

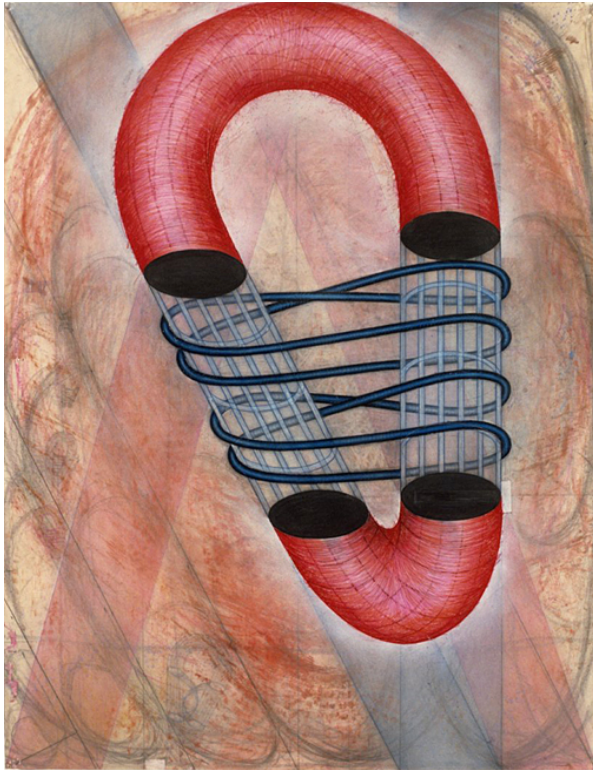
# DEREK ELLER GALLERY

## JOHN NEWMAN

*Drawings of Imaginary Sculptures in Imaginary Spaces: 1991-2003*

November 15 - December 23, 2018

**Opening Reception: Thursday, November 15, 2018, 6-8pm**



*Untitled (headlock)*, 1991, pastel, china marker, colored pencil, pencil, chalk and enamel spray paint on paper, 72.5 x 56 in

Derek Eller Gallery is pleased to present *Drawings of Imaginary Sculptures in Imaginary Spaces: 1991-2003*, a solo exhibition of large works on paper spanning two decades of John Newman's career.

Within Newman's practice, drawing carries equal weight to sculpture. Originally conceived as preparatory sketches, the drawings have evolved over the years to become refined and completed works. In the early years, Newman produced large-scale drawings as guidance for fabrication. In the 1980s, he began working and reworking these "shop drawings," adding color and embellishments, relentlessly re-tooling them to the extent that a friend remarked: "You take your drawings within one inch of their lives". By the 1990s, his drawings came to possess their own singularity as he discovered the possibility of rendering objects that were physically impossible to make. He has said, "The objects were never meant to be made; they were meant to be drawn and in many ways they were born out of the space where they reside."

Manipulation of and experimentation with space is central to all of Newman's work. While these drawings possess haptic and tactile qualities, they are rooted in virtual spaces, the digital, the imaginary, and even spiritual spaces that are at once microscopic and infinite. In the drawings, he confabulates multiple conventions of representation within the same composition. Perspectival illusion, geometric mapping and diagrammatic drafting are merged, collided and collapsed together.

The fictional sculptures depicted in these drawings feel akin to early digital animation, further enforcing their connection to virtual reality. The knotted twisting forms, which at times are physically impossible, stem from Newman's interest in non-euclidean geometry and topology. By employing non-planar geometry, Newman makes a clean break from the flat space of modernist abstraction to produce images that have never been seen before.

During the time when these drawings were made, Newman's work underwent a major shift. Extensive travels throughout Asia and Africa introduced him to new materials and new sculptural modes. His sculptures shifted in scale becoming smaller and more akin to devotional objects,

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and the drawings continued to distance themselves from any hint of reductivism. Many of the large works on paper in this exhibition were made in Rome while Newman received the Rome Prize in 2003. In that time, we see a major expansion of his lexicon, as each composition contains more color, detail, and information. The results are masterfully conceived and executed works on paper capable of holding their own next to any painting.

John Newman lives and works in New York City. He has exhibited extensively, mounting over fifty solo exhibitions since the 1970s. His work is included in numerous public collections including the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum, the Whitney Museum, the Tate Modern in London, the National Gallery in Canberra, the Albertina Museum in Vienna, among others. He has been the recipient of residencies and awards including the Dora Maar Residency, the Rome Prize, the Chinati Foundation, the Civitella Ranieri Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Joan Mitchell Foundation, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, the NEA, and a Senior Research Fulbright Grant to India. This will be his first solo exhibition at Derek Eller 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).