

## For immediate release and listing:

Robert Hardgrave

*Momentous*

January 9–February 6, 2010

Opening reception, Gallery II: Saturday, January 9, 6–9 PM

New York, NY December 22, 2009 -- Joshua Liner Gallery is pleased to present *Momentous*, an exhibition of new mixed-media paintings by the Seattle-based artist Robert Hardgrave. This is Hardgrave's second solo show with the gallery.

The fourteen works on exhibit feature Hardgrave's unique vocabulary of marks and symbols that are at once abstract and intensely personal. Working in acrylic on canvas, sewn collage, and paper, the artist builds up images from expressive mark-making and complex shapes. Curved and scalloped lines are repeated and multiplied in arched or wave-like groupings, an additive process that creates dynamic, flowing atmospheres and phantasmagoric figures. This intricate imagery is informed by Hardgrave's experience of illness and recovery, and further inspired by reflections on reincarnation and the possibility of life after death.

*Plexus*, a roughly 5-x-9-foot acrylic-on-canvas painting, is Hardgrave's largest work to date and exemplifies the artist's distinct blend of symbolism and abstraction. The picture's wide expanse suggests a dynamic struggle between light and dark, life and death, with swirling masses of dark blue and white meeting in the center of the pictorial field. This cosmic atmosphere is punctuated with wing shapes, diaphanous hand forms, and disembodied eyes. By contrast, *Black Mass Mask* is a tight, 20" tondo of dark, fist-like forms with flashes of red and ochre, created in sewn collage with painted Japanese papers. *Pan*, a medium-sized acrylic-on-canvas painting introduces open passages of ribboned space, intensifying the relationship of figure and ground.

Hardgrave's calligraphic approach to mark-making takes inspiration from the miniature-painting traditions of the Near- and Far East. Yet he succeeds in creating a truly distinct, organic, and personal system of textures and forms. Described by the artist as "countenances of spirits," these works suggest that spirit "portraits" may have more in common with abstract expressionism than traditional figuration.

Born in 1969 in Oxnard, CA, Robert Hardgrave lives and works in Seattle. Solo exhibitions of his work include *Compounded*, Joshua Liner Gallery, New York (2008); and *Xenoglossy*, BLK/MRKT Gallery, Los Angeles (2007). Selected group exhibitions include: *Further Group Show*, Joshua Liner Gallery (2010); *WHAMMY! The Art Show*, VASF Gallery, San Francisco, and the *International Outdoor Urban Art Exhibition*, Barcelona (both 2009); *Matt Curry and Robert Hardgrave*, Limited Addiction Gallery, Denver (2008); *Green*, Robert Berman Gallery, Los Angeles (2007); and *Hardlight*, BLVD Gallery, Seattle (2006).

Joshua Liner Gallery, located in New York City's Chelsea district, presents an exciting roster of young and emerging artists from the West and East coasts, Asia, and Europe.

Also on view, in Gallery I: *Further Group Show*, January 9–February 6.

For more information, please visit [www.joshualinergallery.com](http://www.joshualinergallery.com), or contact Tim Strazza at 212.244.7415 or [tim@joshualinergallery.com](mailto:tim@joshualinergallery.com).



1



2



3

1. *Plexus* Acrylic on canvas 63 x 112 in. 2009

2. *Black Mass Mask* Sewn collage with paper 20 in. (diameter) 2009

3. *Pan* Acrylic on canvas 30 x 24 in. 2009