For Immediate Release

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UNIQUE ACID ON STAINLESS STEEL WORKS MAKE NEW ENGLAND DEBUT AT THOS. MOSER SHOWROOM

Artist Brian Mark Reveals Graceful, Ghostly Images with Acids and Blowtorches

FREEPORT, MAINE (July 30, 2010) – The unique acid on stainless steel works by artist Brian Mark will make their New England debut as part of the Thos. Moser "Alternative Gallery Space" program on Thursday, Oct. 14 from 6-8:30 p.m. at the Thos. Moser Flagship Showroom in Freeport, Maine. The show, "Islands & Sirens," will also feature the landscape work of Tom Curry.

Mark is known for his one-of-a-kind images featuring multi-layered, ghostly figures and effects created on stainless steel panels with acids and electroplating of gold and silver. Behind the subtle forms lies an aggressive, even violent, industrial process invented by Mark. He uses blowtorches, dry ice and a wide range of acids to create images that have been called everything from "gentle" and "shimmering" to "Dante's sixth circle of hell."

"It is not often that someone creates an entirely new mode of self expression," said Tony Libera, in his Nov. 5, 2008 article "The Art of Dripping Acid" in the Minnesota Daily. "Brian Mark, on the other hand, is one of the select few to have transcended convention, using an innovative method of pouring acid on stainless steel. This bold medium allows for an experience that is wholly unique and deeply mesmerizing."

"It quickly becomes apparent that this is work is in a sense interactive when you see people circling the piece, crouching down, looking at it from different angles," said Mark. ""I want to provoke viewers to slow down and think a little harder about what they are seeing. I think taking this time with interactions dignifies the human experience and is time well spent in the age of instant reactions."

Mark incorporates his training as a classical sculptor into his work, as well as his personal experiences. Mark's visions of "Sirens" will include pieces focused on the lure of inspiration and were

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Inspired while he was living in Costa Rica. His next work is a commission awarded by the Maine Arts Commission Percent for Arts program and will feature 16 panels permanently installed in the Houlton Courthouse, Houlton, Maine.

"Islands & Sirens" is part of the Thos. Moser "Alternative Gallery Space" program, which highlights national and local arts in each of its showrooms across the country.

"Our goal with the program is to introduce work, such as Mark's, that exemplifies the Thos. Moser commitment to ideas of beauty that are timeless and have relevance across cultures and centuries. As an artist, Mark also shares in our belief of the importance in exploring new methods and techniques to create timeless beauty," said Laurie Perzley, Art Curator, Thos. Moser, Freeport, Maine, Showroom.

Mark's work can be seen at www.brianmarkart.com, with high resolutions images available in the press room area. He may also be found on Facebook. More information about Thos. Moser can be found at www.thosmoser.com and more information about Tom Curry is at www.tomcurrymaineartist.com.

"ISLANDS & SIRENS" Exhibit Details:

What: **"Islands & Sirens"**
Featuring work from Brian Mark and Tom Curry
Both artists will be present at the opening reception

When: Show runs Oct. 14, 2010 – Jan. 17, 2011
Opening Reception: Oct. 14, 6-8:30 p.m.

Where: Thos. Moser Flagship Showroom
149 Main Street
Freeport, ME
(one block north of L.L. Bean)

Info/RSVP: 800.708.9041
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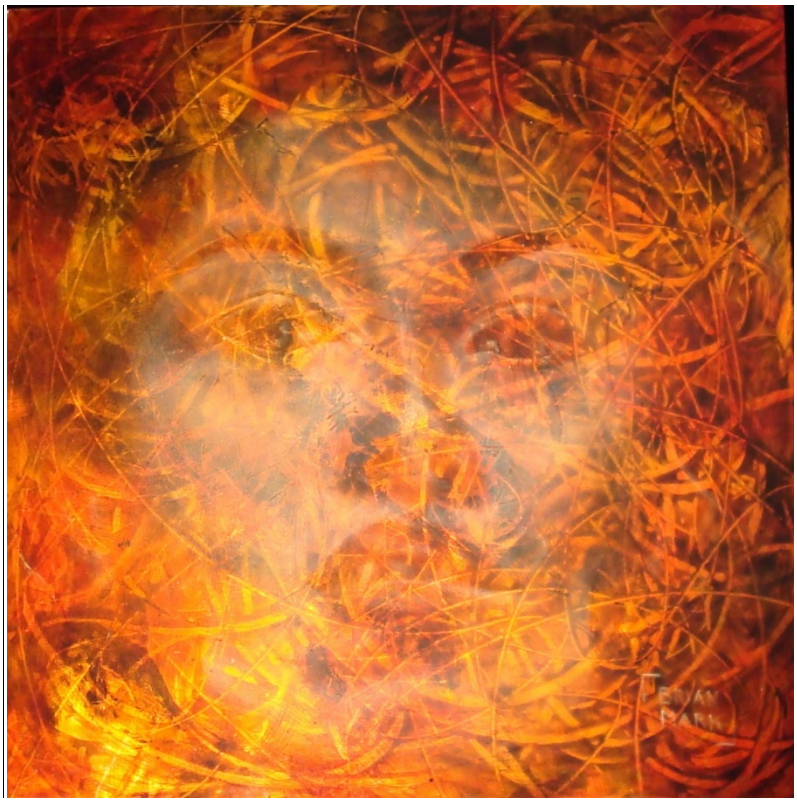

