

Raymond Pettibon & John Newsom

The Seven Deadly Sins and The Seven Heavenly Virtues

9 February – 6 April 2025

Seven years ago, American artists Raymond Pettibon and John Newsom were introduced to each other by Stella Schnabel at a brunch she hosted for artists and their children. Both of the artists have sons who attended the brunch as well. Pettibon's son Bo and Newsom's son Luke were 5 and 6 years old at the time they met. As they became friends quite fast, their relationship also led to an ever-developing artistic dialogue between Pettibon and Newsom. The exhibition at the Kebbel Villa will represent the two artists' second shared exhibition together and the first institutional presentation in Europe.

Expanding on the artists' first joint exhibition "Raymond Pettibon / John Newsom: Classical Elements" presented at COUNTY Gallery, Palm Beach in 2022, the artists chose another timeless theme to tackle and portray for their exhibition at the Kebbel Villa. From the classical elements to the seven deadly sins and the seven heavenly virtues, Pettibon and Newsom share a respectful appreciation for time-tested iconography with a spiritual or psychological leaning. This allows them to explore the heights and depths of allegorical and metaphorical possibilities of each of their individual practices and processes.

Pettibon's creative engagement with a myriad of pictorial tropes and diverse written language incorporates wit and humor along with mystery and, at times, sexual innuendo to create highly engaging and provocative expressions of both body and mind, giving perfect weight and measure to the sins as well as to the relief of the virtues. He presents the viewer with challenges to their everyday norms of understanding and forces the viewer out of their comfort zone, providing the opportunity for repeated viewing, thought, and mind expansion.

Similarly, Newsom relishes the natural world's potential to engage in and embrace any possible pictorial language, referencing through enlarged flora and fauna worldly scenes of pleasure and pain, accompanied by beauty and transcendence. Both artists engage in highly individualized styles of working, focusing here on the formal process of primarily drawing or 'drawn painting' to access the image. Pettibon by means of ink, a wet medium; and Newsom by means of charcoal, a dry medium. Together, the complete bodies of both artists' output for the exhibition comprise 28 pieces in total, all created in 2024, especially for this exhibition at the Kebbel Villa.

The exhibition is accompanied by a **fully illustrated catalog** with a foreword by the director of the Kebbel Villa, Jürgen Dehm, and an essay by renowned esoteric author Mitch Horowitz.



Raymond Pettibon (*1957 in Tucson, AZ, US, lives in New York, NY, US) first came to prominence in the Southern California punk scene of the early 1980s, where he created posters, zines, and album cover artwork for a number of influential bands of the period, including Black Flag, Minutemen, Off!, and Sonic Youth. He has maintained this relationship to music throughout his storied career, recently creating artwork for Foo Fighters, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Pearl Jam, and Iggy Pop. Pettibon's art is one of piercing, poignant, and raw emotional states. He has mined the American cultural subconscious for nearly 50 years, creating a contemporary body of work that can only be referenced historically to the likes of William Blake and Goya. He stands alone in the contemporary landscape as a beacon of artistic integrity and inquiry. Pettibon is somewhat of an anomaly, as is Newsom in his own right, individually investigating his sharp mind and vast imagination, Pettibon continues to spark intrigue by the international contemporary art-world community and beyond.

Pettibon had his first solo exhibition in 1986 at the Semaphore Gallery in New York. In 1995, he had his first major solo exhibition at David Zwirner Gallery in New York. In the mid-1990s, he had his first solo museum exhibition at the Kunsthalle Bern in Switzerland, which travelled to Paris. In 1998, a self-titled show opened at the Renaissance Society in Chicago and travelled to The Drawing Center in New York; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. In 2002, he had a solo exhibition, "Raymond Pettibon Plots Laid Thick", organized by the Museu d'art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), which travelled to the Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, Tokyo and GEM, the Museum Voor Actuele Kunst, The Hague, The Netherlands. In 2006, Pettibon had a major solo survey exhibition at the Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Málaga, Spain that travelled to The Kestner Gesellschaft in Hannover, Germany. A comprehensive catalogue was produced on the occasion of both exhibitions. In 2007, Pettibon participated in the Venice Biennial, for "Think with the Senses - Feel with the Mind: Art in the Present Tense", curated by Robert Storr where he created a unique wall drawing installation. A retrospective of Pettibon's work entitled "A Pen of All Work" spanned three floors of New York City's New Museum in 2017 and travelled to The Bonnefantenmuseum Maastricht, The Netherlands. A portion of the show was presented at the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow, entitled "The Cloud of Misreading." In 2019, Pettibon's work was the subject of a solo exhibition at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art. Pettibon's work is included in numerous private and public collections, including the Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore; the Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami; the Israel Museum, Jerusalem; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; the Moderna Museet, Stockholm; the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; San Francisco; the Tate Britain, London; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.



