

ARTFORUM

SAN FRANCISCO

"SAM LEWITT: MORE HEAT THAN LIGHT"

CCA WATTIS INSTITUTE FOR
CONTEMPORARY ARTS • September 10–
November 21 • Curated by Anthony
Huberman • For his new project at

CCA Wattis, Sam Lewitt will attach ten heaters designed for use in mobile-communication systems to the gallery's track lighting, parasitically siphoning electricity to generate thermal rather than luminous energy. As in his previous work repurposing high-tech materials (his contribution to the 2012 Whitney Biennial employed ferromagnetic liquid, used in everything from hard drives to military aircraft), Lewitt here wittily underscores the degree to which physical environments—and, by extension, contemporary neoliberal cultural and economic systems—are simultaneously strictly regulated yet highly flexible.

Accompanied by texts (in a font designed by the artist), digital sensors, and a thermal camera to capture the infrared signatures of the heaters and of the bodies moving among them, the installation also reflects on the ways in which environmental conditions are registered—as both phenomenological experience and measurable data.

—Gwen Allen