

Irrational Judgments: Eva Hesse, Sol LeWitt, and 1960s New York

Kirsten Swenson



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Irrational Judgments: Eva Hesse, Sol LeWitt, and 1960s New York Kirsten Swenson *Irrational Judgments* examines the close friendship and significant exchange of ideas between Eva Hesse (1936–1970) and Sol LeWitt (1928–2007) in New York City during the 1960s. Taking its title from LeWitt's statement "Irrational judgments lead to new experience," this book examines the breakthroughs of the artists' intertwined careers, offering a new understanding of minimal, post-minimal, and conceptual art amid the era's political and social upheavals.

Kirsten Swenson offers the first in-depth discussion of the early critical developments of each artist: LeWitt's turn from commercial design to fine art, and Hesse's move from expressionist painting to reliefs and sculpture. Bringing together a wealth of documents, interviews, and images—many published here for the first time—this handsome publication presents an insightful account of the artists' influence on and support for each other's pursuit of an experimental practice. Swenson's analysis expands our understanding of the artists' ideas, the importance of their work, and, more broadly, the relationship of the 1960s New York art world to gender politics, the Vietnam War, and the city itself.

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