

# JAMES HARRIS GALLERY

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## PRESS RELEASE



### Storm Tharp

September 1 to October 8, 2011  
Opening Reception  
Thursday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 6-8PM

Gallery hours are Tuesday - Saturday 11:00am - 5:00pm  
Additional images are available upon request

*Bokashi*, 2011  
softground print, edition of 12. Printed at PNCA  
with master printer Paul Mullowney.  
30" x 22"

James Harris Gallery is pleased to present prints and color fields by Portland-based artist, Storm Tharp. Tharp, whose work was included in the 2010 Whitney Biennial, has been almost exclusively showing in Portland and Switzerland over the last 15 years. Over the course of his practice, Tharp has dabbled in a wide variety of mediums including textiles, video, sculpture, painting, and drawing- taking inspiration from a wide range of influences from 1970's American cinema and Japanese portrait prints. The core of his work revolves around the nature of identity and its representation and perception.

Storm Tharp crafts his characters by first drawing contours on the page with water and dropping in mineral ink before it has a chance to dry, resulting in expansive bleeds. This process is repeated in various instances to build forms and light sources and is then manipulated in a variety of ways such as by drawing and erasing. This is exemplified in previous portraits and is present in his piece, "Bokashi". His characters have names, histories, and narratives but suggest multiple interpretations.

A series of eight drypoint prints in the show, made in conjunction with the Pacific Northwest College of Art (PNCA) master printer, Paul Mullowney, are titled "Health". These prints depict Tharp's skill for fine detail and remarkable use of varying line qualities. Detailed line work come together to form portraits like "Health (2), (3), and (6)" or a feverish fractured tableau of legs, feet, and asses like "Health (4)". Though Tharp often thinks of Freud in his figurative work, his "Health" prints were more influenced by Picasso's drypoint etchings.

Tharp's painting titled "Vreeland" is also featured in the show, along with "Nosebleed". Both diptychs are color fields that complement each other despite the differences in mood. "Vreeland" is meditation on lilac, made from gouache and acrylic ink on stretched paper, the depth and richness of the field seen by those who get swept up in the placid lilac surface. "Nosebleed", a vertical pair of six feet high stretched paper panels, is a darker palette in deep purple and black. In the past, Tharp has used reductive abstraction paired with figurative work to push his interest out of realism. His color fields reference figurative qualities through color choice, scale, and their physicality.