

Press Contact

Shaili Shah
sshah@themorgan.org, 212.590.0311

THE MORGAN INSTALLS GEOMETRIC WALL DRAWING BY IMPORTANT CONCEPTUAL ARTIST SOL LEWITT

Donated to the Morgan, Wall Drawing 552D will be on view in Gilbert Court



Sol LeWitt (1928-2007), *Wall Drawing 552D*, A tilted form with color ink washes superimposed. The walls are bordered by 8" (20 cm) black bands. Color ink wash, dimensions variable. First Drawn by: David Higginbotham, Linda Taylor, Jo Watanabe. First Installation: Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh, Scotland, December 1987. Gift of the LeWitt Family in Honor of Richard and Ronay Menschel. © 2018 The LeWitt Estate / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York

New York, NY, July 23, 2018 — The Morgan Library & Museum is proud to announce the gift of *Wall Drawing 552D* by the LeWitt Family, in honor of Richard and Ronay Menschel. This large-scale drawing will be on view at the Morgan beginning summer 2018. As one of the pioneers of Conceptual art, LeWitt first became famous for his three-dimensional structures based on variations on the square and the cube. Turning to drawing shortly after, LeWitt radically transformed the medium through innovative approaches such as drawing directly on the wall.

In celebration of his legacy, *Wall Drawing 552D* will be presented in Gilbert Court for at least two years. LeWitt's tilted cube playfully complements Renzo Piano's geometric architecture, notably the nearby Clare Eddy Thaw Gallery, informally referred to as "the cube."

In a radical gesture, LeWitt made his first wall drawing by drawing directly on the wall in pencil, for an exhibition at Paula Cooper Gallery in 1968. "In conceptual art the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work," wrote LeWitt in 1967, "All of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair." Consistent with his groundbreaking writings on the subject, each wall drawing exists primarily as a set of detailed written instructions, which are then executed by draftspersons. At the end of exhibition, the drawing is painted over, challenging conventional notions of artistic authorship and status. Visitors will be able to witness the installation process for *Wall Drawing 552D* between June 29 and August 22, 2018.

LeWitt conceived over a thousand such wall drawings using graphite, colored pencil, crayon, ink, ink wash, and acrylic. Many of LeWitt's wall drawings from the 1980s feature the cube and its derivative forms, but with a heightened interest in color and perception. To achieve rich and luminous surfaces—inspired by his visits to Italian Renaissance frescoes—LeWitt devised a specific system of superimposing pigments, layer upon wet layer, with ink-soaked rags

Several wall drawings are visible today in public spaces in Manhattan, such as the lobby of the Museum of Modern Art, the Jewish Museum, the lobby of 26 Federal Plaza, and the 59th Street–Columbus Circle subway station. However, *Wall Drawing 552D* is a rare example of LeWitt's use of ink washes. First conceived and created in 1987 at the Royal Scottish Academy in Edinburgh, Scotland, it will be approximately 20 feet high and 30 feet wide.

"Sol LeWitt's work has not only transformed the world of art, but has also enlivened and enriched the atmosphere of numerous public spaces," said Colin B. Bailey, director of the Morgan. "Since 2010, the Gilbert Court has been the site of exciting public installations of contemporary art. We are grateful to the LeWitt Family for this generous gift and delighted to pay tribute to the twentieth century master."

The Morgan Library & Museum

A complex of buildings in the heart of New York City, the Morgan Library & Museum began as the private library of financier Pierpont Morgan, one of the preeminent collectors and cultural benefactors in the United States. Today it is a museum, independent research library, music venue, architectural landmark, and historic site. A century after its founding, the Morgan maintains a unique position in the cultural life of New York City and is considered one of its greatest treasures. With the 2006 reopening of its newly renovated campus, designed by renowned architect Renzo Piano, and the 2010 refurbishment of the original library, the Morgan reaffirmed its role as an important repository for the history, art, and literature of Western civilization from 4000 B.C. to the twenty-first century.

The Morgan Library & Museum

225 Madison Avenue, at 36th Street, New York, NY 10016-3405

212.685.0008

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