

Sol LeWitt: Colour Richard Serra: Black and White

14 February - 17 March 2018



Richard Serra; *Horizontal Reversal II*, 2017. From a series of ten hand-applied Paintstik and silica on two sheets of handmade paper. 38.1 x 106.7 cm. Edition of 50.

The Alan Cristea Gallery will celebrate the prints of two great American artists, Sol LeWitt (1928 - 2007) and Richard Serra (b. 1938), in two exhibitions that will run concurrently from 14 February to 17 March 2018. **Sol LeWitt: Colour** will focus on late prints by the artist. It is the first solo exhibition of graphic works by LeWitt to be shown in the UK, since his death over twenty years ago.

Richard Serra: Black and White will include works from several recent prints series as well as six new black oil Paintstick editions which explore the properties of weight, balance and gravity. Through their ground-breaking and radical approaches, both artists went on to become prolific printmakers, using their chosen media to undermine our understanding of what constitutes an editioned work.

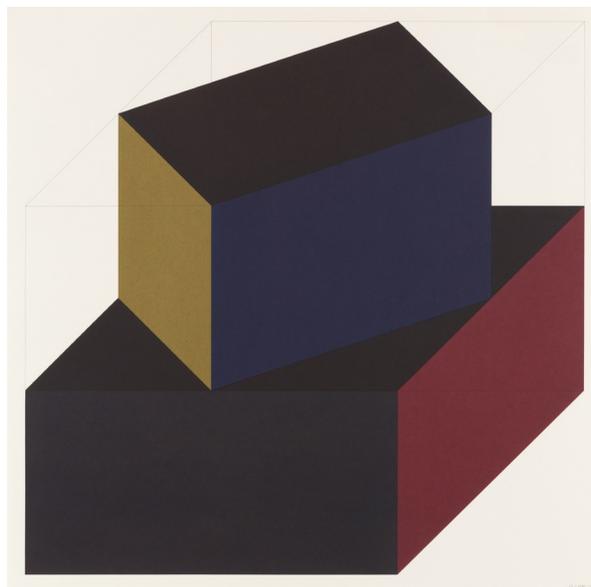
Printmaking became central to LeWitt's practice in 1970. Over his lifetime he undertook 170 print projects, and was honoured with two print retrospectives, in 1974 at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, and in 1986 at the Tate Gallery, London. The last solo presentation of LeWitt's graphic works in London was in 2007. LeWitt believed in the primacy of the idea or concept in an artwork rather than its execution or outcome, turning works into a series of ideas that anyone could, in principle, carry out. The collaborative nature of printmaking was intrinsic to his working method.

The exhibition will include several print series incorporating both organic forms and basic shapes and colours which the artist uses to form complex relationships and patterns. Woodcuts, etchings and screenprints explore variations of what LeWitt describes, in his titles, as 'straight' and 'not straight' lines and evenly delineated 'arcs'. Amongst these will be *Forms Derived from a Cube (Colors Superimposed)*, 1991 (pictured), a set of twelve screenprints, depicting twenty-four of the countless possible forms within the structure of a cube and using different colours to describe each plane.

Few artists have pushed printmaking to such sculptural extremes as Richard Serra, who has been making prints for over 45 years.

His monumental and physical way of working serves to convey weight, stability and density. New works, such as *Horizontal Reversals*, 2017 (pictured), are defined by the juxtaposition of two pieces of handmade paper framed together, that have each been divided by densely layered black pigment. This reversed composition offers a striking contrast between the weight of the black sections and the purity of the untouched white paper, as he explores the physical balance between light and dark.

The works are made using Paintstick, a combination of pigment, linseed oil, and melted wax. The mixture is moulded into large cylindrical sticks, then pressed down into a meat grinder and blended in an industrial dough mixer with silica. This is then applied in two layers, by a gloved hand, directly onto the handmade paper, pushing and rubbing in a downward direction. By layering the Paintstick, Serra asserts the physicality of the prints, which both absorb and reflect light, creating an overall matte, yet glistening, effect.



Sol LeWitt; *Forms Derived from a Cube (Colors Superimposed) VI*, 1991. From a set of twelve screenprints. Paper and image 81.3 x 81.3 cm. Edition of 35.

