

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
MARCH 3, 2010**

**ILLUMINATED & ADORED:  
Paintings & Prints by Deirdre O'Connell and Fumiko Toda**

March 3-April 18, 2010

Opening Reception with Artists: Wednesday, March 3, 6-8 pm

SEFA is pleased to announce the opening of ***Illuminated & Adored***, featuring the work of Deirdre O'Connell and Fumiko Toda. While each artist begins with a very different impetus—O'Connell her beloved characters from Chekhov plays and Toda, the world of bugs, beetles and other tiny fauna—they share an adoration for their subject matter, which drives their work. The results are richly designed and layered multi-media paintings and prints, painstakingly poured over. The artists share a fondness for gemstone colors and decorative pattern, evocative of medieval illuminated manuscripts.

**Deirdre O'Connell** is a self-taught artist, born in Philadelphia and raised in Pittsfield, MA. Her recent work has drawn from characters and scenes in plays by Russian dramatist Anton Chekhov. An award-winning stage actress, O'Connell has played numerous Chekhov women and finds their motivations and behaviors layered and complex. The paintings are jewel-like creations made from collages of her own paintings and drawings. Rich, brilliant hues and intense detail give each work the luscious quality of an illuminated manuscript. This is O'Connell's second exhibition with SEFA.

Born near Kyoto, Japan, painter/printmaker **Fumiko Toda** moved to New York in 2001. Her artwork has an obsessive quality composed of intricate detail and repetition of form and pattern. Her paintings of butterflies, snakes and bugs are rendered with colors so vibrant as to appear as if they were ground from pure minerals or from the very insects themselves. Toda attributes her sense of design, space and line to her studies at Japan's Sugii Art Institution, which emphasized such skills and craftsmanship. Toda counts as her artistic influences Odilon Redon and Jakuchu Ito.

