number of Turrell artworks on display around the country.

*Seldom Seen* can be viewed at Houghton

Hall in Norfolk, while *Aqua Obscura* (part of the *Camera Obscura* series) and *Twelwolow Kernow* (part of the *Skyspace* series) can be seen at Tremenheere Sculpture Gardens, near Penzance.

Yorkshire Sculpture Park in York is host to *Deer Shelter* (again part of the *Skyspace* series), while *Cat Cairn* (also part of *Skyspace*) is on display at Kielder Water and Forest Park. Albeit part of a private collection, another work in the *Skyspace* series, *Craiganour Skyspace*, is located on the Craiganour Estate in Perthshire.

The Pace Gallery is located at 6 Burlington Gardens in Mayfair, London, and the nearest tube stations are Piccadilly Circus and Green Park.