

Tecnológico de Monterrey and DistritoTec usher in ‘Skyspace: Spirit of Light,’ by artist James Turrell

- *The project was implemented by Tec de Monterrey’s Arts Initiative, in conjunction with DistritoTec.*
- *There are more than 90 ‘skyspaces’ worldwide. “Skyspace: Spirit of Light”, installed on the Monterrey campus, is the first artwork of its kind in Nuevo León, and the third in Mexico.*
- *This installation strengthens the mission of DistritoTec, which seeks to use art as a channel for fostering interaction, provoking encounters, generating innovative ideas, and promoting human flourishing.*

Monterrey, Nuevo León, on February 25, 2022.- ‘Skyspace: Spirit of Light,’ an installation designed by American artist James Turrell, now forms part of DistritoTec in Monterrey, a cultural destination that contributes to the status of the space, making use of innovation to generate quality of life, attract creativity, and provoke encounters so that new ideas may emerge.

This artwork, inaugurated on February 21, was designed as an observatory that generates a unique visual experience through a sequence of lights every 12 hours, in the morning and evening, inspired by the ‘Light & Space’ art movement. It was created with the aim of paying homage to the life and work of Don Eugenio Garza Sada and Eugenio Garza Lagüera. The project was also overseen by DistritoTec, Tecnológico de Monterrey’s Arts Initiative, and Laboratorio Arte A.C.

“Skyspace: Spirit of Light” offers an immersive spectacle that aims to engage the public through the limits of visual perception and the nature of light itself. It consists of three main areas: the contemplation area outside; the inner chamber, and two tunnels for entering and leaving.

According to José Antonio Fernández Carbajal, Chairman of the Board of Tec de Monterrey, art is an important channel for communication and reflection, which is why public art has been promoted in DistritoTec since the project’s inception. “Art and culture can transform people, so we contribute to transforming the community in this way too.”

“From now on, this work and its legacy will be part of the TEC, DistritoTec, and the cultural heritage of Monterrey. I also trust that this will push us to make a similar impact on all our campuses. That is our task: transforming people’s lives, communities, and surroundings to be able to fully engage with our world,” added Fernández Carbajal.

Both Turrell and Tec de Monterrey share the conviction that this new artwork will be an artistic asset to the city. Hence, the importance of its location in Central Park, a space for people to meet up, hang out, and relax.

David Garza Salazar, rector and executive president of Tecnológico de Monterrey, recalled that Tecnológico de Monterrey had launched DistritoTec 8 years previously as “a project that allowed us to imagine how this zone would be transformed over time. Now, this has been realized. In this Central Park, which is the most public place created for the community, not only of the Tec but also of the city, we’re very pleased to inaugurate an emblematic piece that blends science and art and will be accessible to the public.

“We hope it will become a favorite place for the Monterrey community and visitors to the city, and also thank the Garza-Lagüera Gonda family for their generosity and support in making ‘Skyspace: Spirit of Light’ possible.”

For his part, J. Turrell, author of “Spirit of Light,” shared the story behind his work on manipulating light and the vision behind the artwork. He mentioned that he is very pleased to have created it in Monterrey, and that it will become part of the city, finding its own power.

“This is a piece that belongs to the university, to Tec de Monterrey. Ultimately, I’ll leave it here and people here will know more about it than I do. I imagined it, installed it, began it, but it will become yours,” he said.

Undoubtedly, this work marks a milestone in DistritoTec’s public art program, which for eight years has been promoting artistic expression as a form of provoking encounters and forming community. One example of this is the Exhibition Pavilion from Laboratorio Arte A.C. in Central Park, which will continuously be presenting exhibitions involving projects from the institution’s School of Architecture. It opened the “James Turrell: Spirit of Light” Exhibition on February 18 as a way of showing the creation and construction process behind this new project from James Turrell in Monterrey.

During the presentation of the artwork, Bárbara Garza Lagüera Gonda, Active Associate of Tecnológico de Monterrey and Vice Chairwoman of the Board for Mexico City Campus, said that “Spirit of Light” will be open to all who want to visit it and experience its magic. “I’m certain that ‘Skyspace: Spirit of Light’ will become one of our city’s landmarks.”

“I want to thank James Turrell from the bottom of my heart for sharing his vision, talent, and art with us. This Spirit of Light shines with the memory of our father, Eugenio Garza Lagüera, and our grandfather, Eugenio Garza Sada. Their conviction that education enables people to prosper shines brighter than ever today,” she said.

The inauguration of “Spirit of Light” was attended by David Garza Salazar, Rector and Executive President of Tecnológico de Monterrey; Mario Adrián Flores Castro, Vice President for the Monterrey Region of Tecnológico de Monterrey; and Sheila Ferniza Quiroz, Urban Environment Design Leader for DistritoTec; as well as Luis Donald Colosio Riojas, Municipal President of Monterrey; and Marilú García Luna, Monterrey President of the System for Family Development (DIF).

Members of the public will be able to visit “Skyspace: Spirit of Light” and experience Turrell’s unique artistic vision, in the process engaging with mediations on time and space that are as

relevant today as they have been throughout human history. The method for scheduling visits will be announced in the following weeks.

About James Turrell

He is an American artist known around the world for his interactive installations that engage viewers with the limits of human perception. Turrell, who also represents the “Light and Space” movement which is related to optical art, minimalism, and geometric abstraction, has received multiple prestigious awards, including the MacArthur Fellowship in 1984 and the National Medal of Arts in 2013.

This work is one of only three permanent installations in Mexico, the first of which is “Water of Light,” which illuminates a cenote located in Mérida, Yucatán, and “Encounter,” which is in the Botanical Garden of Culiacán.

URL for downloading photographs: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1hNOc4-OGawknsxWUJwbPoX_mKHrbsEQY?usp=sharing

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About Tecnológico de Monterrey

Tecnológico de Monterrey (<http://www.tec.mx>) is a private, not-for-profit multi-campus university system. Since it was founded in 1943, it has stood out for its academic excellence, educational innovation, entrepreneurship, and internationalization, as well as its outreach with industry and employers, and its proven track record. It has campuses in 29 Mexican cities; 67,000 undergraduate and graduate students and almost 7,000 professors; as well as more than 26,000 high school students and 2,500 professors at that level. The institution has been accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) since 1950. According to the QS World University Rankings (2022), it holds 161st place, ranked number 30 among the world's private universities; and number 1 in Latin America and 26th in the world in the QS Graduate Employability Rankings (2022). In the Times Higher Education Latin America University Rankings (2021), it is number 4 in Latin America; as well as being the only university outside the U.S. in the Top Schools for Entrepreneurship Ranking (2021) from Princeton Review and Entrepreneur, occupying 5th place in entrepreneurship programs at undergraduate level. It belongs to several networks with international prestige, such as the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU), Universitas 21 (U21), and the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN).

About DistritoTec

DistritoTec is an innovation district in the city of Monterrey that operates under a model of co-responsibility to provide city living with new value standards for everyone.