

PRESS RELEASE

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Williams College Museum of Art Presents

The ABCDs of Sol LeWitt

November 14, 2008–May 17, 2009

Williamstown, Mass. — Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA) presents *The ABCDs of Sol LeWitt*, an exhibition featuring important works from the private collection of Sol LeWitt (American, 1928–2007) that explores the underlying grammar of the artist's work and ideas. The opening reception at WCMA on Friday, November 14 at 4:00 pm initiates a weekend of events that celebrate LeWitt's extraordinary achievements. On Saturday, November 15 at 10:00 am, a lecture by LeWitt scholar and curator Andrea Miller-Keller will be held at the '62 Center for Theatre and Dance at Williams College, followed by a conversation with artists Mel Bochner, Michael Glier, and Whitney Museum of American Art curator, Chrissie Iles about LeWitt's continued significance. On Sunday, November 16, the public opening of *Sol LeWitt: A Wall Drawing Retrospective* will take place at MASS MoCA at noon. *The ABCDs of Sol LeWitt* complements *Sol LeWitt: A Wall Drawing Retrospective*, which was made possible by a partnership among MASS MoCA, the Williams College Museum of Art, and the Yale University Art Gallery. These events are free to the public, and all are invited to attend. More details follow.

The ABCDs of Sol LeWitt examines the visual vocabulary and aesthetic principles LeWitt employed throughout his forty year career. One of the pioneers of Conceptual Art in the 1960s, LeWitt emphasized the idea underpinning a work

over its material realization. Early texts such as “Serial Project No. 1,” published in Aspen Magazine in 1966, established predetermined regulations that guide the arrangement of squares and cubes in the configuration of a corresponding structure (or three-dimensional object). Likening these shapes to a work’s “syntax” and later to its “grammar,” LeWitt defined forms as organizational components. As with language, which is often constituted by sets of rules and words, the artist’s body of work expresses ideas that can be both complicated and straightforward in their verbal and formal permutations. *The ABCDs of Sol LeWitt* considers how expansive LeWitt’s fundamental methods are when paired with basic elements like the cube and square.

The ABCDs of Sol LeWitt highlights the conceptual process LeWitt articulated in the 1960s but developed and reinterpreted over the course of decades in his production. The exhibition begins in the museum’s Aaron Gallery with an *ABCD* row (a variation from “Serial Project No.1”) and a selection of the artist’s writings, working drawings, and works on paper. Also on view is a group of *Complex Forms*, including an example given to the museum by Sol and Carol LeWitt, installed in the museum’s neoclassical rotunda. Although LeWitt stated in 1966 that “A more complex form would be too interesting in itself and obstruct the meaning of the whole,” he would use this term twenty years later when he developed these multifaceted structures, derived from numerical points that specify the works’ various heights.

The ABCDs of Sol LeWitt was organized by Lisa Corrin, Class of 1956 Director of the Williams College Museum of Art, and Erica DiBenedetto, Williams College Graduate Student in the History of Art, Class of 2009. “We are thrilled to be collaborating with the LeWitt Collection on this exhibition,” says Director Lisa Corrin. “The unprecedented presentation of 105 wall drawings at MASS MoCA provides a timely occasion for the Williams College Museum of Art to investigate the work of such an important figure in contemporary art and will lay the groundwork for teaching across the disciplines in years to come. *The ABCDs* inaugurates a series of annual programs and teaching exhibitions that WCMA will organize during the twenty-five-year run of the *Retrospective* at MASS MoCA. The two openings launch a long-term resource for our faculty and students at both institutions.” DiBenedetto adds, “As a graduate student at Williams, studying LeWitt’s process with such proximity has been a challenging

and rewarding project. LeWitt remained in dialog with his foundational ideas as he made new and stunning work later in life. That practice demonstrates the aesthetic and conceptual potential of these principles.”

