

Storm King Art Center

For Immediate Release
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STORM KING PRESENTS DIVERSE RANGE OF WORK BY SOL LEWITT IN EXHIBITION CELEBRATING REINSTALLATION OF THE ART CENTER'S LARGE-SCALE *FIVE MODULAR UNITS*

From May 14 through November 15, 2008, the Storm King Art Center will present a special exhibition comprising eleven sculptures by **Sol LeWitt**, one of the most important and influential American artists of the last century. This first major showing of LeWitt's three-dimensional works since 2005 brings together key sculptures that foster a deeper appreciation of the artist's work and its significance to American art. With works on loan from the LeWitt Collection, Estate of Sol LeWitt, several private collections, and PaceWildenstein Gallery, the exhibition—organized by David R. Collens, director and curator of the Storm King Art Center—celebrates the reinstallation of Storm King's *Five Modular Units*, 1971, a seminal work by the artist that was recently refabricated. Support for the exhibition has come from individuals and foundations nationwide.

Exhibition

Sol LeWitt (1928–2007), called “a lodestar of modern American art” by *New York Times* art critic Michael Kimmelman in his obituary of Mr. LeWitt, was among the world's most pioneering and prolific artists. Beginning in the mid-1960s, he led a generation that rejected the gestural painting of the



Sol LeWitt, *Five Modular Units*, 1971. Collection Storm King Art Center, Mountainville, NY. Gift of the Ralph E. Ogden Foundation, Inc. ©Estate of Sol LeWitt/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photograph by Jerry L. Thompson

Abstract Expressionists in favor of what would come to be known as Conceptual art. Believing that a work of art is first and foremost the embodiment of an idea, he held that once that idea is expressed as a set of explicit instructions, the object itself can be realized by anyone. Additionally, he limited himself to a narrow vocabulary of geometric forms, including, most notably in his three-

dimensional work, variations on the cube. From these basic elements—written instructions and simple forms—LeWitt created a body of work of stunning variety and nuance.

Installed both in the museum building and on the adjacent lawn and patio, the Storm King exhibition includes works in aluminum, fiberglass, wood, and steel, ranging from 1967 to 2006, and demonstrating the enormous breadth and complexity of LeWitt’s art. The exhibition also shows how, late in his career, LeWitt took a radically new direction, using bright acrylic paints on free-form fiberglass objects, before circling back to earlier ideas, carrying them forward, reworking, and transforming them.

One of the highlights of the exhibition is *Five Modular Units* (1971), purchased by Storm King in the year it was made. This work—comprising five open cubes joined to form a row—will be re-sited on Storm King’s south lawn, adjacent to the museum building.

Also included in the exhibition are three superb examples of the sculptures in LeWitt’s *Incomplete Open Cube* series (1974), in which the artist explored the seemingly infinite permutations of a cube that is missing one or more sides. The works on view at Storm King provide a glimpse of the great variety of LeWitt’s works. Sited outdoors, they offer new perspectives of the surrounding fields and mountains.

Moving away from his well-known vocabulary of geometric forms, *Splotch #3* (2000) comprises undulating forms, painted in vivid hues. The artist said that in these works he wanted to shift the paradigm “to something not geometrical.” Installed inside the galleries, this work, with its organic shapes, complements the rolling outdoor landscape with the Art Center’s distinguished collection.

Sol LeWitt

Sol LeWitt was born in 1928, in Hartford, Connecticut. After graduating from Syracuse University with a degree in studio art, he served in the Korean War as a graphic artist. He moved to New York in 1953 and worked as a draftsman for architect I.M. Pei. During this period he also worked in the bookstore at The Museum of Modern Art, New York (MoMA), where he met other young artists with “day jobs” at the Museum, including Dan Flavin, Robert Mangold, and Robert Ryman. Stimulated by their ideas and those of the Russian Constructivists, LeWitt decided, as he put it, “to recreate art, to start from square one.”

Mr. LeWitt’s first solo show was in 1965 at the John Daniels Gallery, New York, and his first retrospective was at MoMA, in 1978–79. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, he participated in important group exhibitions of Minimal and Conceptual art, including the Jewish

Museum, New York, in 1966, and the Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland, in 1969, and his work was included in Documentas 6 (1977) and 7 (1982), in Kassel, Germany. A major retrospective organized in 2000 by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art traveled to the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. In 2005, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, organized *Sol LeWitt on the Roof: Splotches, Whirls, and Twirls*, an exhibition of five recent sculptures and one wall drawing.

His work is in collections of major museums around the world, including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Dia:Beacon, Beacon, New York; and the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, among many others internationally. *Sol LeWitt: A Wall Drawing Retrospective*, covering forty years of work, was organized by the Yale University Art Gallery, Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (Mass MOCA), and Williams College Museum of Art. It opens at Mass MOCA, North Adams, Massachusetts, on November 16, 2008, and will remain on view for twenty-five years.

Storm King Art Center

The Storm King Art Center, widely known as one of the most distinguished and renowned sculpture parks in the world, is located approximately one hour north of the George Washington Bridge. The Art Center's permanent collection of sculpture, dating from 1945 to the present, includes works by many of the twentieth century's most influential artists, integrated into a pristine, 500-acre landscape of vistas with rolling hills, fields, and woodlands. Several of these works are specially commissioned, site-specific sculptures. The collection is regularly complemented by temporary installations both outdoors and in the museum building.

Visitor hours for the 2008 season are: April 2 through November 1, 11:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (5:00 p.m. November 2 through 15), Wednesday through Sunday; closed Mondays and Tuesdays. On Saturdays from May 24 through August 30, the Art Center grounds will remain open until 8:00 p.m.; regular admission fees apply.

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For additional information or visual materials, contact Libby Mark or Laura Brown, Jeanne Collins & Associates, LLC, New York City, 646-486-7050, or info@jcollinsassociates.com.