John Newsom (*1970 in Hutchinson, KS, US, lives in New York, NY, US) is best known for combining multiple techniques of formal painting strategies onto large-scale canvases featuring dynamic spectacles of the natural world. In 1992, he completed his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at The Rhode Island School of Design (R.I.S.D.) and subsequently moved to New York City, where he attended New York University's studio arts program. He graduated with a Master of Fine Arts degree from NYU at the age of 24. Newsom has been based in New York for his entire career. Newsom had his first solo show in New York at Earl McGrath Gallery in 1995, located at 20 West 57th Street, and has been exhibiting consistently ever since, participating in more than 100 national and international exhibitions since the mid-1990s. In 2007, Newsom's work was included in the notable exhibition "Paradise" organized by Heather Harmon at Patrick Painter Inc. in Los Angeles. The other artists included in the exhibition were Peter Saul, H.C. Westermann, and R. Crumb. Newsom was represented by Patrick Painter for nearly a decade, and this is where he befriended fellow gallery artist André Butzer, a German painter. Newsom and Butzer have remained close friends and periodically organize group exhibitions together as an anonymous collective. In 2013, Newsom was approached by Raekwon of the Wu-Tang Clan after Raekwon discovered Newsom's paintings in an exhibition. Raekwon invited Newsom to create the artwork for his sixth solo studio album entitled "Fly International Luxurious Art", released in 2015. Since then, Newsom, similar to Pettibon's practice of collaborating with punk bands and musicians, has collaborated on several additional albums with Killah Priest, also of the Wu-Tang Clan. In 2024, Newsom presented the artwork from Killah Priest's album "Forest of the Happy Ever After" in a solo exhibition at the Brattleboro Museum located in Brattleboro, Vermont. Newsom's work has been the focus of a number of solo exhibitions presented at notable institutions, including "John Newsom: CRESCENDO" at the Richard J. Massey Foundation for the Arts and Sciences, New York, NY (2011-2012); "John Newsom: Rogue Arena" at MANA Contemporary, Jersey City, NJ (2015); "John Newsom: Nature's Course" at the Oklahoma Contemporary, Oklahoma City, OK (2022); "John Newsom: Universal Frontier" at The Mary R. Koch Arts Center, Wichita, KS (2023); "John Newsom: Painting the Forest of the Happy Ever After" at the Brattleboro Museum, Brattleboro, VT (2024); "John Newsom: New Growth in an Old Garden" at the Kunstverein Heppenheim, Heppenheim, Germany (2024); "Raymond Pettibon and John Newsom: The Seven Deadly Sins and The Seven Heavenly Virtues" at the Keibel Villa, Schwandorf, Germany (2025).

Published in a 2015 monograph of Newsom's paintings, art critic Barry Schwabsky writes in his essay: "Beneath his thick and sensuous painted renderings of flora and fauna is a grappling with the giants of abstraction. What keeps 'strong painting' from becoming merely muscle-bound – is Newsom's secret weapon: the discipline that comes from considering himself, not a painter of images, but rather an abstractionist (...) to appreciate his paintings is (...) to engage with their surfaces of purely sensual incident."

Articles and reviews of Newsom's work have appeared in Artforum, Art in America, Flash Art, and The New York Times, among other notable periodicals. His work is included in numerous private and public collections including the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Brooklyn Museum, New York; the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles;



the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMoMA), San Francisco; the Yale University Art Gallery, Connecticut and the R.I.S.D. Museum, Providence. He resides in Brooklyn, NY with his wife Cassie and their two children, Luke and Ruby.

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Tue–Thu 13:00–17:00h
Sun 11:30–17:00h
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