

Carroll Dunham

Purple Show

November 8, 2025 – January 11, 2026

With great anticipation and excitement, David Petersen Gallery is pleased to present *Purple Show*, an exhibition of monotypes and drawings by Carroll Dunham.

For so much of Dunham's prodigious career, drawing and printmaking have been analytical and exploratory components of his practice. Symbiotically entwined with both his paintings and sculptures, these disciplines have been crucial to the generation of his visual language that gives form to psychologically challenging imagery. With *Purple Show*, Dunham exhibits a selection of drawings and monotypes from 2022. While still employing a black outline, his graphic figures have been rendered in shades of purple with various media - lilac colored pencil, indigo gouache, aqueous lavender watercolor - while situated in imagined spatial constructions.

The exhibition's six large monotypes - created in 2022 at Two Palms, the collaborative printmaking studio in SoHo - and its ten smaller drawings feature the aforementioned figures from the artist's "Purple People." Similar to the artist's "Green Period," from 2018-2022, in which the color green is utilized as a painterly, chromatic tool in the creation of the artist's figures and a means of emotional and psychological engagement, Dunham's purple figures evince the artist's ongoing examination of the ways in which color affects our sense of meaning and how we construct identity. Evoking themes of intimacy, anxiety, sex, and aging, these surreal figures are anonymous, nude, and never meet the gaze of the viewer. The characters are framed by compositional enclosures of black bars, jagged scratches, organic tendrils and swirling loops. Dunham's use of these motifs further heighten the expressive and intellectual charge of his graphic and painterly languages.

Carroll Dunham lives and works in New York and Connecticut. His most recent solo exhibitions include National Museum, Oslo, 2023; Kunsthalle, Dusseldorf, and Sprengel Museum, Hannover, 2019–2020. His work has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions at international institutions including Museum Ludwig, Cologne; Millesgården, Stockholm; Drammens Museum, Drammen; a mid-career retrospective was held at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, in 2002. Dunham has also been included in notable group exhibitions including multiple Whitney Biennials and SITE Santa Fe; and at institutions including MAMCO, Geneva; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museu Picasso, Barcelona; and The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. A forthcoming retrospective celebrating the medium central to Dunham's expansive practice, *Carroll Dunham: Drawings, 1974–2024*, will open at the Art Institute of Chicago in January, 2026.

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