

TABLA RASA GALLERY
presents

SANCTUARY

An exhibition of spiritually inspired art

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November 10, 2016 - January 8, 2017

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Rodriguez Calero, *The Blessing of Lazarus*

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Artists Reception: Thursday, November 10, 2016
6:00 - 8:30 pm

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Gallery hours: 1:00 - 5:00 pm
THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY
Call 718.833.9100 for events and schedule updates

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TABLA RASA GALLERY
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FREE

ARTISTS SHOWN: Amina Ahmed, Pamella Allen, Alfonse Borysewicz, Willie Mae Brown,
Rodriquez Calero, Beatrice Coron, Elizabeth Featherstone Hoff, Terry Marks, Lizbeth Mitty,
Janet Morgan, Otto Neals, Eric Pesso, Larry Racioppo

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Directions to Tabla Rasa Gallery)

The gallery is located two express subway stops from Manhattan on the "D" or "N" train to 36th Street Station, plus one "R" stop to 45th Street (or a just few short "R" stops beyond Park Slope).

By car, Tabla Rasa is on 48th St between 2nd and 3rd Aves, Brooklyn. Ample street parking is available.

About SANCTUARY:

SANCTUARY is an exhibition of spiritually inspired paintings, drawings, and sculptures.

The works (utilize, incorporate) both traditional symbols of religions as harnessed by the individual artist, as well as abstractions from less literal interpretations of faith. The word "sanctuary" is defined as "a sacred place" or the "holiest part of a sacred place." But it is also defined as "a place of refuge and protection." For many artists, their "place of refuge" is immersion in the creative process.

About the artists:

Drawing with measurement and pattern—an exercise in sacred geometry—is a practical tool for re-membrance, for **Amina Ahmed**. Of her sacred geometry works, she says, "Everything takes a similar form, forming again and again and again but every time, necessary—it is never redundant. Every time a mark is rendered, it is an act of re-membering, the utterance, in its literal sense, being an act of making oneself whole again; it is enunciated, proclaimed, persevering and reverberating ad infinitum."

Pamella Allen is a Jamaican born artist descended from a long line of mystic storytellers born to create vibration positive artworks for mind, body and soul. For the past 35 years of her arts practice, she has been using artifacts from her own life combined in the process of mixed media paintings, printmaking, sculpture, papermaking, Installation, photography/video essay & prose to create her archetype, a universal language of images found and remembered that speaks to the diversity of her heritage and lived experiences traveling the world over land and sea. Ms. Allen says, "With these works I investigate memory, moment & the mystic of nature."

Alfonse Borysewicz completed his seminary studies (philosophy and theology) in Detroit, Michigan (where he was born and raised) with a short stay in Jerusalem. After many years of exhibiting abstract painting in the USA and abroad Borysewicz, returned to his interest in *religious* painting traditions. Jonathon Goodman of *Art in America* wrote, "Borysewicz's ability to invent a language of transcendence which is both traditional and of the moment makes him a compelling artist." In 1995 he received a Guggenheim Fellowship in painting. His work is included in many collections and has been written about extensively. He has been living in Brooklyn, NY for the past thirty years (he also spends significant time in his wife's hometown of Kyoto, Japan).

The inspiration for the painting by **Willie Mae Brown** was derived from the preciousness of life and the inescapable reality of death, found in the philosophy of Nichiren Buddhism. An author, visual artist and story teller, Ms. Brown was born and raised in Selma, Alabama during the early years of the Civil Rights Movement of the fifties (50's). The charisma of the times and the excitement, released a creative energy inside her and she began to write the unfolding stories of the times. Ms. Brown is currently working on a book and audio reading chronicling her experiences.

Rodriguez Calero, known as "**RoCa**", cuts across cultures, gender and ethnic boundaries in her "Acrocollage" painting, collage and photography. Alejandro Anreus says her figurative work fuses "popular urban | hip hop cultural figures with Renaissance and religious motifs and iconography, capturing tension and ceaseless symbolism, transcending urban centers and Latino experience in the U.S. and abroad with marked regularity and divinity. Daniel Veneciano Director of the Museum of Art and Design, says of Rodríguez Calero that, "No one in contemporary art makes a clearer case for collage as the natural medium for hip-hop culture than she does."

