

NORTON MUSEUM OF ART

1450 S. Dixie Highway
West Palm Beach, Florida 33401

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Norton Museum of Art to Present *Leslie Hewitt: Achromatic Scales*

Works from three series explore the complex layering of memory,
history, and material culture

The exhibition is on view
September 13, 2025, through February 22, 2026



Leslie Hewitt (American, born 1977), *Riffs on Real Time with Ground (Green Mesh)*, 2017, Digital chromogenic print, silver gelatin print, with custom wood frame, Unique, 41 x 91 in. (104.1 x 231.1 cm). Courtesy of the Artist and Perrotin. Photo: Guillaume Ziccarell

WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA (August 6, 2025) — The Norton Museum of Art will present *Leslie Hewitt: Achromatic Scales*, a solo exhibition of new and recent works by artist Leslie Hewitt (born 1977, New York, lives and works in Houston). This exhibition brings together selections from three ongoing series — *Riffs on Real Time*, *Riffs on Real Time with Ground*, and *Chromatic Grounds* — that explore the complex layering of memory, poetics, and free association through photography, sculpture, and site-specific installation. *Leslie Hewitt: Achromatic Scales* will be on view September 13, 2025, through February 22, 2026.

“Leslie Hewitt is an extraordinary contemporary artist whose conceptual practice explores the complex ways in which we understand time, history, and context through photography, texture, and color. This exhibition marks a rare opportunity to experience three of her most significant ongoing series together, and we are proud to bring it to our visitors,” said Ghislain d’Humières, Kenneth C. Griffin Director and CEO of the Norton.

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The show marks the first occasion that these three interrelated series are brought together in a single exhibition in the United States, offering audiences an in-depth look at Hewitt's evolving practice.

Leslie Hewitt: Achromatic Scales offers a multifaceted and definitively poetic reflection on the intersections of art historical genres from 17th-century Dutch still life to post-Minimalism, with what Robin D.G. Kelley has identified as “the Black radical imagination,” inviting viewers into a unique spatial entanglement. The works on view exemplify Hewitt's interest in how ephemera (snapshots, magazines, archival documents) reference and recall and how photography both renders visibility and flattens the nuances of our lived experience. Her use of the medium expands and simultaneously disrupts its obsolete functions, conventions, and tropes, in favor of new ways of seeing and perceiving.

Hewitt is one of the Norton's 2025 Artists-in-Residence. The program, which features four artists annually, emphasizes the Norton's commitment to fostering creative and intellectual growth for mid- to late-career artists whose work warrants greater attention, and to promoting gender, racial, and ethnic parity in the arts through the dedication of two residencies annually for women artists. Hewitt will spend time living on the Norton's campus in a renovated, historic house, while creating new work.

“I am thrilled to participate as one of the artists-in-residence at the Norton Museum of Art this year,” said artist Leslie Hewitt. “It creates space to develop new works of art and ideas alongside the exhibition and conversation with curator Lauren Richman and the general public.”

Introduced in 2002, Hewitt's *Riffs on Real Time* series has been exhibited at numerous institutions including the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum in New York. In this series, Hewitt physically arranges and photographs layered compositions that combine family snapshots (not necessarily her own), archival materials like vintage *Ebony* or *Life* magazines, books, and drawings, on backgrounds including wooden floors, concrete, or carpet. In this new iteration of *Riffs on Real Time*, Hewitt turns to black and white analog photography, employing silver gelatin print processes, repositioning her relationship from color to the achromatic. Across their many layers and textures — further emphasized through the tonal range of black to white — the postmodern still lifes contain a multitude of readings on time, and personal and collective histories in a single frame. In doing so, the collage-like, two-dimensional photographs take on a more three-dimensional sculptural form, mimicking the act of photography itself: translating the “fullness of life” into a flat picture.

For *Chromatic Grounds*, the second of the three series in the exhibition, Hewitt has sampled a color found in some aspect of the staging of *Riffs on Real Time* before photographic capture and created a vibrant color photogram — a picture produced with light-sensitive paper and without a camera — in the darkroom. Divorced from their original sources, these rich color fields embody additional examples of translation, translocation, and gesture.

