No visitor to Chelsea should miss Sol LeWitt's new work, Ripples, a black pencil drawing on a white wall at the back of the James Cohan Gallery. The piece was actually done by his assistants: LeWitt still adheres to the idea of artist as conceptual crafter of the proposition. Ripples is on a modest-sized wall, maybe twenty feet high by fifteen feet wide, but the formula for the drawing has variable dimensions, and it could be made much larger or smaller.

Above all, Ripples is sexy: it looks like tufts of hair surrounding two labial slits, two shadowy figures surrounded by an evocative haze, or two loosely wound skeins of yarn with threads
cascading in all directions around them. You can imagine the assistants laboring to craft the seemingly infinite number of dense lines comprising the piece. LeWitt's recent wall drawings have been wavy and loopy, but even some of the works titled Tangle don't have the sensuality of Ripples, with its two solid forms emerging and submerging from the swirling mass of lines.

Ripples seems to be a logical next step in the more eccentric direction LeWitt pursued in the late 1990s. You can read the lines in the forms, but they seem to exist in relation to the greater field. It's a phenomenon similar to Jackson Pollock's Blue Poles: Number 11 (1952)--and the transparency of process in Ripples also recalls Pollock. The vertical formal element and the sensuality of this piece resonate with some of the curvy forms in LeWitt's Splotches sculptures, his special project for the roof of the Metropolitan Museum of Art this summer.

Ripples as a title is a departure for LeWitt, whose monikers usually describe the exact relationship of parts. This title is necessarily more vaguely suggestive--the ripples don't occur in synchronized patterns, like waves; they float around in a mishmash of undulating lines. The asymmetry adds to a cascading, diffuse effect, like that of bliss. Ripples is on display at James Cohan for an undetermined period--just until someone buys it. When that happens, which will probably be soon, at least we can go to the Met.