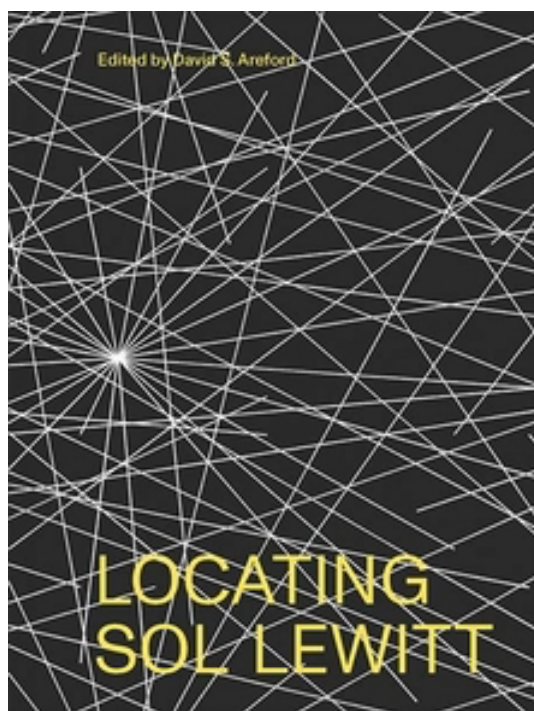


Locating Sol Lewitt

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Whenever I experience a Sol LeWitt artwork, it feels like a fascinating puzzle to solve. Not that the aesthetic experience of his colors, shapes, and structures aren't beautiful enough on their own. But inevitably, my curiosity is piqued. What's the system? How many workers did it take to make this? *Locating Sol Lewitt*, a volume of essays edited by David S. Areford, professor at the University of Massachusetts Boston, provides a formal opportunity to be curious. It leans into the conceptual and contextual spaces that float around LeWitt's life and work, exploring the influences that helped shape his art.

Veronica Roberts's essay "Front Lines: LeWitt at Work for the Modern (1960–65)" is a particularly wonderful piece that maps out LeWitt's friendships cultivated during his work as a receptionist and security guard for the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Roberts deftly

illuminates the web of artists and critics that comprised a chunk of the museum's staff—she shows how they engaged with each other as friends and colleagues, but also as a support system for their artistic endeavors. It's clear how this crew of creators influenced one other, whether it was helping to find housing, sharing books and deep conversations, or curating each other's artworks in shows.

Essays by Kristen Swenson of UMass Lowell, John A. Tyson of the University of Massachusetts Boston, Anna Lovatt of Southern Methodist University, and Areford dig deep, showing how LeWitt used different media types and modes of inspiration—geography, photography, choreography, drawing, printmaking, friendship. Tracking LeWitt's artistic development and

experimentation reveals a deep well of thoughtfulness, tension, and affection undergirding artwork that might seem like a set of scribbles or a drawn grid. These essays show LeWitt propulsively advancing and refining his visual language in new directions. Revealed, too, is an often-precarious balance between the restrictions and methodologies of LeWitt's systems and the critical-social perception of his works.

Areford's final essay delves into the Jewish dimensions of LeWitt's artwork and built structures, linking memory, grief, joy, and questioning. LeWitt's wife Carol describes Sol as "a very very observant nonbeliever" which is a lovely crystallization of his connection with cultural Judaism, but also evokes his engagement with the art world as a creator, as a writer, and as a critic. Indeed, this volume invites people to reconsider LeWitt's work through a constellation of new lenses, or at least, different light passing through known lenses. While this volume could certainly be useful to scholars looking to reframe their knowledge of LeWitt's oeuvre, these essays also provide accessible inroads for more casual, enjoyable engagement. Any library that supports research in postmodern or contemporary art, painting, sculpture, photography, or conceptual art could benefit from including this book in their collection.