Beatrice Coron sees the "Fashion Warriors" series of paper cuttings as explorations of costumes. She says costumes can be at once a protective armor between private and public, a surface to project identity and a functional, and ceremonial expression of role playing. "Cultivate your Aura" tells a story of an inward journey in multiple layers of meanings.

Coron's oeuvre includes illustration, book arts, fine art and public art. She cuts her characteristic silhouette designs in paper and Tyvek. She also creates works in stone, glass, metal, rubber, stained glass and digital media. Her work has been purchased by major museum collections, such as the Metropolitan Museum, The Walker Art center and The Getty. Her public art can be seen in subways, airport and sports facilities among others.

Elizabeth Featherstone Hoff creates evocative sculptures of visceral, tender, and yet somewhat otherworldly doll-like figures. She says, "My work is about life, the life I have lived thus far, the life I have given birth to, and, the life I have observed. The human condition in all its' variety is an unending source for new work. It is, for me, the reality beyond the reality."

Terry Marks works in painting, drawing, printmaking and tattoo. Her hand pulled serigraphs are born of collages, involve an intensively complex process, resulting in wildly creative, and starkly dramatic black and white images. She has been affiliated with the international, ReModernist arts movement known as Stuckism since 2001, and has exhibited with various configurations of the group on three continents, including the Liverpool Biennial, and in Tehran, Iran.

Lizbeth Mitty is a painter of place, and the grandeur inherent in the cathedrals of Barcelona captured her imagination. "Barcelona Blue" references stained glass windows and the quiet beauty of the colored light. Of her stunningly lush paintings, Ms. Mitty says, "I work with many layers of paint and paint processes in an attempt to revive the richness of my memory of existing inside of my subject."

The artworks of **Janet Morgan** are grounded in the body, the kinesthetic: movement, music, and dance -- and also in its subtle forces -- emotional, spiritual and healing energies. The quest to reveal the *underlying energy source* runs through all of her work-- like the Sufis, she find no separation between the divine and the body. She says, "We live in a time of much anger and violence, and communication is often disembodied. The disconnect between ourselves and the natural world is causing serious problems. We need to come home to our bodies, our animal-ness, our human-ness, our body-temples. Fully inhabiting our bodies as part of Gaia gives us knowledge of ourselves and our home, with the opportunity for healing and connection."

Multifaceted master artist **Otto Neals** often addresses spiritual and ancestral themes. Collages such as "Resurrection" are created using materials such as lace, burlap, cheesecloth, buttons, keys, strings or anything that is relatively flat. A printing technique called "viscosity" is used, in which multi-colors can be achieved by placing several oil based colors on an etching plate and run through an etching press.

Eric Pessa created *Mogen David* in 2011 for his dear mother, **Mollie Pessa Cohen**, on the occasion of her 90th birthday. This original work was intended as a gift in her honor to her synagogue, the Sephardic Temple of Cedarhurst, NY, which she considered her second home. It was too large for the synagogue to display, so he carved a smaller version, which she loved and decided to keep for herself. It sat proudly in her living room for 5 years until her passing at the age of 95 on February 29, 2016. Mr. Pessa has since offered the smaller version as a gift in her loving memory to the Sephardic Temple, where it sits in the main lobby today.

Larry Racioppo photographs religious rituals and environments because they reflect a search for spiritual identity and a sense of belonging in a decidedly secular age. According to Mr. Racioppo, "As a former Roman Catholic, I am drawn to the storefront churches, street shrines, and home altars of those who, despite all evidence to the contrary, believe in the existence of a beneficent and loving god. A desire for emotional connection, no matter what form it takes, is the driving force behind these religious expressions. It is the same reason I photograph them."

"I am my own sanctuary and I can be reborn as many times as I choose throughout my life."
Lady Gaga

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