



The plan exists as an idea but needs to be put into its optimum form. Ideas of wall drawings alone are contradictions of the idea of wall drawings.

SOL LEWITT

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Wall Drawing #50 A, 1970

A wall divided into four parts by lines drawn from corner to corner. Each section with three different colors made of parallel lines superimposed. Color pencil.

Dimensions variable

Collection of the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Museum purchase

Acquired in 2010

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Artist Sol LeWitt is considered a founding member of two art movements—minimalism and conceptualism. At the start of his career in the 1960s, many artists were primarily interested in the material qualities of their work. LeWitt's reductive three-dimensional sculptures—what he termed “structures”—were fabricated to his specifications and focused on notions of repetition, seriality, and the permutation of basic geometric forms. These concepts formed “a plan [that] would design the work.”

This reliance on the idea “becoming a machine that makes the art” led LeWitt to abandon minimalism in 1968 to make what he called “conceptual” art. With conceptual art, the idea or concept drives the work; how the piece looks is less significant. LeWitt's wall drawings, which he produced from 1968 to his death in 2007, consist of several equal components: the concept; the instructions (a sketch or written directions) to carry out that concept; and the wall drawing itself, installed by a team of draftsmen. Since LeWitt rarely installed the drawings himself, the clarity of his instructions is important. While the draftsmen follow the instructions to the best of their ability, human mistakes and variation become part of the work.

The Museum's *Wall Drawing #50 A, 1970*, is an important early example, created just two years after LeWitt began this mode of working. By owning the signed certificate that conveys the simple instructions for the wall drawing (displayed near the piece), the Museum owns the work itself and can install it where and when it wishes. The current installation took over 650 hours to complete and is estimated to consist of over 14,000 separate lines. As with all LeWitt wall drawings, the Museum's piece is applied directly to the wall, which eliminates any notion of conventional perspective. Instead, *Wall Drawing #50 A* first appears as an expansive veil of faint color hovering in front of a large wall. When the eyes acclimate, what first appear to be solid segments of color are realized to be color pencil lines of the primary colors and black woven together. We are given the freedom to interpret these marks on the wall as we wish. As LeWitt wrote in 1967, “Different people will understand the same thing in a different way.”