

**Lingnan University**  
**Department of Visual Studies**

<b>Course Title</b>	: Light Art
<b>Course Code</b>	: VIS3002
<b>No of Credits</b>	: 3
<b>Mode of Tuition</b>	: Lecture and Guided Practice
<b>Class Contact Hours</b>	: 3 Hours per Week
<b>Restriction(s)</b>	: Students passed Light Art as a special topic under the course VIS3399 are not allowed to take this course.

**Course Description:**

Light illuminates humanity throughout history. From the sun, to fire, to artificial light; from the symbol of the divine to the dream-like vehicle of enlightenment; from sensory perception to our understanding of the universe: light as a source of energy fuels the world. It determines our sense of space, time and mood, and is the driving chord of modern life.

Light is an immaterial medium crucial to Visual Art. It governs color principles, and thus conditions different modes of expression and perception. Painters like J.M.W. Turner, Claude Monet, Georges Pierre Seurat and Trophime Bigot focused on experimenting with and depicting different light sources through oil pigment. Op Art artists like Bridget Riley and Victor Vasarely studied and explored optical illusions using various patterns and color combinations. New media artists Jim Campbell and Bruce Nauman played with different combinations of LEDs and Neon tubes. Contemporary artists James Turrell and Olafur Eliasson have constructed numerous light installations that explore the relationship between light and space. All these art explorations provide innovative perspectives for understanding images within the context of different optical conditions. This course provides an introduction to the history and politics of light, including the philosophy, science and art. Consisting of lectures, experiments and a guided practice, students will group into teams to complete a creative light project.

**Indicative Content:**

1. Politics of Light
2. Light Phenomena
3. Color Principles
4. Light Perception
5. Artificial Light
6. Light as a Medium of Art
7. Development of Light Art

**Aims:**

- To provide an introduction to the history of light
- To consolidate appreciative skills with respect to various applications of light and color

- To provide awareness of multiple languages of light and their respective influences
- To encourage research-based art practice
- To facilitate cross-subject/ multi-disciplinary study

**Teaching Method:**

Lectures, discussions, creative projects

**Learning Outcomes:**

On completion of the course, students will be able to:

- identify basic principles and concepts in Light Art
- compare the artistic application of light in various contexts
- analyze various discussions on the language of light
- apply theoretical thinking in artistic expression
- integrate multi-disciplinary knowledge into the evaluation and production of Light Art

**Assessment:**

Active Class Participation	10%
Reading Notes	60%
Art Project and Project Report	30%

**Measurement of Learning Outcomes:**

Progress towards the learning outcomes outlined above will be measured by means of:

Expected Learning Outcomes	Assessment		
	Active Class Participation (10%)	Reading Notes (60%)	Art Project and Project Report (30%)
i) identify basic principles and concepts in Light Art	✓	✓	✓
ii) compare the artistic application of light in various contexts	✓	✓	✓
iii) analyze various discussions on the language of light	✓	✓	✓
iv) apply theoretical thinking in artistic expression	✓		✓
v) integrate multi-disciplinary knowledge into the evaluation and production of Light Art	✓	✓	✓

- Active participation in class, which requires students to take an active role in class discussion; class attendance to class is one of the basic criteria for active participation.

- Participation reflects the willingness to learn, the ability to understand and appreciate Light Art from various perspectives and in various context, and to generate an opinion.
2. Five 3-page reading notes requiring students to organize and summarize the five reading packs in their own words, also to further elaborate the concepts as they appear with daily settings.
  3. A team project that requires students to employ their knowledge of Light Art in developing and executing a feasible creative art expression. It includes a 5-page group project report in which students illustrate the conceptual development, practical considerations and reflections of their art project.