Rapture
By Brian Mark
Acid on Stainless Steel

Q & A with Brian Mark

What will viewers experience at "Islands & Sirens"?
My "Sirens" are ghostly figures that call out and lure you to the moment of inspiration. As I walk along the coast of Maine, I believe that there are modern day sirens who trying to provide us with profound moments of epiphany – if we would only take the time to look and listen.

I think viewers will also be inspired by the acid on stainless steel medium as well. Different light and different angles brings out distinct images. The figures appear and disappear. I've had people tell me that, after having a piece for several months, that they see a figure in the corner – and did I know it was there?

This experience will show the world has lots of meanings and truths and beauty, but you have to listen. You have to practice the art of being awake. I'm asking my viewers to practice shutting all this noise out and really trying to be observant.

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How are the acid on stainless steel images actually created?
It is a temperamental process. I start with a drawing. I then scratch and grind the image onto the stainless steel panel to expose the metal. Next, I go on to the electro-plating of gold and silver or nickel to the panel. I may use up to a half an ounce of gold in each panel. I then add the acids – sometimes up to a dozen – and heat up to 1400 degrees F with blowtorches or cool to far below zero with dry ice. This activates the elements to create color and enhance the ground-in images. Because the chemicals are all constantly changing, it isn't until the last moment until the final image is revealed. Even today only about one in seven of these images turn out.

How did you discover this process?
I was working as a sculptor and recreating complex patina recipes from a French master. When I started doing one particular patina on bronze it was very acidic and very nasty stuff. So I got a full moon suit, not just a respirator, and while I was working I noticed it was destroying my concrete floor as it dripped down; the concrete was just turning to sand. So to protect my floor, just out of necessity, I stuck a bunch of stainless steel down. As soon as [the acid] hit the steel it would create amazing effects, so I started messing around and experimenting. It took two to three years before I even came close to being able to manipulate any type of image.

How was the work in "Sirens" inspired by your time in Costa Rica?
Costa Rica inspired me in two ways. First, the pace of life is slower. It allowed me to slow down and quiet down to really look and listen to bring things into focus. This is one of the central themes of my work.

Second, as so many people do when they live in another country, I shared universal human experiences with people from completely different backgrounds, in completely different situations and in some cases, while not speaking the same language. In my case, I met artists from so many countries and I was moved by the universal desire we share as creative people for that "ah-ha" moment. That epiphany is what we all live for.

What is next?
I'll be working on a 16 panel piece for the Houlton Court House, which is part of the Maine Arts Commission Percent for the Arts program. In all of my work as an artist, my goal is to present a unifying message which dignifies the human experience. Nowhere is this more profound than in our justice system with its pillars of equality, impartiality, fairness, and the right to be judged by our peers.

Therefore, my goal is for the Houlton Court House is to put a human face on these pillars. Using metaphorical images, I will portray the importance of the faith we place in our justice system and how it will direct us to a place of balance.

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About Brian Mark

Brian Mark Artist Statement
Using my unique medium of acid on stainless steel, my work explores and dignifies the complexity of the human experience by revealing ghostly hologram-like figures and uncovering a unifying message. The images provoke the viewer to seek the truth found in each image, as it appears and disappears depending on the viewer's perspective and light.

Brian Mark Biography
Brian Mark is a classically-trained artist whose work can be found worldwide, including the Florence Nightingale Museum and Trust, the American Association of Architects, the US Embassy of the Ivory Coast, the Witt Family Memorial in the National Cathedral, Washington DC and many private collections. He has exhibited around the world. Mark recently chose to settle in South Portland, Maine after living in Costa Rica and Minneapolis.

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