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Light Show explores the experiential and sculptural nature of light, tracing a historical trajectory of artwork that uses light to create specific conditions of viewership. The book, which accompanies an exhibition originating at the Hayward Gallery, London, showcases more than twenty dramatic installations and sculptures from the 1960s to the present, pictured in 150 illustrations, most in color. These include works by artists associated with historical movements such as the "Light and Space" movement of the 1970s; rarely seen installations by such precursors as Dan Flavin and Carlos Cruz-Diez; and work by contemporary artists who have found new ways to use light as a sculptural medium.

All of the artworks explore different aspects related to light, including color, duration, movement, sunlight, and moonlight. Some, including Dan Flavin's work made from fluorescent tubes, use light to dematerialize space while others, such as Anthony McCall's "solid light" projections, give light an almost tangible quality. Many light works create immersive experiences, including Olafur Eliasson's atmospheric environments; still others use light as a medium for political response, including Jenny Holzer's LED signs that broadcast censored documents from the "war on terror."

Light Show features essays by the curator and editor Cliff Lauson, the art historian Anne Wagner, and the science writer Philip Ball, who traces the rich history of light as a medium, from phenomenon to artwork.