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Glankoff, 87 First Solo

BY JUDD TULLY

Beyond the startling news that Sam Glankoff will celebrate his 87th birthday during the reign of his first solo show, the 23 print-paintings at the Graham Gallery are arrestingly beautiful. Tinkering with water soluble inks and caseins on Japanese rice paper and mounted on plywood boards, Glankoff sculpts a new medium out of the traditional monotype.

The colors are Tamayo-esque — scorching and powerful — with the supercharged layers skirmishing for attention. Restrained under glass, the untitled works pose hieroglyphic challenges to the viewer with just enough expressionist traces of the human form to goad one on and grope for meaning.

Single Female Figure

Against a swirling black void a single female figure, ablaze in a speckled patina of sunburst yellow and tangerine orange, leaps heavenward in Nijinsky-like abandon. With hands spread wide to accept the turbulence of the universe, the yogic pose simultaneously breathes tranquility and anguish. Despite the triangular shaped head and the briefest notations of the female form, the figure assumes goddess proportions.

SAM GLANKOFF. Prints and Paintings, Graham Gallery, 1014 Madison Ave., through October 31.