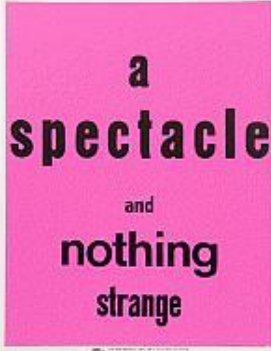


Sites of Reason: A Selection of Recent Acquisitions



Eve Fowler, American, born 1964
A Spectacle and Nothing Strange,
2011 – ongoing
Set of twenty one letterpress posters
Sheet: 28 x 22" (71.1 x 55.9 cm)

The Museum of Modern Art Library

In 2011, Fowler began *A Spectacle and Nothing Strange*, which quotes fragments of Gertrude Stein's groundbreaking feminist prose works *Tender Buttons* (1914) and *How to Write* (1931) on twenty-one posters produced by the Colby Poster Printing Company. Colby's posters—known for their block-printed text over saccharine color gradients—were a common part of the Los Angeles landscape from the company's founding, sixty years ago, until it closed, in 2012. Fowler's posters were made using fonts and colors selected at random by the printer. Fowler displayed them in places where such posters are typically seen: at busy intersections, on telephone poles, or on fences surrounding empty lots, for example.

In *Tender Buttons* and *How to Write*, Stein altered the grammatical structures and social functions of ordinary language. Fowler takes Stein's language—which Fowler describes as queer—from the intimate setting of a book and transposes it into the public realm. As a result, the difference in value assigned to literature and the language of advertising is equalized. At the end of the project, Fowler replaced each poster with a new one that had no text except "Gertrude Stein" in small type along the bottom edge, where the name of the printer usually appears.



Richard Serra, American, born 1939, with Nancy Holt, American, 1938–2014
Boomerang, 1974
Video (color, sound)
10 min.

Circulating Film and Video Library

As video technology became more widely available in the early 1970s, many artists were drawn to the medium's immediacy and ease of reproduction, which allowed works to be shown on television or through other modes of distribution that bypassed the walls of museums or commercial galleries. Serra, known primarily for his large lead and steel sculptures, made a number of films and videos in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Holt, a pioneer of land art, also worked with film, video, and photography throughout her career.

In *Boomerang*—which was broadcast live on a TV station in Amarillo, Texas—Holt's words are fed back to her through headphones with a one-second delay. She describes the experience, in which her words are suspended in time and space, as "a world of double reflections and refractions." As her voice echoes back to her, she continues, "words become like things," disconnected from their individual meanings and from their contexts. This interferes with Holt's thought process and establishes a distance between the artist and her sense of self, an effect intensified when pre-recorded sound samples are played or when glitches in the broadcast cause momentary periods of silence.

Sites of Reason: A Selection of Recent Acquisitions



Sol LeWitt, American, 1928–2007

Wall Drawing #1187

Scribbles: Curves, 2005

Pencil on wall

Dimensions variable, original installation
118 x 118" (299.7 x 299.7 cm)

Committee on Painting and Sculpture
Funds

Executed by others according to the artist's instructions, LeWitt's works embody his guiding principle that "once the idea of the piece is established in the artist's mind and the final form is decided, the process is carried out blindly." In keeping with this doctrine, LeWitt described the realization of his works as "potentially performative," likening this process to that of a "composer that writes notes and then a pianist plays the notes. Within that situation there is ample room for both to make a statement of their own."

Starting with basic shapes and simple marks, these works are built up until the result "renders form without space," creating a sense of depth while maintaining the physical integrity of the wall. The resulting works reflect the duration of their own making, a slow and deliberate process. LeWitt's instructions for *Wall Drawing #1187*— made late in his career—call for layers of graphite scribbles that build six densities of gray bands, which take on a temporal, undulating quality.



Allen Ruppersberg, American, born 1944

The Picture of Dorian Gray, 1974

Marker on canvas, 20 parts

Each panel 72 x 72" (182.9 x 182.9 cm)

Partial gift of Stuart and Judy Spence and purchased with funds provided by Edward Joseph Gallagher 3rd Memorial Fund and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Robins, Jr. (both by exchange)

Ruppersberg's work frequently refers to movies, television, advertising, and literature. "I think the copy is the truth too," he has explained. Here, he has transcribed Oscar Wilde's 1890 novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* on twenty panels, the individual canvases evoking pages of a book. "The original premise was to conflate two forms of 'reading' and 'writing.' One involves narrative, and the other is a form of 'visual' art that is read instantly. Its presence is read all at once." Wilde's story itself ruminates on fine art, with the protagonist of the novel becoming a mysterious portrait with a metaphorical life of its own. The meticulous copying of Wilde's text speaks to Ruppersberg's appreciation for the novel while translating the written word into a work "for an audience outside the book."