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In the *Riffs on Real Time with Ground* series, Hewitt pairs the achromatic works from *Riffs on Real Time* with the vivid photograms of *Chromatic Grounds*, expanding her exploration into color as both a formal device and a conceptual framework. The works further interrogate photography's historical claims to truth and objectivity, engaging viewers to consider how visual and material culture informs and distorts our collective sense of the past and our immediate present.

Through these series, Hewitt engages with various forms of history, even considering it a material in her practice. Borrowed from jazz, the term "riff" aptly describes her method of borrowing, repeating, and improvising across time, medium, and meaning. Each photograph acts as a spatial and temporal collage, reflecting the fluid interplay of histories and challenging the static assumptions often associated with photographic representation.

"Leslie Hewitt's work engages with the compression and expansion of our three-dimensional lives and experiences into the two-dimensional world of photography," said Lauren Richman, the Norton's William and Sarah Ross Soter Senior Curator of Photography. "Her densely layered photographs exemplify how different impressions of or assumptions about history can — and do — collide in the new context of her work, as well as the broader world. We are left to reflect upon the idea that although time is technically linear, there is always space to revisit and reevaluate the past."

Leslie Hewitt: Achromatic Scales is organized by the Norton Museum of Art.

Support for this exhibition was provided by the William and Sarah Ross Soter Photography Fund.

ABOUT LESLIE HEWITT

Working with photography, sculpture, and site-specific installations, Leslie Hewitt addresses fluid notions of time. Her work oscillates between the illusionary potential of photography and the physical weight of sculpture. In her photographed arrangements, she isolates personal effects and the residue of material culture to consider the fragile nature of everyday life. Her approach to photography and sculpture revisits the still life genre from a post-minimalist/civil-rights perspective. Her geometric compositions, which she frames and crystallizes through the spare assemblage of ordinary things, suggest the porosity between intimate and sociopolitical lives. Whether discreetly arranged in conceptually entangled layers or presented plainly, Hewitt often includes or is inspired by mementos such as family pictures, as well as books and vintage magazines that reference the Black literary and popular cultures of her upbringing. Her practice as an artist points to the mechanisms of the construction of meaning and memory through decisively challenging both by unfolding formal, rather than didactic, connections in her contrapuntal compositions and distinctive take on spatiality. Hewitt studied at the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, the Yale University School of Art, and at New York University, where she was a Clark Fellow in the Africana and Visual Culture Studies programs. She was included in the 2008 Whitney Biennial and the recipient of the 2008 Art Matters research grant to the Netherlands. A selection of recent and forthcoming exhibitions includes the Museum of Modern Art in New York; the Studio Museum in Harlem; Artists Space in New York; Project Row Houses in

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Houston; and LA > < ART in Los Angeles. Hewitt has held residencies at the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University and the American Academy in Berlin, Germany, among others.

A solo exhibition of Leslie Hewitt's work will be on view at Perrotin New York from September 4 to October 18.

ABOUT THE NORTON MUSEUM OF ART

The Norton Museum of Art, Florida's largest art museum, is home to a distinguished collection of art, with holdings in American, European, Contemporary and Asian Art and Photography.

Founded in 1941 by Ralph Hubbard Norton and his wife, Elizabeth Calhoun Norton, the Museum collects, preserves, and exhibits art, and engages visitors through exhibitions, events and live entertainment featuring local musicians and performance artists. Public programming is year-round and designed to inspire conversations and build community through the power of art. The Museum is accessible to all.

The Museum's expansion and renovation was led by London-based architecture firm Foster + Partners, adding a building and more than 12,000 square feet of new gallery space, an educational center, a store and restaurant, a sculpture garden, and a Great Hall, serving as the Museum's "living room." The campus is home to renovated, Museum-owned, 1920s-era cottages that house artists-in-residence.

Visit the Museum's website at Norton.org or connect on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

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