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**PRESS RELEASE**



“Storytelling: Hill, Holzer, McKnight and Thomas”

November 9 to December 21, 2024

Gallery Hours:

Wed to Sat 11:30-5:30PM

and by appointment

Reception: November 9<sup>th</sup>, 4-6PM

Left: Barbara Earl Thomas “In Case of Fire” 2014  
Linocut, Edition 3/5 Frame Size: 35 ½” x 47”

James Harris Gallery is pleased to present a group exhibition titled “Storytelling” featuring the work Gary Hill, Jenny Holzer, Mark McKnight and Barbara Earl Thomas. The show depicts the many strategies used by artists to imply or construct narrative. The consistent element between the objections in the show is the use of the color black and its tonal quality to imbue a work with mood and atmosphere. Each of the works evoke a narrative, either real or fictitious, through language or image. By using visual cues each artist, leads the viewer on a journey to question what is seen, missing or heard. In this way the individual pieces communicate their own story.

Barbara Earl Thomas, creates deeply complex compositions through cutting and removal. Her large-scale linocut titled “In Case of Fire” depicts a turbulent scene of burning buildings in a flooded landscape where boats and people are being swept away. Two men grapple with a monstrous size snake on the left while a giant rooster wreaks havoc on the right. This stunning black and white composition tells a narrative of religion, mysticism and personal discovery.

“Earthskin” by Mark McKnight reflect his ongoing engagement with black and white photography. Through framing, composition, use of light and shadow, he produces a reality that upends its reliability as mere documents. Two craters appear paradoxically corporeal. The picture suggests time, desire, and deterioration but also, they occupy a kind of interstice. Situated between the real and the surreal, direct representation and construed meaning, the terrestrial and the ethereal – the picture illuminates the medium's broader poetic and transformative potential.

Known for her LED installations that used text to delivery social critique, Jenny Holzer in the mid 2000s began a series of paintings and prints based on the declassified US documents concerning the War on Terror. In this five-panel etching titled “AKA,” the artist transforms these redacted documents into a powerful graphic story. Several times larger than their original size, the suite of prints, communicates a visual narrative from what is missing. The viewer can only guess at the truth.

Gary Hill investigates an array of issues ranging from the physicality of language, synesthesia and perceptual conundrums to ontological space and viewer interactivity. “The Whisper Room” uses the moving image as well as language to create an encounter with the artist. A small video monitor mounted upon a microphone depicts someone entering a sound proof booth, the camera slowly approaches a mic until its spherical grille becomes the central image. Through the headphones, the viewer listens to a narrative written by the artist, describing human connection of present and past.