

## Making Light Visible

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| <b>Course #</b>                        | 20FML  |
| <b>Format:</b>                         | Seminar  |
| <b>Moderators:</b>                     | Ellen Kosmer, Betsy Siersma                            |
| <b>Date and Time:</b>                  | Tuesday, 9:30-11:30<br>10 weeks, starting September 22 |
| <b>Location:</b>                       | Applewood in Amherst, meeting room                     |
| <b>Maximum number of participants:</b> | 16   |
| <b>Auditors accepted:</b>              | Yes, up to 2   |

**Purpose:** Light is everywhere around us, making the world visible. Rather than delving into the science of light, we will examine our experience of light and how visual artists make us aware of our experiences through their vision.

**Description:** In this seminar we examine transformations of light from early Christian mosaics and medieval stained glass to the California light and space installations of the 1960s. The stained-glass windows of Ste Chapelle in Paris dematerialize its delicate architecture, transforming it into an envelope of colored light; whereas the small, colored glass windows of Corbusier's Ronchamp Chapel allow a dim, slanted light into its interior emphasizing the weight of its thick concrete walls. Caravaggio creates dramas out of piercing light and dark shadows. Claude Monet creates paintings, almost abstractions, shimmering with light and reflection, capturing light as it changes throughout the day. We will look at contemporary artists James Turrell, Robert Irwin, Jenny Holzer, Dan Flavin and others who take light they create as the subject of their work. In short, we will discover how artists have dealt with light as spiritual or divine, as medium, subject, as reflected, painted, projected or modeled.

**Role of participants:** Participants will read the assigned book, research and present a topic for approximately 20 minutes and lead a discussion on their own presentation.

**Resources:** Bruce Watson, *Light: A Radiant History from Creation to the Quantum Age*, 2016, Levellers Press, Amherst, MA.

**About the Moderators:** Ellen Kosmer is an art historian and an artist. Betsy Siersma was a curator of modern and contemporary art.