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ARTSY

From Kusama to Turrell, 9 Artists Who Made Perfect Spaces for Meditation



James Turrell, *Bindu Shards* (2010). Gagosian.

It's a safe bet that anyone who's spent a prolonged amount of time looking at a painting—or failing that, can recall the Seurat scene from *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*—can recognize the meditative power of art. But several artists have taken this idea further, building entire environments meant to help viewers experience deep serenity or contemplation. From giant saltwater tanks to secluded Appalachian outposts, these nine works provide space to guide in focused meditation.

James Turrell

Bindu Shards, (2010)

Gagosian

From the outside, *Bindu Shards* may resemble concept art for an Apollo module, but inside, the room is unearthly in an entirely different sense. With the "Perceptual Cells" series, to which this work belongs, Turrell sought to induce what he called "behind-the-eye seeing." To view the piece, visitors lie on a narrow bed, and an assistant slides them into the cell as if they were entering an MRI scanner. Inside, they are enveloped in a field of soft light. An assistant cycles through certain light cycles that occupy the field of vision. Turrell says the overwhelming stimulation is meant to induce theta brain waves, which occur naturally during focused meditation or before sleep.

— Mitch Sawyer