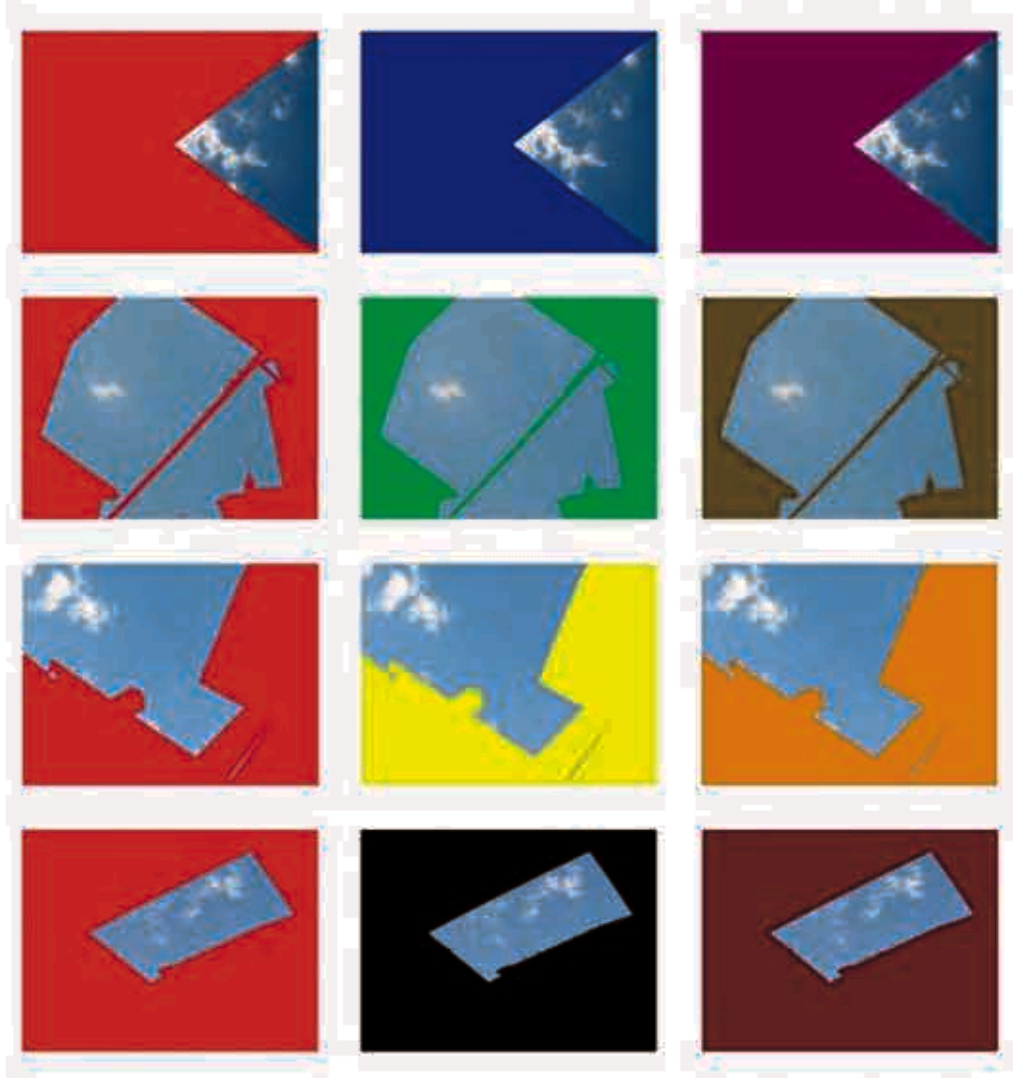


## Three new interconnected exhibitions open this fall at Carl Solway Gallery in Cincinnati



Stephen Berens, Thinking of Pinturricchio (While Looking Out Sol LeWitt's Windows), 2010. Detail from an installation of over 200 Archival inkjet prints on vinyl.

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**CINCINNATI, OH.-** Sol LeWitt (1928-2007), one of the 20th century's most prolific artists, was associated with two major art movements: Conceptual Art and Minimalism. He worked in a wide variety of mediums including wall drawings, structures (a term he preferred to sculpture), painting, printmaking and photography. The exhibition at [Carl Solway Gallery](#) focuses on his prints and structures. LeWitt made prints throughout his career and his extensive list of exhibitions includes two print retrospectives, in 1974 at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and in 1986 at the Tate Gallery in London.

