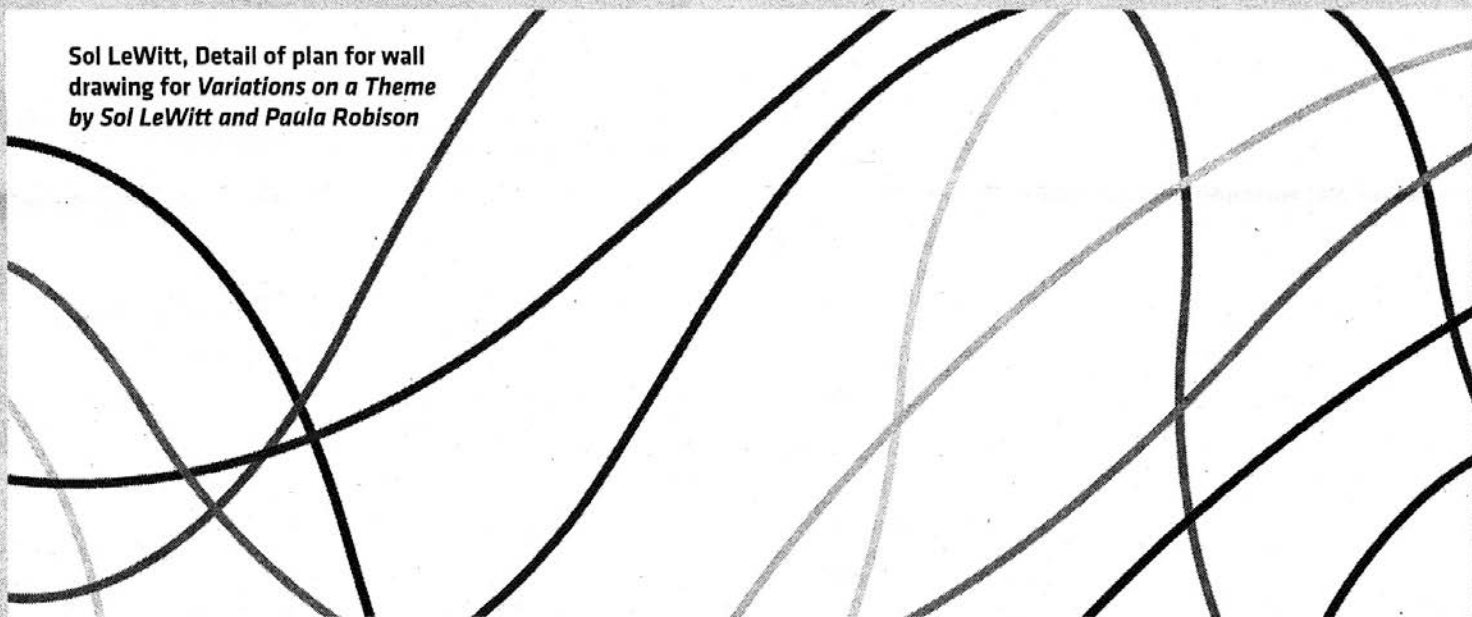


MOZART LOVERS UNITE

SOL LEWITT AND PAULA ROBISON AT THE GARDNER, ART SHOW DOWN ON CCTV

Sol LeWitt, Detail of plan for wall drawing for *Variations on a Theme* by Sol LeWitt and Paula Robison



➤ “Ten thousand lines about 10 inches long, covering the wall evenly,” for example, or, “Lines from the corner, sides, and center to points on a grid” – these are the kinds of instructions that conceptual art pioneer Sol LeWitt gives to artists hired to realize his famous large-scale wall works on the walls of museums and galleries around the world. LeWitt made his first wall drawings in the 1960s, when the position that art could be generated by ideas or systems of logic rather than emotions was radical. Since then, his trademark method of making art by giving simple instructions to mindful assistants has resulted in work ranging from early stark Minimalist wall drawings and modular geometric cube constructions to colorful, lyrical murals comprising stars, steps, and curves. In his latest project, **“VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY SOL LEWITT & PAULA ROBISON,”** which opens at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum on September 23, LeWitt collaborates with flutist Paula Robison in an exploration of the relationship between music and the visual arts.

“Variations on a Theme” centers on a big, boldly colored wall drawing to be

conceived and designed by LeWitt and executed in the Gardner’s Special Exhibition Gallery by three “drawers” who’ll include two talented recent grads from Boston art schools, April Gymiski and Reese Inman. At a random moment each day, music by Mozart will be selected and performed by Robison, who is artist-in-residence at the Gardner this fall, and/or young musicians. Exhibition organizer and Gardner Museum contemporary curator Pieranna Cavalchini points out the synergy between these artists, noting that “the work of Sol LeWitt evokes clarity of thought, passion, and ritual. That same precision is in Mozart and in Paula Robison’s interpretation of the music.” The show also benefits from the artists’ personal connection: LeWitt and Robison are long-time friends, having met at the Spoleto Festival in Italy in 1987, where they bonded over Mozart’s Flute Quartet in D K.285.

From the civilizing highs of Mozart to the lowly depths of the TV game show – art treads where many would rather not go. **“ART SHOW DOWN,”** which parodies and critiques game-show culture, is coming to town, organized by

clever curators Roland Smart and Jeff Warmouth, presented by Art Interactive together with Cambridge Community Television (CCTV), and boasting competitions to hang artwork 10 feet in the air on a rock-climbing wall and battles involving paint brushes stuck to helmets. “Art Show Down” will be produced in front of a live studio audience in eight episodes this fall – interviews for contestants will be held in October (check www.artshowdown.tv) – but you have a chance to do your part now when the gang holds a fundraising party to get this baby off the ground at Middlesex Lounge on September 17. Your \$25 donation buys you beer and a sneak peek at the Art Show Down Teaser video, among other prizes.

—Randi Hopkins

“VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY SOL LEWITT & PAULA ROBISON” @ the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 280 the Fenway, Boston | Sept 23–Nov 21 | 617.566.1401 or www.gardnermuseum.org | **“ART SHOW DOWN”** fundraiser party @ Middlesex Lounge, 315 Mass Ave, Cambridge | Sept 17 | 6–8 pm | \$25 | 617.868.6739 or www.artshowdown.tv.