

# [The light and space movement assignment](https://assignbuster.com/the-light-and-space-movement-assignment/)

The Light and Space Movement: An Embodiment of the Sublime Throughout its history, the radiant light and tempered atmosphere distinctive of Cali fornia’s environment, as well as it landscape and culture, has been a source of inspiration for artists. In the first half of the twentieth century, the style of California Impressionism was prevalent. Ar tists involved in this movement adopted the attention to light characteristic of French Impressionists, and applied this to California landscapes.

As Minimalism gained momentum as an art movement in the 960’s, art left behind the notion of universal beauty and moved towards a new aesthetic experienc e which embodied a concept of the sublime which could adapt to the tensions of modernity. Thus emerge d a new kind of movement called Light and Space which explored how geometric shapes and light co uld affect the environment and the viewer’s perception. The Light and Space Movement was officially introduced in 1971 in the Transparency, Reflection, Light, Space exhibition at the UCLA University Art Gallery.

The exhibition f eatured work y Peter Alexander, Larry Bell, Robert Irwin, John McCracken and Craig Kauffman. Usi ng large scale installations they created immersive environments with light as the primary material using glass or plastics including polyester resin, Plexiglas and Fiberglas as conductors. By reducing art to its purest elements, light and space, the focus shifted from the work as an object to the percept ion of the viewer. The interaction of the viewer with the installation is fundamental as it can only be act ivated by one’s perceptual gaze.

Once this occurs, the viewer is provided with an overwhelming sens Ory experience that can be characterized as the modern concept of the sublime (Friel, Megan). The modern aesthetic experience embodies the tense space between reality and unr eality and the visible and invisible using light as a physical presence (Stiles, Kristine). This tensi on can be seen in the work of Light and Space artists Robert Irwin, Doug Wheeler, and namely James Tu rrell. Wheeler demonstrates of the power of light’s presence in his “ light encasement” installation, a