

# I N M A N G A L L E R Y

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FOR MORE INFORMATION  
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INMAN GALLERY is pleased to present

## Darren Waterston

NEW WORKS ON PAPER

JANUARY 14 - FEBRUARY 19, 2000

OPENING RECEPTION:

**FRIDAY JANUARY 14, 6 - 8 PM**

**ARTIST TALK BEGINS AT 6:00PM**

**GALLERY HOURS: TUES-SAT 11-5, THURS 11-8**



Inman Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new works on paper by Darren Waterston. Born in 1965, in Fresno, California, the artist received a B.F.A. degree from Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles (1988), which included a semester in Germany. In the past two years, Waterston has had 7 one person exhibitions, in New York, Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, and Vancouver, B. C. The culmination of this richly prolific period for the artist was the mid-1999 exhibition at the **Fresno Art Museum**, entitled "In the Reeds and Rushes", for which a major catalogue was produced. During this time, Waterston work has been acquired for the permanent collections of several prominent institutions, including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

In the year 2000 Waterston will be focussing his efforts on a major project with the **British Columbia Ballet**. BC Ballet, in cooperation with the Vancouver Symphony and Opera, will be producing a contemporary staging of Spencer's "**The Fairy Queen**", with Henry Purcell's original score. Waterston will design the sets for this project, and work closely with the costumer. Debuting in late October in Vancouver, the production will travel to 6 cities in Canada and end the year in New York. Waterston lives and works in Los Angeles and Denman Island, British Columbia.

This exhibition presents work completed in the past year and includes 40 new works on paper, primarily intimate watercolors, with several drawings and monotypes included as well. Elements from the physical world (insects, plantlife, microbes) float effortlessly alongside fragments of an imaginary, Asian influenced landscape, with occasional figural references. The artist's mastery of the watercolor medium is evident. Using wet-in-wet techniques, layered with dry brush line work, the artist has produced works as complexly layered as his oil paintings, but with the luminosity provided by watermedia.

Waterston's imagery has evolved in the past 2 years from an investigation into man's complex relationship to the natural world, to an even more layered analysis of the duality between the physical and spiritual worlds. An early interest in Chinese calligraphy and Asian landscape led the artist to an appreciation and embracing of many Eastern philosophies and teachings. As his own understanding of the philosophical underpinning for the Asian images that interested him deepens, he has included more references to these teachings.

An example of this direction is provided in the provocative series entitled "Yab Yum". Yab-Yum is a Sanskrit word meaning the father/mother; Yab-Yum icons present deities in copulation with their consorts. Far from being erotica, Yab-Yum icons are used as meditational devices to help achieve liberation from the bonds of human physical senses. The artist reports: "A Buddhist believes that all beings, whatever their superficial sexual identity, are potentially both male and female, each having both male and female aspects and energies. The empathetic ability to transcend sexual identity/habits is cultivated through Tantric meditation." Elegantly simple abstracted figures containing both male and female genitalia, Waterston's Yab Yum series function as portraits of the ideal, enlightened individual.



The recent inclusion of figural elements in Waterston's increasingly imaginary landscapes may thus be seen in the context of a study of the physical versus the spiritual worlds. Floating elements now include not only microbes, pustules, but vaguely familiar body parts. The ecstatic sensuality of the work has been heightened by these references. The artist presents a classic condundrum: even as practitioners reach for the nirvana of nothingness, corporeal functions pull one back into human reality. The lack of defined spatial relationships between the objects that inhabit Waterston's world reinforce the duality and contradictions of the visible and invisible (spiritual) world.

*For more information about the artist or exhibition, or for visuals, contact Inman Gallery at (713) 529-9676*