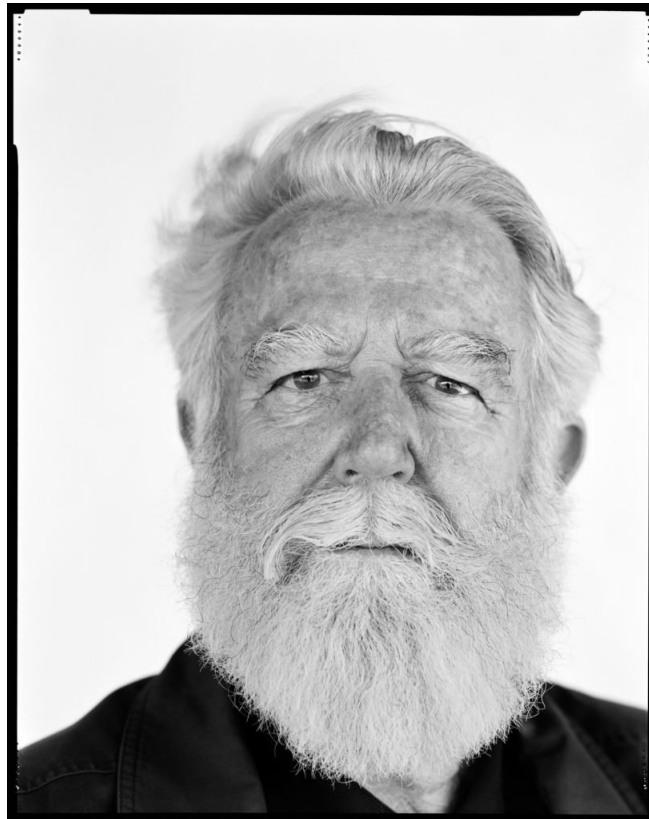


Kayne Griffin Corcoran

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A Major Gift of a James Turrell Installation Will Bring Light and Space to Berlin's Jewish Museum

In 2016, Turrell took over a chapel in Berlin. This spring at the Jewish Museum, he's getting his own pavilion.



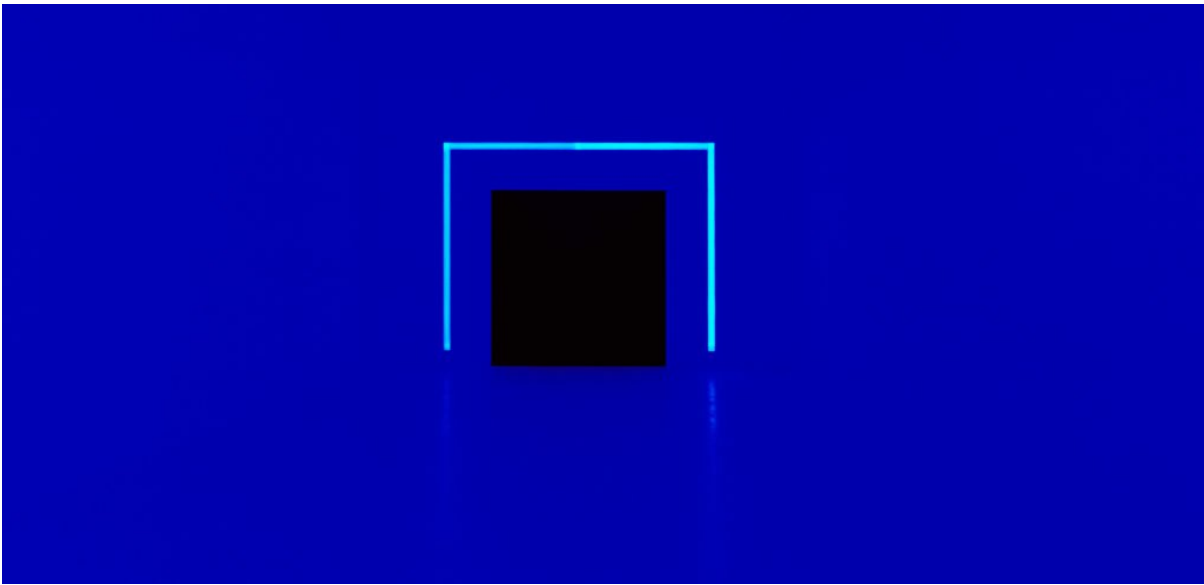
Portrait of James Turrell. Photo by Grant Delin.

Berlin's Jewish Museum has been given an immersive light work by James Turrell from his "Ganzfeld" series. The US artist's blue-hued Aural is an iconic walk-in installation that completely submerges the viewer in a light field. It was donated to the institution by the German collectors Dieter and Si Rosenkranz.

Dieter Rosenkranz is a 92-year-old entrepreneur and a longstanding patron of the arts in Berlin, but not Jewish himself. An important cultural figure in the city, his activities as an arts patron are a tribute to Berlin's Jewish bourgeoisie and their cultural patronage, which ended forcefully and violently in the Nazi era.

Turrell's ongoing "Ganzfeld" series is one of his earliest investigations into light and perception, a body of works he has been evolving over the past four decades. The German word ganzfeld describes the phenomenon of a total loss of depth perception, as in the experience of a white-out. Aural made its debut in 2004 at IVAM (Institut Valencia d'Art Modern) in Valencia, Spain, where it was created especially for the exhibition.

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James Turrell's Ganzfeld *Aural* (2004). Photo by Florian Holzherr.

Now, reinterpreted for the Jewish Museum, *Aural* will be presented in a pavilion that is being specifically designed for the piece. It will be sited in the garden of the museum famously expanded in a deconstructivist style by the US architect Daniel Libeskind in 2001.

"In this installation, one gets the impression of stepping into a supernatural space the construction of which seems to override the empirical world," says the museum. "This experience can be considered as one of the most spectacular artistic interpretations of the creation of light—and thus part of the divine act of creation."

Eliminating the viewer's spatial perceptions is not unlike a holy, transcendent experience, which is why his work should feel at home on the museum's property. In 2016, a different work Turrell went on permanent view in Berlin, at a Protestant chapel in a historic cemetery in the neighborhood of Mitte.

Aural is due to open to the public on April 12 and will be on view for more than a year, through September 30, 2019.

—Kate Brown