

This catalogue documents a new body of work by Sharon Loudon commissioned by the Birmingham Museum of Art and inspired by the particularities of the Museum's galleries and gardens. Loudon conceptually "ran through" the Museum conceiving the works in their completed state prior to their creation and installation. Curator Ron Platt, in his essay for this publication references Paul Klee's evocative statement, "a drawing is a line that goes for a walk," which provides a perfect entry point for us to explore Sharon Loudon's *Taking Turns*. The highly participatory nature of walking should inspire our looking, making it an active process of engagement for the viewer with the works of art. Approaching the works in this way can free the lines from specific constraints of material and open the possibilities for thinking about the gesture and the movement more than the media. Movement through these shapes also inspires our thinking about line and how it informs our understanding, not only about bodily movement, but ways of seeing. Actively moving through space with the line as guide and inspiration allows us to better understand the possibilities of drawing and the very nature of line and movement through space.

The Birmingham Museum of Art has a history of inviting artists to create site-specific works for our space, both short term and long term. This list includes Jessica Diamond, Tara Donovan, Patrick Dougherty, Stephen Hendee, Sol Lewitt, Paul Morrison and Lawrence Weiner. It is an honor and a pleasure to add Sharon Loudon to this distinguished list. We are extremely grateful for Sharon Loudon's enthusiasm and dedication to this project and for the generous support of our funders, the Toby D. Lewis Philanthropic Fund, Mr. and Mrs. Werner Kramarsky, an anonymous gift in honor of Vinson Valega, and EBSCO Industries, Inc.

As with any exhibition, many members of the staff are instrumental in its successful execution. Particularly crucial to this installation were Denny Frank, Rashid Qandil, Priscilla Tapio, and Daniel White. We are also grateful to Birmingham-based artist, Amy Pleasant, who worked with Sharon Loudon and the preparation department on the installation. James Williams designed the handsome catalogue. Finally, I wish to acknowledge Curator Ron Platt who conceived this dynamic project and was devoted to its successful development and execution; his attention and interpretation enlarges our understanding of the artist's work.

FOREWORD & ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Gail Andrews

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