



Sam Lewitt

Less Light Warm Words

June 08 – July 24, 2016

For Sam Lewitt's first institutional solo exhibition in New York, entitled *Less Light Warm Words*, the artist has removed all of the fluorescent lights from the ceiling rig in Swiss Institute's main gallery and redirected the total available electricity into custom-designed flexible copper heating circuits. These slim, sensitive micro heaters are larger versions of the kind used in precision technologies that require a regulated temperature in order to function smoothly, and are used everywhere from satellites to medical equipment. This transferal of energy - from light to heat, from ceiling to floor - reorganizes the building's existing electrical infrastructure, delineating and redirecting usually imperceptible currents and flows.

This exhibition is a newly adapted iteration of Lewitt's *More Heat than Light* project, initiated by the Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco, and Kunsthalle Basel, where heating circuits were installed in a similar manner. At Swiss Institute, maxing out the electrical load strains the temperature regulation system, yet the heaters struggle throughout the day to raise the surrounding temperature, creating what the artist describes as a 'weak local lineament' of the conditions of circulation. For this exhibition Lewitt emphasizes the linguistic elements of the project, using pairs of keywords from the literature surrounding the heating technology to determine the path of the circuits from the outset. The circuits are designed using these textual couplets as a guideline, the copper tracing an outline of the words whilst taking a course that adheres to industry standards. Despite the fact that the forms created in the heating elements are literally structured around written language, the words are virtually illegible, embedding ambiguous hieroglyphs into the local climate.

Sam Lewitt (b. Los Angeles, 1981) is based in New York. Recent solo exhibitions include Kunsthalle Basel (2016), and The Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco (2015). With Richard Birkett, he curated the exhibition *and Materials and Money and Crisis* at MUMOK, Vienna (2013). His work has been included in numerous group exhibitions including *Collected by Thea Westreich Wagner and Ethan Wagner* at The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2015), *Nature after Nature* at Fridericianum, Kassel (2014), *Geographies of Contamination* at DRAF, London (2014), *Whitney Biennial* at The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2012), and *Time Again: Novel* at SculptureCenter, New York (2011). Lewitt received a BFA from the School of Visual Arts and attended the Whitney Independent Study Program in New York.

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