Sites of Reason: A Selection of Recent Acquisitions



Seth Price, American, born 1973

Essay with Knots, 2008

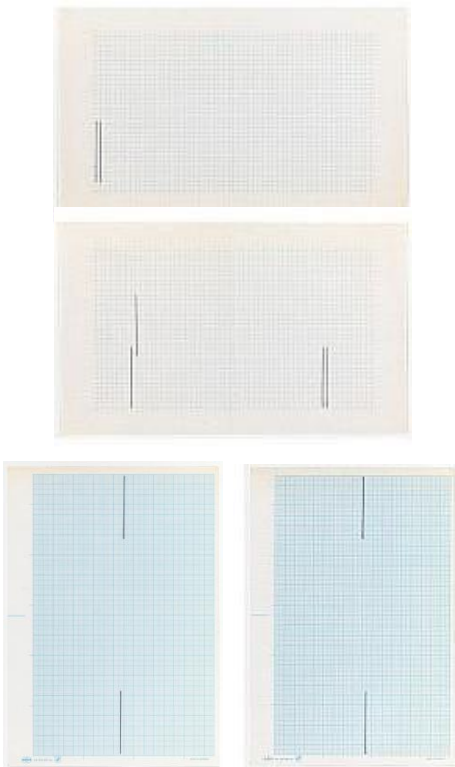
Screenprint ink on high-impact polystyrene and polyester, vacuum-formed over rope, nine panels

Each 48 x 96" (121.9 x 243.8 cm)

Gift of Marlene Hess and James D. Zirin and gift of the Speyer Family Foundation

Essay with Knots consists of nine panels of vacuum-formed plastic, across which is printed an essay entitled "Dispersion," which Price began writing in 2002. The essay explores the profound changes in the creation and experience of art that have accompanied the growth of digital technology, and the ways in which artists are addressing these new possibilities for the production and diffusion of information. Price has circulated the piece in various forms, including the sculptural work on view here, in which the artist's Adobe InDesign files are printed on plastic and formed around knotted ropes using industrial packaging technology; a printed book available in stores; and a free PDF of the book available online. By positioning the work within different economic spheres—the art world, the retail market, and the free economy of the Internet—Price creates multiple possibilities of presentation that are all equally "the work."

"Dispersion" is available at <http://www.distributedhistory.com/Dispersion08.pdf>.



Peter Downsbrough, American, born 1940

Untitled, 1972

Rubber stamp on two pieces of graph paper

Each: 11 11/16 x 8 1/4" (29.7 x 21 cm)

Since the early 1970s, Downsbrough has been making works that subtly articulate space by way of simple lines drawn on paper or comparably minimal sculptures—a pair of wooden poles, for instance, or a skeletal rectangular prism suggesting the frame of a building—placed in galleries, gardens, public squares, and other architectural settings.

Downsbrough has said of his drawings, "I had done *Two Lines* on paper . . . which allowed the concept to continue and fill out a bit, become a little fuller with meanings and able to move into more spheres." With his modestly formed sculptures, the artist creates delicate shifts, thus reframing how we perceive space and our physical relationship to an artwork.

Sites of Reason: A Selection of Recent Acquisitions

Untitled, 1973–74
Rubber stamp on graph paper
8 1/2 x 14" (21.6 x 35.5 cm)

Untitled, 1973–74
Rubber stamp on graph paper
8 1/2 x 14" (21.6 x 35.5 cm)

Partial gift of the Daled Collection and partial purchase through the generosity of Maja Oeri and Hans Bodenmann, Sue and Edgar Wachenheim III, Marlene Hess and James D. Zirin, Agnes Gund, Marie-Josée and Henry R. Kravis, and Jerry I. Speyer and Katherine G. Farley



Peter Downsbrough, American, born 1940

Two Poles, 1974
Wood
88 9/16 x 3/4" (225 x 1.9 cm) and 41 5/16 x 3/4" (105 x 1.9 cm)

