

## Taking home a "Sol LeWitt"

### 1st FREE SOL LEWITT copy by SUPERFLEX leaves the museum



Ms Lelieveld leaves the museum with her FREE SOL LEWITT copy. On the background the original work by Sol LeWitt from 1972. Photo: Bram Saeyns

Last week, a person walked out of the museum with a "Sol LeWitt" tucked under her arm. Not the real artwork by Sol LeWitt of course, but an exact copy of the structure entitled *FREE SOL LEWITT* by *SUPERFLEX*. Ms. Bettina Lelieveld was the first person to collect her copy of *FREE SOL LEWITT* by *SUPERFLEX* from the Van Abbemuseum. On 11 April, Ms Lelieveld filled in a form during her visit to the museum which gave her the chance to receive her own copy of the work of the American artist, Sol LeWitt, *Untitled (Wall Structure)*, 1972. The distribution of copies of this work is part of the *FREE SOL LEWITT* project by the Danish artist collective, *SUPERFLEX*. With this project *SUPERFLEX* playfully asks the Van Abbemuseum to 'set free' the work of Sol LeWitt, and raise the issues concerning the public ownership of artworks, copyright restrictions and artistic freedom. *SUPERFLEX* has set-up a metal workshop inside the museum in which exact replicas of this specific artwork by LeWitt are made. Here, workmen cut aluminium, weld it into a lattice structure, sand this form and then paint it white. The copies lie stacked in a corner awaiting their new destinations. Visitors sign-up for a copy by filling in a form at the museum. The copies are distributed to the public through a random system of selection. The selected person can then collect his or her copy from the museum free of charge within two weeks.

There is great interest in the *FREE SOL LEWITT* copies; since the opening of the project on 10 April, the Van Abbemuseum has already received hundreds of completed forms. *FREE SOL LEWITT* continues until the beginning of September and the museum expects to produce about 1 or 2 copies per week.

#### Artistic freedom versus economic interests

*FREE SOL LEWITT* is a new installation made specially for the exhibition, *In-between Minimalisms* in the second part of *Play Van Abbe*. *SUPERFLEX* questions the museum's position in the current information age where the capacity to share and exchange information is restricted

by the economic interests protected by copyright. The museum is sometimes described as a prison in which the artwork is 'locked-away' like a criminal. The museum has the duty to collect and document cultural property and to make this accessible to stimulate critical reflection, so that fresh perspectives may be presented and new

developments in the cultural and social fields made possible. Yet, copyright laws can potentially prevent the museum from being able to fulfil its task. Like the current social debate about the illegal copying of images, music, film and digital media with this project, SUPERFLEX also raises issues concerning authorship, copyright and the ownership of culture that resonate throughout society. When a museum commits itself to artistic freedom in a public space, then it has to raise the issue of the rules and regulations that restrict this freedom.



Leaving the museum with a *FREE SOL LEWITT* copy. Photo: Bram Saeys

### Seminar *Who owns the artwork?*

On 14 May the seminar *Who Owns the Artwork?* (English spoken) takes place in the Van Abbemuseum. The aim of the seminar is to examine and discuss issues relating to authorship, copyright and the ownership of artworks by public institutions.

### Curators

SUPERFLEX, Daniel McClean and Christiane Berndes.

### Sponsors

*FREE SOL LEWITT* is part of *Play Van Abbe*. *Play Van Abbe* is made possible by contributions from The Mondriaan Stichting, BankGiro Loterij, Provincie Noord-Brabant, VSBfonds and SNS REAAL Fonds.



The *FREE SOL LEWITT* copy on transport. Photo: Bram Saeys

The Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven is one of the first public museums for contemporary art to be established in Europe. The museum's collection of around 2700 works of art includes key works and archives by Lissitzky, Picasso, Kokoschka, Chagall, Beuys, McCarthy, Daniëls and Körmeling. The museum has an experimental approach towards art's role in society. Openness, hospitality and knowledge exchange are important. We challenge ourselves and our visitors to think about art and its place in the world, covering a range of subjects, including the role of the collection as a cultural 'memory' and the museum as a public site. International collaboration and exchange have made the Van Abbemuseum a place for creative cross-fertilisation and a source of surprise, inspiration and imagination for its visitors and participants.

### Van Abbemuseum

Bilderdijklaan 10  
Eindhoven, The Netherlands  
For more information, please visit [www.vanabbemuseum.nl](http://www.vanabbemuseum.nl)

### Opening hours

Tuesday to Sunday 11:00 – 17:00  
Thursday 11:00 - 21:00  
On Thursdays, entrance to the museum is free from 17:00

### Entrance

Adults: € 9,00  
Groups of 15 persons or more, senior citizens: € 6,50  
Students; holders of the Dutch young people's cultural pass (CJP): € 4  
Thursdays from 17:00 - 21:00: free entrance (until 31/12/2010)

For more information please look at our website  
[www.vanabbemuseum.nl](http://www.vanabbemuseum.nl)

### For the editors

More information and images can be downloaded from:  
[www.vanabbemuseum.nl/pers](http://www.vanabbemuseum.nl/pers).

Or contact:

Ilse Cornelis, Communication & Press Van Abbemuseum  
Phone: +31 (0)40 238 1019  
Mobile: + 31 (0)6 12995794  
[i.cornelis@vanabbemuseum.nl](mailto:i.cornelis@vanabbemuseum.nl)