

# DEREK ELLER GALLERY

*For Immediate Release:*

## **Bettina Sellmann**

*Taina . cosmogeny . make your own paper dragon*

November 21, 2008 - January 10, 2009

**Opening Reception: Thursday, November 21, 2008**

Inspired by art historic imagery, Bettina Sellmann creates "see-through versions" of Old Master paintings, which appear as spaces of consciousness rather than recognizable depictions. Using watercolor on canvas, she builds up veil-like layers of pigment, the translucency of which exposes the vulnerability of the portrayed subjects. At the same time, this process highlights the inner psychology of the image. For example, in *At Church*, Sellmann's gestural brushstrokes evoke the loose contours of a scene from Faust in which Gretchen seeks comfort in the church while tormented by the Evil Spirit. Dissolving into diaphanous pools of color that recall the soak-stain technique of color field painters, the scene reveals the psychological isolation and decay that lies beneath the surface.

Sellmann's process is highly expressive and instinctual. She states, "My strategy is to strictly follow the painting-inherent impulse only, and bring the painting onto the canvas as immediately and directly as possible." The end result of this intuitive process is a painting, which seeks to mine the depths of existential human experiences.

Born in Munich, Germany, Bettina Sellmann lives and works in New York. Her work has appeared in numerous exhibitions throughout the United States and Europe and is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art, NY. This will be her fourth solo show with the gallery.

Derek Eller Gallery is located at 615 West 27th Street, between 11th and 12th Avenues. Hours are Tuesday - Saturday from 11am - 6pm. For further information or visuals, please contact the gallery at 212.206.6411 or visit [www.derekeller.com](http://www.derekeller.com)