

# News release

27 April 2006

## James Turrell Deer Shelter: An Art Fund Commission

**Opening 28 April 2006**

(Embargoed 00.01 28 April 2006)



**Today, The Art Fund, the UK's leading art charity, unveils one of the most significant projects in its history – a permanent Skyspace at Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) by the internationally renowned artist James Turrell. This is the first commission for the Art Fund and its most significant gift to the nation since The Burghers of Calais by Rodin in 1911. James Turrell Deer Shelter opens to the public on 28 April 2006.**

The entire cost of the project, in the region of £800,000, will be covered by the money set aside to celebrate The Art Fund's Centenary with a special purchase in 2003. The funds available for normal grant-giving activities will not be affected. The commission inaugurates a new and more active phase in the life of The Art Fund and underlines its commitment to contemporary collecting – especially in the international arena.

Turrell is an artist of international acclaim, renowned as a 'sculptor of light'. For over 40 years he has used light and space to create art installations which extend and enhance perception – from indoor pieces which baffle the senses, creating an illusion of infinite diffused light, to outdoor Skyspaces. The Skyspace will consist of a large square chamber with an aperture cut into the roof. Through this aperture the visitor will be offered a heightened vision of the sky, seemingly transformed into a *trompe l'oeil* painting.

James Turrell is creating one of his Skyspaces at YSP within the Park's 19th-century Grade II Listed building – the deer shelter. He has first envisaged developing the deer shelter with YSP in 1993, and now thanks to The Art Fund his vision has been realised. The work will not alter the shape of the landscape or disturb the tranquillity of the site, but will create a place of contemplation and revelation, harnessing the changing light of the Yorkshire sky.

"Look within yourself and welcome the light", was once the advice of James Turrell's Quaker grandmother, scarcely anticipating where it might lead him. Born in Los Angeles in 1943, Turrell was fascinated by flying and aircraft from an early age. He worked as a pilot before studying mathematics and perceptual psychology. His interest in optics and visual phenomena led him to the University of California where he started working with the medium of light to create art installations. Turrell is perhaps best known for his

We are an independent charity committed to saving art for everyone to enjoy. Since we began in 1903, we have helped to save over 850,000 works of art. Today, some 80,000 members fund our work. In return, they receive free or reduced-price admission to many museums and galleries in the UK. This is not the only reason they join: they support us because they love art.

ambitious Roden Crater project in the Arizona desert. He has spent over 30 years transforming an entire extinct volcano into a series of Skyspaces that will harness the light from sun, moon and stars.

James Turrell has long been an admirer of the Yorkshire landscape and what he calls England's 'maritime sky'. His Skyspace will contribute to YSP's growing international reputation for displaying significant contemporary art and sculpture. YSP is also hosting an exhibition of James Turrell's light installations in the Underground Gallery until September 2006.

**- Ends -**

**Please note: At busy times (weekends and public holidays) timed tickets may be in operation. For further information please call YSP on 01924 832631**

**For further information please contact Sarah Harrison or Francesca Rivett-Carnac in The Art Fund press office on 020 7225 4822/4837.**

**Notes to editors:**

- The full title of the art work is **James Turrell Deer Shelter: An Art Fund Commission** and it should be referred to as such in the first instance. Subsequent mentions can be shortened to **Deer Shelter**. All images must be captioned with the full title of the work.
- The Art Fund is the UK's leading independent art charity. It offers grants to help UK museums and galleries enrich their collections and campaigns widely on behalf of museums and their visitors
- It has 80,000 members. Since its foundation in 1903, The Art Fund has helped UK public collections acquire over 850,000 works of art, ranging from Bronze Age treasures to contemporary works of art
- In 2005 The Art Fund offered over £4.1 million to museums and galleries and distributed 12 gifts and bequests
- Independent of government, The Art Fund is uniquely placed to campaign on behalf of public collections across the UK. It was at the forefront of the campaign for free admission in 2002 and the campaign to save the Macclesfield Psalter in 2005
- This April The Art Fund will unveil one of the most significant projects in its history – a permanent 'Skyspace' at Yorkshire Sculpture Park by James Turrell
- The Art Fund is currently undertaking a groundbreaking survey of UK museum and gallery acquisitions, to build a comprehensive picture of collecting activity in the 21st century. They will be published in May 2006
- A 10-part documentary series on the Art Fund is to be aired on sky channel Artsworld, beginning April 23. Saved for the Nation will celebrate 100 art treasures acquired with The Art Fund's help over the last century.
- Visit the charity's website at [www.artfund.org](http://www.artfund.org).
- Yorkshire Sculpture Park, near Wakefield, is an independent art gallery, registered museum and charity which was established in 1977
- YSP curates changing international exhibitions of modern and contemporary sculpture in 500 acres of 18th-century landscaped grounds and gardens. The park is open daily 10am – 5pm. Admission free
- Yorkshire Sculpture Park receives funding from: Arts Council England, Wakefield MDC, The Henry Moore Foundation, West Yorkshire Grants (a joint committee of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield Councils)
- Visit the YSP website at [www.ysp.co.uk](http://www.ysp.co.uk)