### **Bibliography:**

- Bockemuhl, Michael, *J.M.W. Turner, 1775-1851: The World of Light and Colour*, Taschen, 2000.
- Broeker, Holger, Jonathan Crary and Richard Dawkins, eds. *Olafur Eliasson: Your Lighthouse: Works with Light 1991-2004*, Hatje Cantz, 2004.
- Clark, Robin Lee, Michael Auping and Stephanie Hanor, eds. *Phenomenal: California Light, Space, Surface*, University of California Press, 2011.
- Follin, Frances, Claus Pias and Martina Weinhart, eds. *Op Art*, 2007.
- Govan, Michael, *James Turrell: A Retrospective*, Prestel USA, 2013.
- Houston, Joe, *Optic Nerve: Perceptual Art of the 1960s*, Merrell Publishers, 2007.
- Ketner II, Joseph, *Elusive Signs: Bruce Nauman Works with Light*, The MIT Press, 2006.
- Kosky, Jeffrey L., *Arts of Wonder: Enchanting Secularity - Walter De Maria, Diller + Scofidio, James Turrell, Andy Goldsworthy*, University of Chicago Press, 2012
- Lauson, Cliff, *Light Show*, MIT press, 2013.
- Malina, Frank Joseph, *Kinetic Art: Theory and Practice*, Dover Publications, 1974.
- Rossing, Thomas, and Christopher J Chiaverina, eds. *Light Science: Physics and the Visual Arts*, Springer, 1999.
- Walther, Ingo F., *Impressionism*, Taschen, 2010.
- Weibel, Peter, and Gregor Jansen, eds. *Light Art from Artificial Light, Light as a medium in 20th and 21st Century Art*, ZKM, 2006.
- Weibel, Peter, and Olafur Eliasson, eds. *Olafur Eliasson: Surroundings Surrounded: Essays on Space and Science*, The MIT Press, 2002.
- Weschler, Lawrence, *Seeing Is Forgetting the Name of the Thing One Sees: Over Thirty Years of Conversations with Robert*, University of California Press, 2009.
- Wildenstein, Daniel, *Monet Or The Triumph Of Impressionism*, Taschen, 2010.
- Wolfe, William L., *Optics Made Clear: The Nature of Light And How We Use It*, SPIE Publications, 2006.

### *Reading Pack I*

- Kosky, Jeffrey L., *Arts of Wonder: Enchanting Secularity – Walter De Maria, Diller+ Scofidio, James turrell, Andy Goldsworthy*, University of Chicago Press, 2012.
- “A Picture of Modern Disenchantment”, 1-13

Weibel, Peter, and Gregor Jansen, eds. *Light Art from Artificial Light, Light as a medium in 20th and 21st Century Art*, ZKM, 2006.

- "The Open Clearing and Illumination. Remarks on Metaphysics, Mysticism and the Politics of Light", Peter Sloterdijk, 44-55

#### *Reading Pack II*

Victor, Stoichita, *A Short History of the Shadow*, London: Reaktion Book, 1997.

- "The Shadow of the Flesh", 42-88

#### *Reading Pack III*

Rossing, Thomas and Christopher J Chiaverina, eds. *Light Science- Physics and the Visual Arts*, Springer Science & Business Media, 1999.

- "Chapter 8 : Color Vision", 173-202

Weibel, Peter, and Gregor Jansen, eds. *Light Art from Artificial Light, Light as a medium in 20th and 21st Century Art*, ZKM, 2006.

- "Light and Order", Gunther Leising, 56-67

Tuyl, Gijs van, Holger Broecker, eds. *Olafur Eliasson: Your Lighthouse; Works with Light 1991-2004*, Hatje Cantz Verlag, Ostfildern-Ruit, 2004.

- "Bar Codes in the Stars", Richard Dawkins, 10-19

#### *Reading Pack IV*

Gordon, Haim and Shlomit Tamari, eds. *Maurice Merleau Ponty's Phenomenology of Perception: A Basic for Sharing the Earth*", Praeger, 2004.

- "The Human Body and the Field of Perception", 81-90

Houston, Joe, *Optic Nerve: Perceptual Art of the 1960s*, New York: Merrell Publishers, 2007. 11-54

- "Trying to See What We Can Never Know", Dave Hickey

- "New Sensation", Joe Houston

- "Art Optics and the Scientific Perspective", Joe Houston

- "The Inner Eye", Joe Houston

- "The Foundations of Op", Joe Houston

#### *Reading Pack V*

Tuyl, Gijs van, Holger Broecker, eds. *Olafur Eliasson: Your Lighthouse; Works with Light 1991-2004*, Hatje Cantz Verlag, Ostfildern-Ruit, 2004.

- "Twentieth-Century Light and Space Art", Annelie Lutgens, 32-40

Govan, Michael, *James Turrell: A Retrospective*, Prestel USA, 2013.

- "Inner Light: The Radical Reality of James Turrell", 13-35

Trachtman, Paul, "James Turrell's Light Fantastic", MAS Ultra- School Edition, 2003. 1-6

**“Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations.”**

Important Notes:

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3\* hours of class contact and 6\* hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.

\* Numbers of hours are subject to adjustment for individual courses.