

November 10, 2017
For Immediate Release:

JOHN PATKAU: *CUT / DRAWN*
with
MARKUS SCHALLER: *SPACE GARDEN*

Opening reception: Thursday, November 23rd, 5 – 8 p.m.
Artist talk: Saturday, November 25th, 2 p.m.
Exhibition dates: November 23rd – January 13th, 2018.

Gallery Jones is very pleased to present John Patkau's inaugural exhibition, *Cut / Drawn*, in conjunction with an exhibition of new work by minimalist German sculptor Markus Schaller, *Space Garden*. Though the artists' styles are each distinct, the works in *Cut / Drawn* and *Space Garden* combine to delve into the nature of metal as a vehicle for artistic expression.

The wonderful contradiction in John Patkau's work is between the strength of steel and its point of failure. It is in that liminal space that the conversation begins; between what our communal expectations and knowledge of the material are, and what the material can be.

Steel is an alloy of iron, one of the most abundant elements on the planet. The ubiquity of steel is a testament to humanity's success in creating a useful material for all manner of building, making and invention. The word steel has even become synonymous with strength, occupying a place in our lexicon alongside fortitude and resilience.

Cut / Drawn, the title of this body of work by John Patkau, refers to large cuts made in sheets of steel and the enormous tension applied to them as they are pulled to the point of failure. Patkau's interventions with industrially rolled steel sheets were initiated from a place of curiosity. When subjected to tension, the steel reacts and unfurls in unpredictable ways. Patkau's sculptures, which exhibit a certain formal elegance, are a physical index of his creation process. Their contours at once expose the vulnerabilities of steel while opening the material up to new avenues of meaning.

The architectural work of John Patkau has received national and international recognition over the past 25 years, including 10 Governor General's Medals. Patkau Architects represented Canada at the Venice Biennale in 1996, currently has work exhibited at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, England, and

has recently completed the Audain Art Museum in Whistler and nearing completion on the Polygon Gallery in North Vancouver. Patkau Architects work has been featured in and the subject of numerous books, most recently “Material Operations” (2017), published by Princeton Architectural Press.

Markus Schaller lives and works in Berlin, Germany. In *Space Garden*, he departs from his signature style—heavy forged steel sculptures—to create two-dimensional wall-hangings of embossed aluminum. While still minimalist, these handmade works have a sense of intricacy and balance that sets them apart from his former work. The kaleidoscopic patterning on the metal is sharply symmetrical, with angled sections that reflect the light.

For many years, Schaller’s work has thoughtfully contrasted the immense force involved in forging steel objects with the more intimate practice of stamping. Often hidden away on the surface of his large forged sculptures are delicate poems and texts specific to the work, hand-stamped letter by letter. The connection of stamping with a deeper poetic or philosophical meaning is reinstated as a motif in Schaller’s new sculptures, where geometric markings in aluminum represent a starting point for a dialogue around fundamental forms in nature.

The patterns in Schaller’s recent embossed aluminum work are based on universal principles—in particular the mathematical sciences around crystalline structures, known as Penrose and Kepler tilings. These “impossible” aperiodic tilings were presented as a mathematical theorem in the 1960’s and amazingly discovered some twenty years later in the atomic structure of aluminum alloys. The unusual Penrose and Kepler symmetries imprinted on the surface Schaller’s wall-hangings bear a profound comprehension—one originating with the ancient Greeks—that the universe at its most elementary level is a geometric composition.

Schaller’s work has been featured in the Vancouver Sculpture Biennale, with installations in English Bay and in front of the Vancouver Library, and he has also represented Germany at the Venice Biennale. His work is included in private, public and corporate collections around the world.