Suggested definition of laser effects for the ILDA Artistic Awards

Draft 2.0, 28 October 2026

To be discussed 3 November at the Awards Seminar during the ILDA Conference

Introduction

The ILDA Artistic Awards recognize the artistic use of **laser** effects. Judges focus primarily on the laser effects in an entry.

Some Artistic Awards categories allow entries to include non-laser effects, such as conventional stage lighting, video projection, and effects from Laser Illuminated Lighting Instruments (LILIs) and similar laser-based lighting instruments or devices that resemble conventional lighting. Although such effects are permitted in those categories, they are not the primary focus of judging.

The definition below helps entrants and judges distinguish between effects that count as “laser effects” for Artistic Awards judging purposes, and those that do not.

Definitions

For purposes of ILDA Artistic Awards entering and judging:

1. **Effects that count as “laser effects”:** Those produced by visible laser light, whether the light is emitted directly, modified by optical elements, or scanned or projected onto a surface.

   Effects produced by LILIs and similar laser-based lighting instruments or devices also count as “laser effects” when their appearance and use resemble traditional laser display effects, such as sharply defined beams, multi-beam arrays, scanned graphics, or lumia. This applies regardless of whether the visible light is emitted directly by lasers or generated through laser-excited phosphors.

   Effects also count as “laser effects” when visible laser light or non-visible laser radiation (e.g., UV) is scanned or projected onto fluorescent or phosphorescent surfaces to create drawings or effects through visible light emitted by the surface.

2. **Effects that do not count as “laser effects”:** Those produced by LILIs and similar laser-based lighting instruments or devices when their appearance and use resemble conventional non-laser lighting effects, such as gobo projections, conventional moving-head prism effects, framing effects, or broad washes of light.

Laser video projection and display holography also do not count as “laser effects” for Artistic Awards judging purposes.

If an effect meets the criteria in both Sections 1 and 2, then Section 2 takes precedence, meaning that the effect is excluded from the definition of “laser effects” for ILDA Artistic Awards purposes.

Applicability

This Definition applies only to the ILDA Artistic Awards, beginning with the 2027 Awards year. This Definition does not apply to the ILDA Technical Awards, or to Artistic Awards entries and winners from 2026 or earlier.

Interpretive Guidance

Whether an effect counts as a “laser effect” depends on both the technology used to produce it and its visual appearance and use. Simply using a laser somewhere in the chain from electricity to visible light does not necessarily make an effect a “laser effect” for Artistic Awards judging purposes.

For example, an effect from a LILI or similar laser-based lighting instrument or device may count as a “laser effect” when the effect resembles traditional laser displays, such as sharply defined laser beams. However, the effect may not count when it resembles effects typically produced by conventional non-laser lighting instruments.

Laser-excited fluorescence or phosphorescence counts as a “laser effect” when visible laser light or non-visible laser radiation (e.g., UV) is scanned or projected onto a fluorescent or phosphorescent surface to create visible drawings or effects. (This is already covered by a separate Artistic Awards rule.)

However, laser-excited fluorescence or phosphorescence does not count simply because laser-excited materials generate light inside a lighting instrument.