Alan Cristea Gallery

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About the artists

Sol LeWitt was born in 1928 in Hartford Connecticut, USA. After studying a bachelors degree in Fine Art at Syracuse University until 1949, he worked as a graphic designer for I.M Pei's architecture office in New York. In 1960 LeWitt took a job at the Museum of Modern Art in New York at the book counter where his co-workers included Robert Ryman, Dan Flavin and Robert Mangold. LeWitt participated in seminal group exhibitions including *Primary Structures*, Jewish Museum, New York, and *10*, Dwan Gallery, New York, both in 1966, Documenta IV in 1968 and Harald Szeeman's exhibition *When Attitude Becomes Form*, Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland and Institute of Contemporary Art, London, in 1969.

A major retrospective of Lewitt's work was organised by the San Francisco Museum of Art in 2000 and then travelled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. His works are found in the most important museum collections including, Tate, London; Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands; Musee National d'Art Moderne, Paris; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Australian National Gallery, Canberra; Guggenheim Museum, New York; MoMA, New York; Dia:Beacon, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington DC and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC.

Sol LeWitt died in New York in 2007.

Richard Serra was born in 1938 in San Francisco, California. He studied at the University of California, Berkeley; University of California, Santa Barbara; and Yale University, Connecticut where he worked with Josef Albers on Albers' seminal book *Interaction of Color*. Serra's bodies of work in sculpture and drawing have been celebrated with retrospectives at the Museum of Modern Art twenty years apart: *Richard Serra/Sculpture*, in 1986 and *Richard Serra Sculpture Forty Years*, in 2007.

Other major recent exhibitions include the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Spain (1999); American Academy in Rome, Italy (2000); Saint Louis Art Museum, Missouri (2003, 2014); Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Italy (2004); *Richard Serra Drawings - Work Comes Out of Work*, Kunsthhaus Bregenz (2008); *Promenade*, Monumenta, Grand Palais, Paris (2008); *Richard Serra Drawing: A Retrospective*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2011, travelled to San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California; and The Menil Collection, Houston, through 2012); Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, the Netherlands (2014); *Prints*, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas (2017); *Props, Films, Early Works*, Museum Wiesbaden, Germany (2017); *Films and Videotapes*, Kunstmuseum Basel (2017); and *Drawings 2015-2017*, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2017). In 2005, *The Matter of Time (1994-2005)*, a series of eight monumental sculptures, was installed at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. *East-West/West-East* (2014) was permanently installed in the desert of the Brouq Nature Reserve in western Qatar in 2014. Serra lives and works in New York and Nova Scotia.

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About Alan Cristea Gallery

Prompted by a continuing ambition to 'paper the world in original art', Alan Cristea opened his eponymous gallery in 1995. The gallery is the primary representative for a number of renowned contemporary artists, artists' estates and emerging artists, and is one of the world's leading publishers of original contemporary prints and editions. Having expanded considerably over the past 21 years, in October 2016 the gallery moved to new, larger, bespoke premises, better suited to the representation of the gallery's growing roster of celebrated and international artists.

The Alan Cristea Gallery is entirely artist-led and is dedicated to assisting artists in bringing new bodies of work to fruition, including editions, works on paper, paintings, sculpture or installations, which are presented in a continuous programme of public exhibitions, events and art fairs. Alongside this, the gallery also draws on Alan's 50 years of experience in the art world to provide unrivalled access to the best examples of original prints by the modern masters of the 20th and 21st centuries, from Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso to Patrick Caulfield, David Hockney and Andy Warhol.

The gallery continues to extend the legacy of some of art history's most important figures through its work with the Estates of Josef and Anni Albers, Patrick Caulfield, Naum Gabo, Richard Hamilton and Tom Wesselmann. Exhibitions for 2018 include Christiane Baumgartner, Julian Opie, Richard Woods, and Anni Albers

Visitor information:

Mon - Fri 10am - 5.30pm
Sat 11am - 2pm
Closed on Sundays and public holidays.

Travel:
Piccadilly or Green Park tube station

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#RichardSerra #SolLeWitt