LeWitt was best known for reducing art to its essential elements. Working with the most basic of shapes (spheres, triangles, cubes, quadrilaterals) and colors (red, yellow, blue, black and white), he organized his components into seemingly logical systems that were often executed in series. He devised instructions for his wall drawings consisting of plans that were executed by teams of assistants. Working very much like an architect or composer, his proposals became collaborations with opportunities for translation by others. For LeWitt, the idea of the art was of paramount importance, rather than its physical execution. This was the foundation of Conceptual Art. His earliest works tended to be somewhat simple and austere, but particularly after spending the late

1970s and early 1980s in Italy, a colorful opulence emerged within systems he freely expanded to incorporate new possibilities. After seeing the frescoes of Massacio, Fra Angelico and Giotto, he began experimenting with India ink and color ink washes. In a 2007 exhibition catalogue for the Venice Biennale, Robert Storr wrote that LeWitt "proved over and over again that the strict, systematic realization of a singular working premise is bound to produce results that will surprise both the maker and the viewer by exceeding expectation and giving eye-and-mind expanding physical dimensions to mental abstractions."

Sol LeWitt was born in Hartford, Connecticut in 1928. In his youth, he took art classes at the Wadsworth Atheneum. He received his B.F.A. at Syracuse University before being drafted for the Korean War in 1951. After his service, he moved to New York in 1953 to study illustration and cartooning. He worked for Seventeen Magazine and in the office of the architect I.M. Pei before taking a job at the Museum of Modern Art's bookstore in 1960. There he met the artists Dan Flavin, Robert Ryman and Robert Mangold, all of whom became, along with LeWitt, major proponents of Minimal and Conceptual Art. His influences included the 19th century locomotion studies of Eadweard Muybridge in which the movements of humans and animals were photographed sequentially against gridded backgrounds. LeWitt incorporated the elements of the grid and the series throughout many aspects of his work. He also became well known for collecting and otherwise supporting the work of his contemporaries and less well known artists. After moving back to Connecticut in the mid-1980s, he donated his private art collection to the Wadsworth Atheneum, the museum of his childhood. His artworks, in various mediums, are included in nearly every contemporary museum collection in the world. Extensive examples of his wall drawings can be viewed at Dia: Beacon in Beacon, New York and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, North Adams, Massachusetts.

### Elizabeth Bryant and Stephen Berens

In conjunction with FOTOFOCUS, the greater Cincinnati area's month-long October celebration of photography, Carl Solway Gallery will feature photographic installations by noted Los Angeles artists, Elizabeth Bryant and Stephen Berens. Each created new work during the summer of 2010 while completing residencies in Sol LeWitt's studio in Spoleto, Italy. This was LeWitt's primary work space in Italy, left largely untouched since he died in 2007. Whereas the photographer Eadweard Muybridge influenced LeWitt's artwork, LeWitt profoundly influenced that of Bryant and Berens.

In Sol LeWitt's Spoleto living area, nine etchings by the Italian artist, Giorgio Morandi, engaged Bryant's ongoing research into traditional still life painting. She created a series of ten still life photographs in five locations in the building; the vestibule, library, studio workspace, upstairs dinner table and a downstairs table. Incorporating LeWitt's environment for backgrounds and using available light, she arranged fruits, vegetables and bottles. She sees the final images as a conversation across time between LeWitt, Morandi, and herself. At Carl Solway Gallery, her photographs will be shown with two etchings by Morandi loaned by the Cincinnati Art Museum.

During his concurrent residency, Stephen Berens photographed through the doors and windows skylights of LeWitt's studio using these architectural elements to outline the sky. He then edited the images into sets containing the sky with no clouds and sets containing various cloud formations. He later devised an elaborate color system for the architectural backgrounds. The final images juxtapose the flatness of these outlined shapes against the luminous realism of the sky. The variations are arranged in grids, a visual device he shares with LeWitt. The project reflects how Sol LeWitt and the Italian Renaissance painter, Pinturicchio, although working 500 years apart, shared the incorporation of architectural space in their artwork. 280 images will be digitally printed on adhesive matte vinyl panels mounted directly on the walls. The installation is specifically designed for the Carl Solway Gallery space.

Stephen Berens and Elizabeth Bryant live and work in Los Angeles, California. Each artist is widely exhibited and published. Berens work is included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; International Museum of Photography, Rochester; Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles and the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris, among others. He is the co-founder of X-TRA, a contemporary art journal, and continues to serve on its editorial board. He currently teaches at Chapman University in Orange, California. Elizabeth Bryant teaches at California State University, Los Angeles. Her work is included in the collections of the Washington State Arts Program, Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris and the California State University, Los Angeles Contemporary Collection.