

For Immediate Release:

## **D A V I D   T H O R P E**

**A vexed and troubled Englishman sees a parting in the fog  
which is a glimpse of the glory, or a sweet sip of liberty.**

November 5 – December 22, 2005

Opening Reception Saturday November 5, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

303 Gallery is proud to present our first exhibition of work by David Thorpe. Thorpe will show groups of sculptures, screens, drawings and an intricate collage, made of grass, wood, leather and Formica, that simultaneously open up and close off the viewer from the world.

In the central collage, a sky is constructed of inlaid Formica reminiscent of stained glass panels. The laminate is solid and impenetrable and the collage has no distance, luminosity or horizon line. Thorpe's idea goes against traditional Western landscape painting which employs a sense of depth to suggest a limitless view - that the world is infinite. Here, the reverse happens. He eschews limitlessness, instead opting to focus on an end point, a barrier. At the center of this work is a floating ship or building - a fortress, linked to Charles Robert Ashbee's (1863-1942) notion of "Ship of Craft".

Three screens, wood and clear glass, have been painted with matte green and brown pigments. Their function is the reverse of glass architecture, which was designed to show the wonders of the outside world. Instead of filling the interior space with beams of light, Thorpe's screens effectively shut out all manners of natural phenomena. Reflective on one side, the opposing side is a barrier to the outside world, while the main screen is shaped like a mountain range. Thorpe has also included a poem painted on paper in early manuscript-like text. The font is a self-sufficiency style taken from 'enthusiasts' pamphlets of the English Revolutionary period that promised a world turned upside down, but ended in defeat for the Radicals. The Radicals were forced to retreat into the silence of material self-sufficiency. You can see their legacy in William Blake and William Morris, specifically in the Morris book "News from Nowhere" with its concept of the Inner Light, a slow removing of yourself from outside needs.

David Thorpe's work is currently on view in The British Art Show 6, a touring group exhibition of British Contemporary Art that opened at BALTIC The Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead, England, this September and will travel to other venues in the UK. Earlier this year Thorpe's work was included in "Desire Worlds - New Romance in the Art of the Present", at the Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt, Germany. In 2004 Thorpe had a one-person exhibition at the Tate Britain, London, as a part of the "Art Now" series, and published an artist book "A Rendezvous with my Friends of Liberty" with Revolver, Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Thorpe's work was included in 2004's "Into My World: Recent British Sculpture", at the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut, and "Drawing Now: Eight Propositions" at the Museum of Modern Art, Queens, New York in 2002. Upcoming exhibitions include solo shows at the Worcester Art Museum, Massachusetts in 2006, and at the Camden Arts Centre, London that will travel to the Kunsthauus Glarus, Switzerland in 2007.

**303 Gallery represents the work of Doug Aitken, Laylah Ali, Anne Chu, Thomas Demand, Inka Essenhigh, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Ceal Floyer, Karel Funk, Maureen Gallace, Tim Gardner, Rodney Graham, Mary Heilmann, Karen Kilimnik, Florian Maier-Aichen, Kristin Oppenheim, Eva Rothschild, Collier Schorr, Stephen Shore, David Thorpe, and Jane and Louise Wilson.**

303 Gallery is open Tuesday-Saturday from 10 am - 6 pm. For further information please visit us at [www.303gallery.com](http://www.303gallery.com) or contact Lisa Spellman or Mari Spirito.