Partial gift of the Daled Collection and partial purchase through the generosity of Maja Oeri and Hans Bodenmann, Sue and Edgar Wachenheim III, Marlene Hess and James D. Zirin, Agnes Gund, Marie-Josée and Henry R. Kravis, and Jerry I. Speyer and Katherine G. Farley

Sites of Reason: A Selection of Recent Acquisitions



Peter Downsbrough, American, born 1940

Two Pipes, 1972

Steel

240 3/16 x 1 5/16" (610 x 3.3 cm) and 86 5/8 x 1 5/16" (220 x 3.3 cm)

Partial gift of the Daled Collection and partial purchase through the generosity of Maja Oeri and Hans Bodenmann, Sue and Edgar Wachenheim III, Marlene Hess and James D. Zirin, Agnes Gund, Marie-Josée and Henry R. Kravis, and Jerry I. Speyer and Katherine G. Farley



Liz Deschenes, American, born 1966

Tilt/Swing (360° field of vision, version 1), 2009

Black and white photograms mounted on metal

Overall 136 x 192 x 58" (345.4 x 487.7 x 147.3 cm), original installation room dimensions 206 x 192 x 216" (523.2 x 487.7 x 548.6 cm)

Acquired through the generosity of Agnes Gund, Mimi Haas, Michael Lynne, Jerry I. Speyer and Katherine G. Farley, and Committee on Painting and Sculpture Funds

Deschenes's work expands upon photographic concepts, investigating the relationships between the mechanics of seeing, image-making processes, and modes of display. In *Tilt/Swing (360° field of vision, version 1)*, the artist gives physical form to the concept illustrated in a 1935 drawing by Herbert Bayer, a Bauhaus-trained graphic designer, architect, and sculptor who designed The Museum of Modern Art's 1938 exhibition Bauhaus 1919–1928. In this diagram, Bayer imagined an arrangement of artworks on all six walls of a room, including the floor and ceiling, to create what he described as "an inclusive picture of all [viewpoint] possibilities," inviting the viewer to look in any direction, rather than simply straight ahead, as in a traditional gallery presentation.

Deschenes has brought Bayer's principle of "extended vision" to life with six photograms (photographic images made without using a camera) created by exposing photosensitive paper to the subtly varying light from the moon, stars, and surrounding buildings. The photograms act as hazy mirrors, reflecting fragments of their gallery setting back onto the other panels and onto the gallery itself, and at the same time accumulating traces of these settings as their surfaces oxidize in response to shifting atmospheric conditions. In this way, the work retains an ever-growing memory of the situations in which it is exhibited, belying the notion that a photograph represents a single moment that has passed.

Sites of Reason: A Selection of Recent Acquisitions



Charles Gaines, American, born 1944

Manifestos 2, 2013

Four-channel video (color, sound; 64 min.)
and four graphite drawings
Dimensions variable

Acquired through the generosity of Jill and Peter Kraus, Jerry I. Speyer and Katherine G. Farley, and The Friends of Education of The Museum of Modern Art

Manifestos 2 consists of four large graphite drawings of musical scores—each a transcription, as it were, of an abridged version of a revolutionary speech or political manifesto, made by assigning a note to each letter and a rest for each space—and four video monitors that display Gaines’s variants of the original texts. The four texts are “An Indigenous Manifesto” (1999), by the Canadian activist and educator Taiaoaale Alfred, addressing the history and future of indigenous peoples; Malcom X’s last public speech, from 1965, in which he advocated unity among oppressed communities; Raul Alcaraz and Daniel Carrillo’s “Indocumentalismo” (2010), which calls for rights for undocumented immigrants; and the “Declaration on the Rights of Women,” written by Olympe De Gouges in 1791, which champions equality of the sexes.

In the videos, recordings of each piece of music accompany each gradually scrolling text; once all four have played on their own, they all play simultaneously, allowing the manifestos to act both individually and together. The resulting work considers the ways in which, in Gaines’s words, “the activist posture [of these texts] is complicated by the affect of music.”



Emily Roysdon

Sense and Sense, 2010

Two-channel video (color, silent)
15:25 min.

