

Observing Turrell's skyspace at PS1 in 2009

James Turrell "Meeting" skyspace at PS1 Museum in Long Island City, NY. 4-5 PM, Monday, November 23, 2009.

A very faint rain fell for most of the hour. The sun set at 4:32 PM. The observations below were recorded by the students of my "Experiments in Beauty" class (NYU undergraduate psychology), another NYU undergrad, Marianne Jacob, and two NYU center for neural science postdocs, Toni Saarela and Luke Hallum. The class visits to learn observation, as explained in this article: <http://psych.nyu.edu/pelli/pubs/pellizoo5turrell.pdf> -Denis Pelli, Professor of Psychology & Neural Science at NYU

4:18 Puffs of clouds change light. -Malia Norman

4:20 The sky looks as if it were on the level of the ceiling, i.e. there is no apparent difference in depth between the ceiling and the sky. Everything looks flat. A bird appears in view. Immediately the sky "pulls back" and there is a very vivid impression of depth. -Toni Saarela

4:23 Birds flying in formation. Looks like a painting. -Malia Norman

4:25 I can feel the the rain on my face, but I can't see it. -Denis Pelli

4:36 Equiluminance: the ceiling and the sky are equally bright. -Denis Pelli

4:40 I saw a darker cloud mixing in with the lighter clouds, slowly changing the sky dark blue. It was this movement of shades of the clouds that caught my eye. -Diane Kim

4:44 Sky is starting to look more and more blue as the walls appear to be a yellow-orange color. -Alisen Pappalardo

4:46 I see a difference in brightness across the cut out. The sky seen along the perimeter of the rectangle is darker than the inner sky. This perceptual difference is probably due to the contrast with the light in the room. -Melanie Ceder

4:47 Darkness allows patterns in sky from clouds to become apparent. Circling birds flowing with movement of clouds. -Malia Norman

4:47 It is darker outside than inside. When looking at the dark clouds, they seem to come to a halt. At the same time, the window seems to expand as if the ceiling were moving towards me and there were a greater opening to the sky. -Toni Saarela

4:48 Room has an orange glow. -Stefani Tellefsen

4:51 The sky is now a really amazing dark purple blue color that feels fading. -Megan Smith

4:53 There was a brief flash of lightning in the dimming sky. -Meng Zhang

4:56 Can no longer tell clouds apart from the rest of the sky (or if there are even clouds). Everything looks the same colour. -Bill Cheng

4:57 Is the aperture square? From here (sitting on the bench), it looks square. From there (lying on the ground), it looks rectangular. -Luke Hallum

4:58 Dark blue plexiglass sheet hanging below ceiling. No clouds. -Denis Pelli

4:58 Eyes follow the dark then the light. Begin to see less and less distinct shadows and eyes start to play tricks. (Is it a shadow?) -Malia Norman

4:59 Sky loses its depth due to darkness. It begins to look like a flat square without dimension. -Brittan Badenhop

4:59 There are reverberations of the color blue. -Marianne Jacob

5:01 The uniform color/luminance of the sky made the aperture appear as though it was covered by glass. But when I saw and felt raindrops on my forehead, it shattered the illusion of being in an enclosed room. -Angel Patel

