

**WHITING TENNIS**

October 12 - November 12, 2017

**Opening Reception: Thursday, October 12, 2017, 6-8pm**

Derek Eller Gallery is pleased to present an installation of new paintings, sculptures and works on paper by Seattle-based artist Whiting Tennis.



For this exhibition, Tennis assembles an array of enigmatic forms in varying shapes and sizes. Generated from the method of “automatic” drawing popularized by the French Surrealists, Tennis’ ideas and images emerge in two and three dimensions, in paper, plaster, paint, and cardboard. This drawing technique (or as Tennis refers to it, “sketchpad-as-Ouija board”) subverts the roles in traditional rendering, allowing the drawing tool to guide the hand in order to seek out subjects that exist within the subconscious mind. Geometric crystals, woven grids of thread, and plant-like root systems have risen to the surface. Mining the lexicon of enigmatic, self generated imagery, Tennis enlists his materials with their physical parameters, to help him determine final compositions. As a result he has constructed an iconography that is warmly familiar and nostalgic but uniquely autonomous.

Tennis fluidly transforms humble materials into a network of abstract frequently zoomorphic forms with vague references to architecture or the landscape. In *Office Furniture* and other large canvases, he combines collage, painting, and mono-printing. Here, as well as in many works on paper, he uses a primitive relief printing

technique to add textural depth and to render patterned surfaces. The grain of wood is imitated by pressing plywood coated in wet paint directly into the paper. Cardboard, bubble wrap and other textured surfaces are utilized to make marks in the same way. These wall works are accompanied by a series of smaller scale sculptures, like *Model For Venus* and *Rabbit*, which teeter between figurative and abstract. Evoking the ancient fetishes and earliest artifacts of the pre-linguistic period, these totemic structures possess a minimal formal vocabulary and a fierce autonomy.

Tennis has recently mounted solo exhibitions at the Museum of Northwest Arts, La Conner, WA, the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery, Saratoga Springs, NY and Hallie-Ford Museum of Art, Salem OR. His work is included in public collections such as the Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR and the Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA. This will be Whiting Tennis’s fifth solo exhibition with the gallery.

Derek Eller Gallery is located at 300 Broome Street between Eldridge Street and Forsyth Street. Hours are Wednesday-Sunday from 11am to 6pm and Tuesday by appointment. For further information please contact the gallery at 212.206.6411 or visit [www.derekeller.com](http://www.derekeller.com)