

LISSON GALLERY LONDON LTD.

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PRESS RELEASE

AVIS NEWMAN

**PRESS DAYS:** Wednesday 4th - Friday 6th November 1987  
**PRIVATE VIEW:** Saturday 7th November 12 am - 2 pm  
**OPEN TO PUBLIC:** 9th November to 19 December 1987

This is Avis Newman's first show at the Lisson Gallery. Recent shows include installations at the Matt's Gallery, London in 1982 and at the Serpentine Gallery in 1984. Major group shows include the 'British Art Show' toured by the Arts Council in 1984-85; 'Falls the Shadow', Hayward Annual, 1986 and 'The Analytical Theatre: New Art from Britain' toured by the Independent Curators Incorporated, New York 1987-88. The exhibition at the Lisson Gallery in London will travel in a more extensive form to the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago.

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Newman extends post-minimalism's explorations of the affective relation between the work's space, the artist, and the viewer, through drawing - a process whose material qualities are not simply a matter of indifference or convention, but are intrinsic to the meaning of the work. It is here that we understand the significance of the dream-work, for it is by means of its intricate weaving of the phantasmic fragments of memory with the residues of daily life that we hear, if only momentarily, the murmurs of an inner truth. Thus the drawing's surface may be considered analogous to the deep structure of the mind: as our unconscious thoughts work over the tangled paths of memory seeking a form to the present, so the drawing's accumulation of marks and collage, tracings and retracings, repetitions and echoes, take on body and meaning. And as the space of thought is potentially timeless and limitless, so the space and scale of the drawing evokes the uncertain immensity of experience.

In the Orphic myth the poet descends into the depths of an eternal night in search of his 'other' self, only to lose her in the impassioned movement of a glance. This dramatization of the essential enigma of the creative process has been central to Avis Newman's work; indeed, her work is itself a profound mediation on the relationship between representation and the intimate estrangement of the self in its otherness. Newman's passage to this tenuous encounter has been forged through several pathways among which we might identify, on the one hand, a critical attention to post-minimalist and conceptual concerns with the context of art as it relates to the realities of contemporary existence; and on the other, an understanding

of the work of the dream as a universal expression of human desire.

Here there are no clearly defined boundaries, no symbolic enclosures that would constrain the viewer's imaginative involvement with the work. Drawing suggests an open-endedness, a transgression of the demand for the self-contained world of the classico-modernist tradition. If there are references to earlier traditions they are those that remain tangential or obscure to mainstream thought: palaeolithic drawing with its inscrutable signs and complex superimpositions of another cultural memory; or Mannerist art with its torsions and multiple perspectives. Like Mannerism, Newman's drawings do not subscribe to a language of order and certitude but to the otherness of language - to the palpable silences of the absent body through whose wordless rhythms we are drawn into communication with the incessant flow of human longing. It is in its understanding of the dialogues between interiority and universal experience that Newman's work opens up a space to the viewer's own reflections.

Editors: For further information please contact  
Caroline Mockett on 01-724 2739. Transparencies  
and photographs are available on request.

Opening hours, Monday to Friday 10 am to 6 pm.  
Saturday 10 am - 1 pm.