

For Immediate Release
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Michela Martello and Tourya Othman
Idols and Icons
March 11 – April 16, 2010



Tourya Othman / *Angel 7*
35 x 63" / oil on canvas



Michela Martello / *Courage*
50 x 54" / mixed media on canvas

March 11, 2010 - New York, NY: Tria Gallery presents *Idols and Icons*, featuring works by artists Michela Martello and Tourya Othman through April 16, 2010. The powerful canvases engage the viewer by harkening to universal archetypes, producing messages that transcend religious, cultural, and linguistic barriers. Through the use of bold graphic elements and text, Martello crafts spiritual images by removing the veneer of the body, showing the metaphysical components. She transmits her message by using mixed media and techniques such as collage and embroidery. Othman's large oils are a meditation on devotional imagery and an exploration of the divide between spirit and body. She employs detailed figures that at once are innocent and commanding, and unequivocally otherworldly.

Michela Martello was born in Grosseto, Italy. She received her Bachelor of Arts in illustration from the Europe Institute of Design. In the ensuing years she traveled extensively, dividing her time between Milan, London and New York, and became a prominent illustrator, publishing work in over thirty books.

In 1996 she turned her focus to painting, and by 1997 she had her first exhibition in both Milan and New York. The strong Asian influence in Ms. Martello's painting is self-evident; she explains that Asian philosophies and spirituality have had a profound impact on her work. In these paintings Martello explores iconic worship as an extension of that spirituality.

Martello's work has been exhibited regularly over the past decade, both in the U.S. and abroad, and is held in both private and public collections worldwide.

Tourya Othman became fascinated by "santos" – saints – while traveling in Cuba in 2001, and the *Santos* series was born. Her unusual renderings of the glorification of worship and mystical adoration are compelling reflections of how deep religious extension can be. In these paintings Othman seems to capture the nature of spirituality and its borderless reach across cultures. Her *Faith* series portrays nuns (albeit in a non-traditional fashion) as a means of bringing to life the near loss of faith and beliefs across cultures and understanding, and are similarly compelling.

Othman is a sculptor and painter. She received her education at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, The Art Institute of Fine Arts, and The Academy of Beaux Arts in Belgium. Her work has been shown in galleries throughout the U.S., Morocco, Belgium, and England, and has been exhibited at the Biennale in Florence and at Miami Basel.

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It is the mission of Tria Gallery to exhibit a balance of established artists with impressive resumes and exciting young talent, showing representational and abstract work, painting, sculpture, mixed media and installations. The common denominator is that the Tria artist has a unique, authentic voice and a compelling body of work which the directors feel should be given an audience.

Tria is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 11 am to 6 pm, or by appointment. "Idols and Icons" runs from March 11 through April 16. For more information, please visit www.triagallerynyc.com.