

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### October 2009 at Traver Gallery – Seattle

**Tobias Møhl: *Broken Twill***

**Preston Singletary: *Beyond Primitivism***

**Exhibition Runs: October 2 – November 1, 2009**

**Opening Reception: First Thursday, October 1, 5 – 8 pm**

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### Preston Singletary: *Beyond Primitivism*

Traver Gallery-Seattle is proud to present Tlingit artist Preston Singletary's latest body of work, *Beyond Primitivism*. The exhibition continues the artist's exploration of his Native American heritage through glass sculpture. Singletary addresses the ongoing discourse between Northwest Coast Native art and contemporary art, melding culturally significant Native images with the abstract, subtle forms of the Modern Art movement. Singletary "wanted to turn the tables on Modern Art" with this exhibition, responding aggressively to categorization of "primitive art" as secondary to other art historical movements. The resulting *Beyond Primitivism* showcases Modern forms bearing traditional Tlingit Formline design; sculptures that exist elegantly in both the Native and Modern realms.



Close study of various Modern artists including Constantin Brancusi, an artist of particular interest to Singletary, resulted in works such as *Invoker of Hidden Spirits* (featured above). Reminiscent of the Modernist's groundbreaking sculpture, the soft, abstract form has been embellished and adorned with Northwest Coast design and motifs in an organic, natural manner. More than ever before, narrative has taken a primary role in this work, illustrating cohesive stories that wrap lyrically around the forms. "I feel like my whole career at this point is turning a new corner. I am branching out and into the more sculptural aspects of the work...It's now time to begin exploring more deeply the narrative and symbolism within the work. The work evolves. With each year it seems as if I can eclipse what I have done before."

Singletary developed his talents as a glassblower working with Seattle area artists such as Benjamin Moore and Dante Marioni. He first began to experiment with transferring Tlingit designs, traditionally carved in wood, to the medium of glass in the early 1990's. The artist's career has taken him around the world including Kosta Boda in Sweden and the hot shops of Lino Tagliapietra, Checco Ongaro, and Pino Signoretto in Murano. Recognized internationally as one of the foremost artists working in glass, Singletary's artworks are included in many museum collections including Museum of Fine Art (Boston, MA), Seattle Art Museum, Corning Museum of Glass (Corning, NY), Mint Museum of Art and Design (Charlotte, NC), and Heard Museum (Phoenix, AZ). His work has been featured in museum exhibitions including *Fusing Traditions* (traveling exhibition) and *Changing Hands: Art Without Reservation* (Museum of Art and Design, NY), and a solo exhibition, *Threshold*, at Seattle Art Museum. A mid-career retrospective of Singletary's work, *Echoes, Fire and Shadows*, opened in August 2009 at the Museum of Glass and will travel across the nation. Singletary continues to teach and lecture internationally.

*Caption Info: "INVOCATOR OF HIDDEN SPIRITS" 2009, blown and sandcarved glass, 20.75" x 12" x 10.25". Photo: Russell Johnson Located one block north of the Seattle Art Museum, the Traver Gallery is one of the country's premier exhibition spaces for contemporary studio glass, painting, sculpture, and installation art. Gallery hours are Tuesday – Friday 10 – 6, Saturday 10 – 5, and Sunday 12 – 5. For more information, please call (206) 587-6501 or visit our website at [www.travergallery.com](http://www.travergallery.com).*