

Sol LeWitt drawings transform Vernon Social Center



Top, the LeWitt wall drawings gleam at dusk; and, above, Lana Abraham '98 helped to execute the drawings.

Students in fine arts classes were given the chance this fall to see exactly how a conceptual art project proceeds, from creation to implementation. And the illustration will have extraordinary immediacy, because the art is newly installed in Vernon Center on campus and the implementers of the design were Trinity students and young alumni with an arts background. The artists worked for several weeks this summer in a project which created a “first” on campus — a public work of art in a Trinity College building.

The project began when the building’s architect, Tai Soo Kim, suggested to world-renowned conceptual artist Sol LeWitt the idea of designing wall drawings for the Vernon Center rotunda. The

opportunity at Trinity represented a kind of homecoming for LeWitt, who lived as a child in the College’s neighborhood. His father is buried in the Zion Hill Cemetery on Allen Place, within sight of Vernon Center where LeWitt’s colorful, amorphous forms now radiate energy and warmth. The zingy wall drawings have attracted praise from neighbors, visitors to the building, and passersby.

The mural drawings, which LeWitt titled *Wall Drawing #849 Irregular blobs of color*, were executed in acrylic paint by artists from LeWitt’s team, Kevin Oster and Sachiko Cho, and Lana Abraham '98, Amalie Flynn '98, Tory Marsh '97, Kim Piotrowski '93, and Professor of Art History Alden Gordon '69. The bold drawings on the concave

and convex wall of the building’s foyer are visible from Vernon Street through the windows in the building’s exterior wall.

Funded by a grant from the Hartford-based Edward C. and Ann T. Roberts Foundation, the project resulted in a dramatic new look for the Roberts Terrace, as the newly named terrace and entry to the Vernon Center are now known in recognition of support for this project. LeWitt has also donated four maquettes, which were the

first thoughts for the project. They are now part of the College’s art collection curated by the faculty in art history.

Recorded on video for use in introductory art history courses and courses on 20th-century art, the project will live on to help future undergraduates understand issues related to public art and site-specific art. The video was produced with additional support from the Friends of Art of Trinity College. ♦