Related Events

The ABCDs of Sol LeWitt Exhibition Opening Reception

Friday, November 14

4:00–6:00 pm at the museum

Sol LeWitt: A Wall Drawing Retrospective Opening Events

"Sol LeWitt's Wall Drawings in Context: Lecture and Artist Chat"

Saturday, November 15

10:00 am–12:00 pm

Main Stage, '62 Center for Theatre and Dance, Williams College

Renowned LeWitt scholar and curator, Andrea Miller-Keller, will discuss LeWitt's wall drawings in the context of his practice followed by a conversation about LeWitt's continued significance, with artists Mel Bochner, Michael Glier, and Whitney Museum of American Art curator, Chrissie Iles.

Sol LeWitt: A Wall Drawing Retrospective Opening at MASS MoCA

1040 MASS MoCA Way, North Adams, Mass.

Sunday, November 16

Noon–5:00 pm

This historic event celebrates the opening of the largest exhibition of LeWitt wall drawings ever installed and a 25% expansion of MASS MoCA's galleries. Conceived more than five years ago and designed by Sol LeWitt before he passed away last year, the exhibition is a collaboration with Yale University Art Gallery and Williams College Museum of Art. Since April 2008 60+ artists have been hard at work painting almost a mile of walls in the renovated Building 7 at the heart of the MASS MoCA campus. The completed 27,000 square foot building, which contains 100 LeWitt wall drawings, will be open free to the community on November 16.

Williams College Museum of Art

The Williams College Museum of Art is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 10

a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. Admission is free and the museum is wheelchair accessible. Contact: Suzanne A. Silitch, Director of Public Relations and External Affairs, 413.597.3178.

Yale University Art Gallery

Founded in 1832, the Yale University Art Gallery is the oldest college art museum in the United States. Today, the Gallery's encyclopedic collection numbers more than 185,000 objects ranging in date from ancient times to the present day. These holdings comprise a world-renowned collection of American paintings and decorative arts; outstanding collections of Greek and Roman art, including the artifacts excavated at the ancient Roman city of Dura-Europos; the Jarves, Griggs, and Rabinowitz Collections of early Italian paintings; European, Asian, and African art from diverse cultures, including the recently acquired Charles B. Benenson Collection of African art; art of the ancient Americas; the Société Anonyme Collection of early twentieth-century European and American art; and Impressionist, modern, and contemporary works. The renovation of the Gallery's 1953 Louis Kahn building, finished in 2006, is part of a comprehensive renovation and expansion of the museum's entire facility, scheduled for completion in 2011.

The Gallery is both a collecting and an educational institution, and all activities are aimed at providing an invaluable resource and experience for Yale University faculty, staff, and students, as well as for the general public. The Gallery is free and open to the public: Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm (Thursday until 8:00 pm, September-June); Sunday 1:00 to 6:00 pm. Closed Mondays and major holidays. 1111 Chapel Street (at York), New Haven, Connecticut. For additional information call 203.432.0600 or visit <http://artgallery.yale.edu>.

MASS MoCA

The largest center for contemporary visual and performing arts in the United States, **MASS MoCA** is located off Marshall Street in North Adams,

Massachusetts, on a thirteen-acre campus of renovated nineteenth-century factory buildings. MASS MoCA juxtaposes a beautifully restored icon of the American industrial past with some of the liveliest, most evocative—and provocative—art being made today. Emphasizing art that charts new territory, art that ignores traditional boundaries between the performing and visual arts, and installations that are truly vast in scale and environmental in feeling, MASS MoCA has received some of the nation’s most coveted architectural and historic preservation honors. From Robert Wilson and Robert Lepage to rollicking dance parties and its crowd-pleasing “silent film/live music” series, MASS MoCA’s astonishingly varied performing arts program has reshaped the cultural landscape of New England. MASS MoCA’s galleries are open from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm, closed Tuesdays, and open every day 10:00 am to 6:00 pm from July 1 through Labor Day. For additional information call 413.662.2111 or visit www.massmoca.org.