

Light and Campus Design



Two recent art exhibitions bring to mind how light can be manipulated to define space and evoke emotion, thus creating intentional campus design effects. Georges de La Tour (National Art Gallery) illuminates his interiors so as to bring the eye to the central subject, and through the contrast of dark and light evoke in his paintings a contemplative mood. At Iowa State University, the Palladian window frames the symbolic clock tower. The gesture to history is modulated by seasonal changes in light and dark. For some, there are parallel responses in visceral viewing: sedating winter, exuberant spring, fulfilling summer, and autumnal repose. American painter Thomas Eakins (Yale University Art Gallery) has few peers in arranging light to sharpen his landscapes. Reminiscent is the time-frozen effect at the University of the Americas (Mexico). The patio's deep shadows and intense sunlight are orchestrated into a distinctive sense of place.



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