



Norman Bluhm
*1948-1998: A Retrospective of
Works on Paper*

Opening Reception:
Thursday February 11, 2010
6PM to 8PM

On View:
February 11 through March 20, 2010

Gallery Discussion:
Saturday February 13, 2010 - 2PM
Cary Bluhm - James Harithas - Loretta Howard
on the Work of Norman Bluhm

"Norman Bluhm's paintings demonstrate the intimate connection between the erotic and the spiritual by virtue of their intensity, that is, the passion and skill invested in their execution, and the extraordinary quality of light that emanates from the finished work of art"

-James Harithas, Director of Station Museum of Contemporary Art

McClain Gallery is pleased to present *Norman Bluhm: A Retrospective of Works on Paper, 1948-1998*. The exhibition will encompass 50 years of original paintings and drawings on paper by the artist known as a major player in the second generation of Abstract Expressionists. The retrospective not only shows how the artist's work changed stylistically over the course of his career but also expresses

the strong continuities in Bluhm's work. Certain methods and motifs have survived as Bluhm moved from a primarily Abstract Expressionist output in the 1950s and 1960s to the more sensual figures of his later works.

The works in this exhibition range from figure studies and drawings to fully developed paintings. A selection of the artist's sketchbooks provides an intimate look into Norman Bluhm's unique artistic approach. According to James Harithas, Bluhm's images are the result of the artist's observation of nature and from a diverse selection of artistic influences including medieval and oriental art, Rubens, Matisse, Pollock and Kline. Bluhm is not only one of the superlative painters of the post-World War II era, but his willingness to deal with changes makes his artwork "recognizably ageless."

Norman Bluhm was born in Chicago in 1921. He served as a US Army B-26 pilot during World War II and flew in over forty dangerous missions over North Africa and Europe before being severely wounded. After recovering from his wounds, Bluhm began his career as an artist in Paris. He moved to New York in 1956 where he became a member of The New York School. Although Bluhm was influenced by his contemporaries in New York, his format, technique, and intensity were distinctly his own. Bluhm's notoriety as an artist grew as his work continued to evolve. He died at his home in Vermont in 1999.

The gallery discussion on Saturday, February 13 will include remarks by Cary Bluhm, Norman Bluhm's wife of 38 years, Loretta Howard, the director of Jacobson Howard Gallery in New York and James Harithas, Director of the Station Museum of Contemporary Art in Houston. Cary Bluhm manages her late husband's estate and was responsible for the preparation of his catalogue raisonné. Loretta Howard represents the works of Norman Bluhm and organized *Norman Bluhm: A Retrospective of Works on Paper, 1948-1998* which was on view at Jacobson Howard Gallery before coming to Houston. James Harithas has written extensively on Norman Bluhm and curated several exhibitions featuring his work including a solo exhibition at the Station Museum of Contemporary Art in 2007.

For more information please visit www.mcclaingallery.com

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Gallery hours: Tuesday - Friday: 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Saturday: 11a.m. to 5 p.m.

Image: Norman Bluhm, *Untitled*, 1990, Acrylic, ink, pastel on paper, 44.5 x 59 inches