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**Makoto Fujimura Pays Homage to Georges Rouault**  
*George Rouault & Makoto Fujimura: Soliloquies Exhibit*

**NEW YORK, NY (October 19, 2009)** -- Painter Makoto Fujimura will pay homage to twentieth century Fauvist and Expressionist painter Georges Rouault in an exhibition of both artists' work this fall at Dillon Gallery, one of Chelsea's preeminent art galleries. The show will open with a reception on November 12 and will feature a collection of original works by the renowned Rouault, given exclusively by the Rouault Estate to Dillon Gallery, paired with Fujimura's paintings done in homage. The exhibition closes December 24.

A full-color 64-page book by Square Halo Press, featuring an essay by Dr. Thomas S. Hibbs of Baylor University, will be released on November 12th at the opening of the exhibit. The exhibit and the book were made possible with the support of The Rouault Foundation, Paris.

For his new series, "Soliloquies," Fujimura meditated on Rouault's paintings and sketched ideas from various details, creating a series derived from Rouault but still essentially "Fujimura."

While Rouault, a contemporary of Matisse, Picasso, and Chagall, has been associated with many artistic movements, he remains in his own category. At the turn of the 20th century, when other artists were turning to Expressionism, Fauvism, and Cubism, he developed his own style that incorporated tradition and artistic progressiveness. Highly respected by his peers and called "a painter's painter" by Fujimura, Rouault was influenced by both stained glass and oil paintings, and he portrayed ordinary figures with grace and authenticity. This idiosyncratic style — dark, heavy and broken, as well as colorful and hopeful — makes Rouault difficult to categorize.

Fujimura is likewise is difficult to classify. His style is too contemporary to be traditional Nihonga, but too traditionally spiritual to be postmodern. For him, painting is a sacred experience; it is prayer. At the beginning of his career, when the word "beauty" was becoming unpopular in the art world, Fujimura continued to use gold leaf to depict the sacredness of the ordinary and speak of hope in an often dark and broken world. This devout view of ordinary life and creativity ideologically exiles Fujimura from his contemporaries.

Both Rouault and Fujimura bridge the past and the contemporary, taking inspiration from ancient beliefs and everyday life. Fujimura believes, as Rouault did, that art is more than an artist's personal expression: art can connect views, bridge aesthetic movements, cross cultural boundaries and offer a spiritual service to others.

Rouault's work continues to instruct and delight young artists, and his paintings possess a cross-cultural appeal. To wit, the largest collections of Rouault's pieces are in Japan. Fujimura, a Japanese-American, also reaches audiences from East to West. His work is in galleries and museums in Japan, China, and the United States.



"True influence is catalytic," says Fujimura. Rouault was instrumental in the Parisian Sacred Art Movement and influenced other painters, such as Picasso and Matisse. Similarly, Fujimura is leading the 21st century Neo-Nihonga movement, and he is the founder of International Arts Movement, a leading voice in wrestling with the deep issues of art, faith and humanity. Fujimura sees Rouault as "the first 21st century painter," ahead of his time. Rouault painted fallen subjects in a redemptive light and founded his movement on generosity and hope, with which current audiences identify. Fujimura also assumes this role, "using the language of a secular age to explain a sacred calling."

The Georges Rouault/Makoto Fujimura Exhibit at Dillon Gallery runs November 12-December 24. The gallery is located in Manhattan's Chelsea District at 555 W. 25th Street. More information, including hours of operation, can be found at [www.DillonGallery.com](http://www.DillonGallery.com).

[b]About Makoto Fujimura:[/b]

Japanese-American painter Makoto Fujimura fuses ancient Nihonga traditional techniques with modern influences. Known for his attention to and celebration of beauty, Fujimura's work is represented by Valerie Dillon at Dillon Gallery ([www.dillongallery.com](http://www.dillongallery.com)). Former National Council on the Arts member (2003-2009), Fujimura founded the non-profit global arts organization International Arts Movement in 1991.

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