



By Jessica Baran
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In the Galleries: *Life Saver* at Bruno David Gallery

Life Saver As impossibly light or heavy as the exhibit's title sways, Missouri painter Damon Freed plays to both ends of the existential spectrum, crafting a series of small graphic paintings that steer between bubblegum levity and 3 a.m. dread. Call it Neo-neo-geo: Here Freed reprises the style of that quintessential '80s movement as well as a few of his own favorites, resulting in work that relishes the graphic aspects of systems and symbols as well as Pop Art, Color Field painting and the stylings of Georgia O'Keeffe. Peter Halley's "cells" are directly alluded to, as are Kenneth Noland's bright concentric circles and jagged chevrons, though the palette is more pastel than neon or primary, producing a sense of faded buoyancy that's not so readily poised to aggravate or propagandize. But this world of ambiguous symbols that Freed crafts — intertwining cubes, vibrating X marks, zigzag starbursts and frenetic dots — pushes subtly against its own tidy borders, suggesting something much less sweet than the title implies. The search for meaning and salvation is rendered as a giddy and desperate fever dream — hysterically systematic, perfectly unknowable and always out of reach.



Through January 20, 2012, at Bruno David Gallery, 3721 Washington Boulevard; 314-531-3030 or www.brunodavidgallery.com.
Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Wed.-Sat., noon-5 p.m. on the first Sun. of every month and by appointment.

Photo: Damon Freed's *Bi-Polar* at Bruno David Gallery

<http://www.riverfronttimes.com/2011-12-15/culture/in-the-galleries-life-saver/>

ABOUT THE BRUNO DAVID GALLERY

Bruno David Gallery, St. Louis' leading art gallery specializing in contemporary art and one of the most important places to see art in Saint Louis. The Gallery represents some of the best artists that Saint Louis has to offer, along with artists of national and international reputation. Located in a stunningly renovated industrial building in the Grand Center arts district, directly opposite the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts and the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis. Bruno David Gallery's art program has introduced new contemporary art to local gallery goers, and has been discussed in important art publications including, *Art in America*, *Art Papers*, *ArtNet Magazine*.