

Cristea Roberts Gallery

43 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JG
+44 (0)20 7439 1866
info@cristearoberts.com
www.cristearoberts.com

Press Information

Press Contact:
Charlotte Hampshaw
charlotte.hampshaw@cristearoberts.com
+44 (0)20 7439 1866

The Location of Lines: The Prints of Sol LeWitt 1970 – 2005

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Cristea Roberts Gallery is pleased to present a display of prints by American artist Sol LeWitt (1928 – 2007), which showcases the role of printmaking in the artist's work, as an integral part of his conceptual approach and artistic strategy.

This retrospective of prints is the first dedicated to the artist in eight years, bringing together over twenty graphic works made from 1970 – 2005, some unveiled at Cristea Roberts Gallery for the first time, in a diverse array of techniques, such as woodcut, screenprint, linocut, etching and embossing.

Printmaking became central to LeWitt's practice in 1970, previously the artist was best known for his wall drawings and modular cube structures; his earliest works were typically sets of rigorous instructions which when followed created precise, geometric forms. LeWitt's methodical approach, which made way for the Minimalist and Conceptual art movements, was synonymous with the collaborative and incisive nature of printmaking.

In 1975, the artist began working with the master printers at Watanabe Studio, after sharing a loft building with them and other artist tenants on New York City's Lower East Side. LeWitt formed a close relationship with the printmakers, he valued the ways in which the printing process created objective distance between the art and the artist's hand. Over the course of his career, LeWitt would go on to complete nearly three hundred editioned print projects.

For the first time, Cristea Roberts Gallery presents a series of embossed works made with paper-pulp, entitled *W*, 1996. These works on paper are deeply textural and layered, seeming to rise beyond the limits of the two-dimensional plane. Many of the artist's titles read as if they were instructions; *Fifteen Equal Arcs from the Midpoint of the Bottom, with All One, Two, Three and Four part Combinations of Four Colors*, made in 1990, depict concentric semicircles in a variety of colours, that seem to radiate outwards.

LeWitt's full portfolio, *Forms Derived from a Cube*, 1991, will also be on show, depicting a variety of geometric forms in similar colours. In *Lines in Four Directions in Color on Color*, 2005, the artist illustrates the power of gradation to completely alter the composition of an image. LeWitt experimented with a number of different printing techniques to explore their full effects. In the 1990s, he began to introduce curved lines and brighter colours, as seen in *Irregular Bands*, 1995, a series of four etchings with aquatint. In *Bands (Not Straight) in Four Directions*, 1999, the artist used four colourways to achieve contrasting relationships and patterns in each variation of the work.

Distorted Cubes, 2001, are a tour de force within the artist's graphic oeuvre. In this series of linocuts, the artist carved twenty-one cubes on separate blocks which were then reassembled like a jigsaw puzzle within a rectangular frame. Throughout his practice, LeWitt prioritised the conceptual aspect of his work over physical,

personal execution; the artist explored multiple configurations within different series, his systemic use of lines becoming a channel for possibility. *"Using a simple form repeatedly narrows the field of the work and concentrates the intensity to the arrangement of the form. This arrangement becomes the end while the form becomes the means."* **Sol LeWitt**

About Sol LeWitt

Sol LeWitt (1928 – 2007) was born in Hartford, Connecticut, USA. He received a BFA from Syracuse University, New York, in 1949. LeWitt believed in the primacy of the idea or concept in an artwork over and above its execution or outcome. He used basic shapes and colors to create drawings, prints, paintings and structures, exploring repetitions and variations of these simple elements to achieve complex relationships and patterns.

LeWitt is best known for his large-scale wall drawings, making over 1,200 over his lifetime. In 1978, he had his first retrospective at Museum of Modern Art, New York, and in 2000, a retrospective organised by San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, travelled to the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago.

LeWitt is the subject of countless solo exhibitions worldwide; in 2025 the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo in Japan opened a major retrospective dedicated to the artist. LeWitt's work is also held in the collections of Albertina, Vienna; Kunstmuseum, Basel; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia; and Tate, London.

Sol LeWitt died aged 78 in 2007 in New York, USA.

About Cristea Roberts Gallery

Cristea Roberts Gallery is a leading international art gallery with a particular focus on original prints and works on paper. The underlying ethos of the gallery has always been artist-led. Acknowledged as one of the leading galleries in its field of speciality, the gallery's programme is dedicated to publishing, cataloguing, exhibiting and dealing in original prints and drawings by its roster of over 30 important international artists and Estates.

It participates in all the major international art fairs and has a dynamic programme of exhibitions hosted in its bespoke space in Pall Mall, London. The gallery works closely with international museums on acquisitions and loans, and examples of its editions are held in major public collections around the world including Tate, London; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and Museum of Modern Art, New York.