

# JAMES HARRIS GALLERY

312 SECOND AVENUE SOUTH  
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98104  
T: 206 903 6220 F: 206 903 6226  
JAMESHARRISGALLERY.COM

## PRESS RELEASE



Adam Sorensen

*Honey from the Sky,*  
*Yogurt from the*  
*Mountaintop*

May 3 – June 2, 2012

Opening Reception

Thursday, May 3, 6 – 8 pm

*California*, 2012, Oil on Linen, 60 1/2" x 55"

Gallery hours are Thurs. to Sat.

11:00am - 5:00pm or By Appt

Images are available upon request.

James Harris Gallery is pleased to present *Honey from the Sky, Yogurt from the Mountaintop*, our third exhibition of paintings by Portland artist Adam Sorensen. Sorensen continues to bring new perspectives to the Romantic landscape as he considers humanity's contemporary relationship with the natural world. What was once the voyage of the painter to the fringes of civilization to depict the landscape's unmatched power and grandeur must now be imbued with a conversation about depletion. The exhibition's title, *Honey from the Sky, Yogurt from the Mountaintop*, references modern attitudes regarding the ideal, pointing to the excess that often overtakes an appreciation of pure natural substances, such as water. The acidic blaze of color in Sorensen's landscapes presents this dichotomy by artificially rendering nature sublime, a metaphor for desire and the liminality of the real and imagined in the spectacle of modern life.

Sorensen's synthesis of styles, from heroic Western landscape painting to Japanese anime and woodblock prints, accounts for the compelling dialogue between the real and fantasy in his pictures. The tradition of depicting water as a source of tranquility and powerful force of nature hearkens to the monumental ocean cliffs of Caspar David Friedrich and the generative force of Hokusai's waterfalls. Sorensen's most recent works highlight yet another important component of natural waters by emphasizing their real and allegorical capacity for reflection.

In the artist's vibrant work, *California*, a milky river cascades over a glowing outcrop of rocks, pouring into still waters. The basin acts as a mirror to the landscape, imparting a sense of meditation and calm reflection. Luminous buttes repeat their forms and rich colors in the pool of water, suggesting a false sense of all-encompassing abundance. This anxious tension between the monumentality of his subject matter and his vibrant atmosphere captures our awkward and displaced relationship with the vital yet diminishing natural environment. Still reverent and sublime, the rejuvenated narrative of these landscapes represents the precipice between life and death.

This exhibition follows Sorensen's first solo museum show which concluded in December 2011 at the Portland Art Museum. The artist has work in the collection of the Boise Art Museum, Seattle University, Portland Art Museum, Progressive Corporation among others. His paintings have been shown nationally.