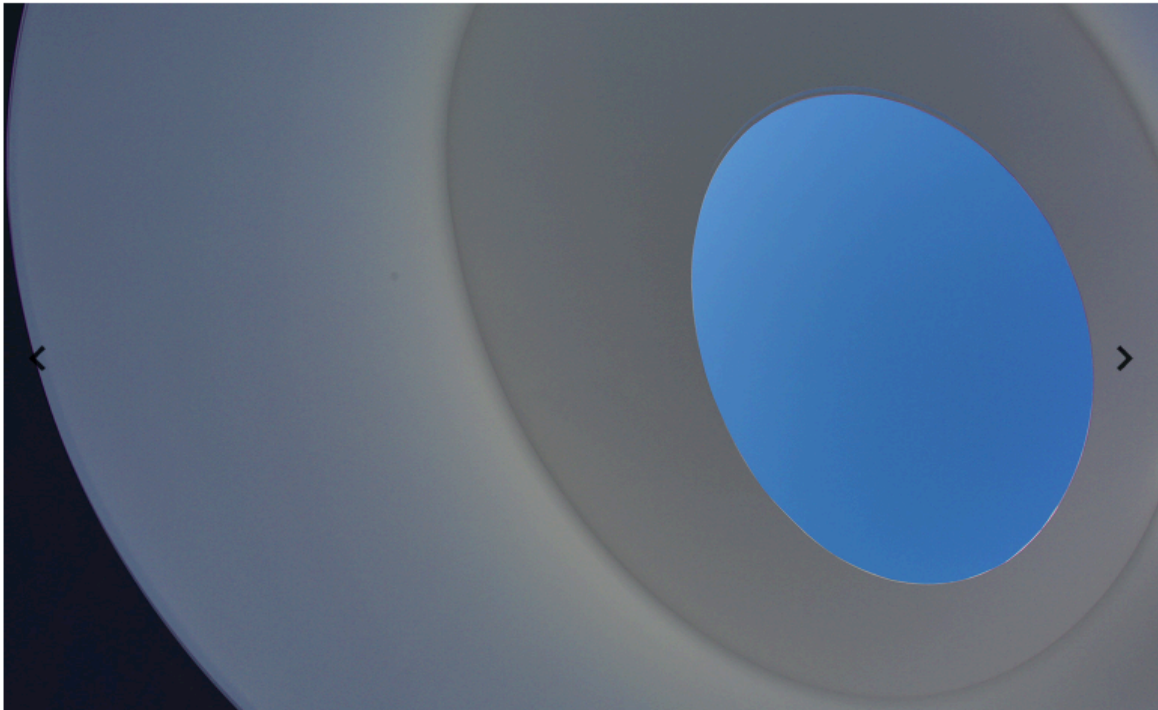


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# Sky high: Venet Foundation welcomes two iconic installations by James Turrell

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This summer, the renowned American artist James Turrell brings two new installations to the Venet Foundation in southern France, both focusing on his signature theme: light. Pictured: *Elliptic, Ecliptic*, 1999. Photography: Frédéric Chavaroché

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A temple of light; a temple of silence. James Turrell's new installations – collectively grouped under the title 'Inspire the Light' – at the Venet Foundation are one (well, two) of a kind. Staged in the middle of sumptuous Mediterranean gardens, the new skyspace – entitled *Elliptic, Ecliptic* – seems, from the inside, like a white sculpture carved into the deep blue sky. The second piece, entitled *Prana*, is an aperture: inside the pitch-dark room, a red rectangle projects a foggy, almost volcanic, crimson hue. Walking into both spaces becomes a physical and metaphysical experience.

'Both installations give me a lot of pleasure. If they both have a strong physical presence, it is their intellectual dimension that fulfills me. They hint at an essential link in art, they are part of the course of art history,' explains Bernard Venet, a master sculptor who received a Lifetime Achievement Award in NY this year for his exemplary career.

'It's a major art piece from my generation,' Venet adds, 'and although I never met James Turrell personally, this is a way for me to pay tribute to his work.' Set in an old factory and a 17th century mill, the Venet Foundation stands out for its coherence, and Turrell's two pieces definitely add clout to the young institution.

It took five weeks of construction work, an English expert, four German light masters and an American executive to put the installation together. 'Piecing this skyspace together was like building a new home,' Venet explains. The outcome is spectacular; blending perfectly with the surrounding nature, Turrell's talent joins Venet's unique collection of timeless pieces. 'It felt natural for James Turrell to join "the family",' the sculptor comments, highlighting the fact that the Venet Foundation also houses 29 works by Frank Stella (including a breathtaking open-air chapel), five light sculptures by Dan Flavin and pieces by Carl Andre, Donald Judd, Richard Long, François Morellet and Sol LeWitt, to name just a selection.

In Le Muy, on a summer night's stroll through the gardens, Venet's vision came to life. Let there be light.