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February 2010 at Traver Gallery – Seattle

Mark Bennion: *Amhairghin*

Exhibition Runs: February 5– February 28, 2010

Opening Reception: Thursday, February 4, 5 – 8 pm

Mark Bennion: *Amhairghin*

Traver Gallery-Seattle is pleased to present, *Amhairghin*, an exhibition of new works by Vashon Island artist Mark Bennion. The title *Amhairghin* refers to an ancient druid poet whose poems and songs were said to have made his people victorious in battle. Moved by the tale of this ancient poet, Bennion's, twenty-five fresco paintings are imageless stories that invite one's imagination to wander and become lost in quiet contemplation.

Borrowing colors directly from the landscape that surrounds him, the paintings in *Amhairghin* are subtle and penetrating. A practicing Buddhist for much of his adult life, Bennion is not so concerned with the specific story each painting tells, rather that they prompt a moment of inner peace and meditation within the viewer. The purpose of Bennion's work is to record the moment of personal creation—a tribute to that singular moment—shared as shrines for contemplation and meditation. They are instinctual and emotional.



Like the Frescos of Pompeii, Bennion's paintings convey a sense of history – the cracked plaster surface, layered with various pigments and ink are reminiscent of the richly colored walls that adorned homes, temples, and churches throughout the Mediterranean. Unlike these traditional works in plaster and pigment, Bennion's paintings are deliberately cracked and scratched; each mark a record of the artist's hand, and a personal history of creation.

Mark Bennion is a painter and sculptor who has shown his work across the United States, Canada and Europe since 1968. Bennion has exhibited at the Museum of Glass in Tacoma, WA, as well as the Museum of Northwest Art in La Conner, WA. In 2008 Bennion was featured at gallery 435 in London and in 2009 at West Chester University, West Chester PA, with the international abstract painters group Pintura Fresca. Bennion's work includes painting, sculpture and large-scale installation work.

Caption Info: "Untitled (Fresco 6)," 2009 Fresco on panel, 24"h x 18"w

Located on Tacoma's Thea Foss Waterway and adjacent to the Museum of Glass, Traver Gallery is among the nation's premier exhibition spaces for contemporary studio glass, painting, sculpture, and installation art. Gallery hours are Tuesday – Saturday 10 – 6 and Sunday 12 – 5. For more information, please call (253) 383-3685 or visit our website at www.travergallery.com.