

PAULA COOPER GALLERY

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SOL LEWITT: ARCS AND LINES

Paula Cooper Gallery
534 West 21st Street, New York
May 7 – August 26, 2011

NEW YORK – The Paula Cooper Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of Sol LeWitt wall drawings composed of arcs and lines. These important works, one of which is presented here for the first time since its creation, will be on view from May 7, 2011 through August 26 at 534 W. 21st Street.

From the simple straight line, in black pencil on a white wall, of his first wall drawings, to the luminous ink washes, exuberant swirls of color and final scribbled graphite works, LeWitt developed, throughout his entire career, a body of wall works that thoroughly transformed and enriched the very definition of contemporary art. Realized directly on the wall yet different from frescoes in their ability to be re-created, the wall drawings are impermanent manifestations of an idea. In LeWitt's words, "All decisions are made beforehand, so execution becomes a perfunctory affair." These quietly revolutionary works detached art from the condition of being an object and concentrated the viewer's attention on aesthetic form as the lucid exposition of thought.

During the 1970s and early 1980s, LeWitt's privileged lexicon was an array of straight, non-straight, and broken lines and arcs traced in black and primary colors. The three wall drawings presented here are such explorations of the drawn line. In the front gallery, two works composed of identical grids containing colored straight lines and arcs (*Wall Drawings #392, #393*) dialogue in counterpoint. The works were commissioned in 1983 by the Musée d'Art Contemporain of Bordeaux, France, and intended for children to execute in the Museum's Atelier d'Enfants (*children workshop*). *Wall Drawing #393* has never been exhibited since.

In the main space is *Wall Drawing #122*, first installed in 1972 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. As specified in its title-cum-definition, the work contains "All combinations of two lines crossing, placed at random, using arcs from corners and sides, straight, not straight and broken lines" resulting in 150 unique pairings that unfold on the gallery walls. LeWitt further expanded on this theme, creating variations such as *Wall Drawing #260* (Museum of Modern Art, New York), which systematically runs through all possible two-part combinations of arcs and lines.

Sol LeWitt (1928 – 2007) was born in Hartford, Connecticut, and graduated from Syracuse University in 1949. In 1953 he moved to New York, where had his first one-person show at the John Daniels Gallery in 1965. His first wall drawing, *Drawing Series II 18 (A&B)*, was created at the Paula Cooper Gallery in 1968. The Gemeentemuseum in The Hague presented his first retrospective exhibition in 1970, and his work was later shown in a major mid-career retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 1978. His work has been featured in innumerable group exhibitions. LeWitt's pieces are in some of the most prestigious public collections in the world, including the Museum of

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Modern Art in New York, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Centre National d'Art Moderne Georges Pompidou, Paris, the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Turin's Castello di Rivoli, the Moderna Museet Stockholm and the Tate Gallery, London, to name but a few.

In November 2008 "Sol LeWitt: A Wall Drawing Retrospective" opened at MassMOCA (Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art), and will remain on view for 25 years.

For more information, please contact the gallery: (212) 255-1105; info@paulacoopergallery.com