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Sol LeWitt Wall Drawing Installed at Einstein Medical Center Montgomery

Vibrant, playful work by internationally acclaimed artist will enliven innovative new hospital for the next 25 years

EAST NORRITON — A new installation of work by transformative modern artist **Sol LeWitt** demonstrates the vision of **Einstein Medical Center Montgomery**, where architecture, design and efficiency work together with staff excellence and medical innovation to deliver an unparalleled patient experience. The bright colors and unpacked cubes of LeWitt's *Wall Drawing #972* will grace the first floor corridor of the medical center for 25 years through a generous loan from the artist's estate, serving as a feast for the eyes for staff, patients and visitors and providing a rare opportunity for the public to access this important work of art. The installation enriches Einstein Montgomery's brand-new, state-of-the-art medical facility — one whose patient-focused aesthetic sensibility mirrors its holistic, community-focused approach to healthcare.

Opened this fall on Sept. 29, Einstein Montgomery (559 W. Germantown Pike, East Norriton, PA) is the first completely new medical center to be built in the Southeastern Pennsylvania region in more than a decade. The 146-bed facility was designed to include every possible element of holistic healing, from natural light pouring through soaring atrium windows and in patient rooms to carefully selected high-quality works of art intended to soothe and inspire.

In order to achieve this vision, **Einstein HealthCare Network President and Chief Executive Officer Barry R. Freedman** and his team have sought to acquire artworks for the hospital that both elevate and comfort. From the Labor and Delivery series by local artist collective Mamacitas, to the hospital's south-facing pastoral panoramic view of Norristown Farm Park, to bold modern works like the LeWitt, Freedman believes in the healing power of art and beauty.

“Hosting a piece of art by the father of Conceptual art is consistent with how we’re working to transform healthcare in the region,” says Freedman. “It also represents our outreach to the community — this is a famous work that is now accessible to anyone.”

With a longstanding wish to bring a LeWitt to Einstein Montgomery, Freedman turned to **Alberto Esquenazi, M.D.**, President of the American Association of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation and Chief Medical Officer of world-renowned rehabilitation facility **MossRehab**, part of the Einstein Healthcare Network. Esquenazi and his wife, Rosa, both art enthusiasts, introduced Freedman to a former patient and well-known modern art collector who connected him with the LeWitt estate. Inspired by Freedman’s vision, the estate arranged for a long-term loan and performed a site evaluation at Einstein Montgomery, selecting the 9’4”-by-154-foot *Wall Drawing #972* — previously displayed only at the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin — for the first-floor corridor based on dimensions and light specifications.

Much like an architect’s blueprints or a composer’s score, LeWitt’s wall drawings begin as sets of instructions meant to be deciphered and interpreted. The installation of the work, executed by a crew of on-site artists tasked with following LeWitt’s sometimes-vague instructions, is considered a part of the artwork itself. The first of LeWitt’s wall drawings was installed at the Paula Cooper Gallery in New York in 1969; since then, more than 1,500 drawings have been executed. “Since art is a vehicle for the transmission of ideas through form, the reproduction of the form only reinforces the concept,” LeWitt once said of interpretive pieces like the wall drawings. “It is the idea that is being reproduced, [so] anyone who understands the work of art owns it.”

For *Wall Drawing #972*, an installation crew of four local artists and two artist representatives from the LeWitt estate spent 27 days painstakingly transferring the artist’s vision onto the main corridor using painter’s tape, pencils and acrylic paint. The crew was led by Kutztown University graduate and Bethlehem, PA, resident **Andy Colbert** along with artist **Takeshi Arita**.

“Each project brings a new architectural or drafting challenge,” says Colbert, who has installed LeWitt wall drawings around the world. “It’s more like a collaboration with the artist than just working on it.”

Crew member and Philadelphia artist Shane Leddy is enthusiastic about the responses the artists are receiving from hospital staff traversing the hallway: “It’s been interesting to see how the dialogue with the people who see this every day changes as the work takes shape. The questions change. I can see them going home with this art really affecting them, going home with this on their brain.”

About Sol LeWitt

Sol LeWitt (1928-2007) was an influential figure in the Minimalist art movement and considered the father of the Conceptual Art movement of the 1960s. He is known primarily for his deceptively simple geometric structures and architecturally scaled wall drawings. LeWitt first gained renown for geometric sculptures that used open, modular structures originating from the cube. He began devising wall drawings in 1968. The owner of the wall drawing received only a set of instructions. LeWitt's drawings break down the notion of a singular, irreplaceable art object — they are transferable and yet never the same, adjusting to fit new architectural spaces with every creation. LeWitt's work encourages a collaborative and participatory network of ideas, activating both the physical domain of the art itself as well as the ideological arena of human thinking and interpretation. LeWitt's methodology is often likened to that of a composer whose precise instructions are vulnerable to interpretation with each performance.

Major retrospectives of LeWitt's career have been held at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1978), the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2000), the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2000), the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2001), and MASS MoCA (2008). LeWitt's work is also included in many museum collections, including that of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

About Einstein Medical Center Montgomery

Einstein Medical Center Montgomery is a full-service, acute-care hospital, opened September of 2012. Located on 87 acres of a former golf course, the Medical Center has 96 medical/surgical beds, a 22-bed intensive care unit, a 20-bed obstetrical unit and an eight-bed neonatal intensive care unit. It features a two-story medical arts building connected to the main medical center. Designed with the patient's needs in mind, it provides an ideal environment for healing and an exceptional patient experience.

The site design of Einstein Medical Center Montgomery includes open green space and walking trails open to the public. As a LEED certified structure (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), Einstein Montgomery meets specifications for energy savings, water efficiency, improved indoor environment and other conditions.

Einstein Healthcare Network's major expansion into Montgomery County is in keeping with its mission to provide excellent healthcare to everyone who needs it. More than 60 percent of the population in the immediate area of the new hospital has had to travel up to 30 miles to receive the full complement of health care services, which now will be available in their neighborhood. The expansion broadens the scope of Einstein's healthcare services, while Einstein maintains its commitment to the network as a whole, including Einstein Medical Center Philadelphia.

About Einstein Healthcare Network

Einstein Healthcare Network is a 1,203-bed integrated delivery network with more than 8,500 employees serving the communities of Philadelphia and Montgomery County, Pa. The network's primary location, Einstein Medical Center Philadelphia, is one of the largest academic medical centers in the Delaware Valley, providing training and education for more than 400 residents and fellows each year. The network also provides a comprehensive range of healthcare services through the brand new Einstein Medical Center Montgomery, Einstein Medical Center Elkins Park, MossRehab, Belmont Behavioral Health, Willowcrest, outpatient facilities such as Einstein at Germantown and Einstein Center One, and a network of more than 500 primary care physicians and specialists employed through Einstein Physicians and Farnance Physician Services, Inc. For more information, visit www.einstein.edu or call 1-800-EINSTEIN.

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