

MIT List Center

Lawrence Weiner

I am Lawrence Weiner. I was approached by the art committee from MIT, and I guess they charmed me into trying to present something that would please the students.

For Ashdown House's well traversed courtyard, pioneering conceptual artist, Lawrence Weiner, created one of his signature textural works carved in geometric pieces of red, gray, and black granite.

The work is called Dead Center. Dead Center is one of those physical states where the expenditure of energy is not evident. It was attempting to objectify an existential state within the laws of physics.

In this 2008 work, Weiner included a series of phrases that offer possibilities for moving off the state of Dead Center, An Unknown Vector, Poised at a Tangent, & a Relative Calm.

An unknown vector is an unknown vector. It's quite self-explanatory. Poised at a tangent, implies a certain kind of pent-up, built-in energy. Energy is what sculpture is about. A relative calm is not quite dead center, but it's beginning to give you an idea that there's a possibility at a given moment that you can contemplate something.

So you're building now a sculpture that leads to what? It leads to the ideal for me, which was dead center. I hope Dead Center forces people into standing still for a second and maybe changing their attitude or their relationship to the world around them. I had always wanted that young people when they're trying to arrange a rendezvous they would be able to say, oh, I'll meet you at-- & A Relative Calm. I'll meet you at this. I'll meet you at that. I'll meet you there. Then you've really entered the culture.