A project with MPA

Fund for the Twenty-First Century

Roysdon’s work encompasses art-making, choreography, curating, writing, and organizing. *Sense and Sense* is part of her ongoing exploration of how political movements are represented, which hinges on a broad understanding of choreography as organized movement. Roysdon is interested in “the way an idea of ‘free movement’ and people demonstrating comes to be represented by an abstraction and in turn comes to represent the idea of the city.” For this piece, she collaborated with the performance artist MPA, whose work examines the social and political implications of the body in space.

MPA lays on her side and mimics walking, her body pressed to the ground, through Stockholm’s buzzing central square, Sergels Torg, a historical site of countless political demonstrations. Her physical struggle to move in a manner that appears easy and uninhibited recalls the utopian ideals embedded in the site, which was planned to accommodate political protests. In this way, *Sense and Sense* prompts passersby to compare their everyday movement in the iconic square to the history of political movements galvanized there since its construction in 1967.

Sites of Reason: A Selection of Recent Acquisitions



Matt Mullican, American, born 1951
Untitled (Learning from That Person's Work: Room 1), 2005
 Installation of ink on paper collage mounted on twelve cotton sheets, wood, cable, and video component (color, sound; 14:04 min.)
 12 units, 109 x 88.5 in. each. Installation dimensions variable.

Acquired through the generosity of the Contemporary Arts Council of The Museum of Modern Art and the Friends of Contemporary Drawing

Since 1977, Mullican has been working under hypnosis, which he considers a way of breaking the patterns of everyday life, in an effort to examine his subconscious. In this altered state, Mullican becomes someone he refers to as “that person”: an ageless, genderless being that is a passenger inhabiting his body. In public performances, that person makes artwork while talking to himself through a haze of hypnotically induced intoxication or psychosis.

Untitled (Learning from That Person's Work: Room 1) is a large-scale manifestation of that person's activity. This disorienting, maze-like installation consists of twelve parts, in which bed sheets are covered with nine collaged ink-on-paper drawings. An accompanying video brings that person—mumbling and humming to voices he hears as the water fills and drains from a bathtub—directly into the installation. This immersive environment invites viewers to step into the wild terrain of Mullican's subconscious—and that person's reality.



Simryn Gill, Singaporean, born 1959
Where to draw the line, 2011–12
 Typewriting on nine sheets of paper
 40 1/4 x 74 3/4" (102.2 x 189.9 cm)

The Modern Women's Fund Committee of The Museum of Modern Art

Gill's photographs and installations have often taken books and the printed word as source material. In 1992, she began a series of pieces that appropriate and transform books, often rendering them indecipherable. For *Where to draw the line*, Gill hired a typist to copy on a manual typewriter five essays she wrote (and revised with the assistance of an editor) over the preceding year, titled “Women,” “Work,” “Snake,” “House,” and “Copycat.” The typist was instructed to omit spaces, overtype any errors, and repeat words as necessary to fill nine long, scroll-like sheets.

These highly personal texts are enormous, densely printed, and virtually illegible. In Gill's words, the work poses the question of “how much . . . we really give away” by putting such stories into the public sphere. Gill's text-based works allow her to experiment with the medium while maintaining a degree of privacy. They invite close looking, but remain inaccessible, and when seen from a distance they read as an abstract, variegated textile.

Sites of Reason: A Selection of Recent Acquisitions



Hanne Darboven, German, 1941–2009

Untitled, (c. 1972)

Ink on ten pieces of transparentized paper
(each): 11 5/8 x 16 1/2" (29.5 x 41.9 cm)

Art & Project/Depot VBVR Gift

Darboven was at the forefront of Conceptual art from its beginnings in the late 1960s until her death. Evincing a strict sense of order and an obsessive discipline, her work uses numerical systems to explore time and the documentation of her life—a mode of working she likened to “a way of writing without describing.” While living in New York City from 1966 to 1968, Darboven developed her characteristic painstakingly choreographed lines, producing the rhythmic cadence visible in this untitled work made around 1972.

Darboven worked in near-isolation during her time in New York but did befriend the artist Sol LeWitt, whose work shares an intellectual and formal relationship with her own. Both artists created systematic, iterative visual styles, thereby “[freeing] art from both representation and expressive emotion,” LeWitt noted. LeWitt was “struck by the originality and depth of [Darboven’s] work,” which he believed helped free art from representation, emphasizing ideas over aesthetics. Her emphasis on process and duration makes time both the raw material and the subject of her art. Like a journal or a diary, her work reflects her life, but her use of mathematical principles keeps her personal history private.