



## Museum Press Release

For Immediate Release  
August 17, 2012

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# Komar and Melamid “The Deconstruction of Religion” – Art Installation

The Jewish Russian artistic duo Komar and Melamid has been applauded by art critics for their biting contemporary approaches to traditional themes and historic figures. Both members of Komar and Melamid were born in Moscow and immigrated to New York in 1978. No longer together, Komar and Melamid was a team of conceptualist artists consisting of Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid. Their artist’s statement explains “Even if only one of us creates some of the projects and works, we usually sign them together. We are not just an artist, we are a movement.”

Created in the 1990’s for display in New Jersey, there are five monumental mixed media works of metallic panel treated with chemicals to create chemical reactions and other techniques that result in Western religious representations. Museum Curator Scott Peck: “This current installation is entitled ‘The Deconstruction of Religion’ because these religious works exemplify the philosophical concept of deconstruction, primarily derived by French philosopher Jacques Derrida. Created to decay and ‘deconstruct’ over time, the art will continue to change in years to come. Beauty and aesthetic qualities are found in the art as these large panels rust, corrode, and oxidize. The applied paper will discolor and disintegrate or the gold leaf will fall off. Komar and Melamid’s ‘Michael the Archangel in New Jersey’ or ‘The Books of Genesis and Exodus’ express different meanings to be discovered by the art itself being taken apart and the decaying metal panels expose the assumption that the words of the Bible and Biblical concepts have a fixed reference point beyond themselves. Deconstruction questions all traditional assumptions about the ability of language to represent reality. The art work of Komar and Melamid questions the ability of visual art to represent God, the Bible, and theology.”

In 1991, the *New Yorker* magazine wrote about these works on display at the MBA: “they are of religious figures floating sweetly against attractively distressed metallic grounds that evoke industrial landscapers”. The periodical *Flash Art* stated that Komar and Melamid’s ‘Crucifixion’

“depicts Christ as an imaginative reality, as real as reality”. Brook Adams, writing for the magazine *Art in America* on this art: “the Russians’ religious enterprise can be seen as oddly sincere, rather like van Gogh preaching to the coal miners in the Borinage or Constantin Meunier making late 19<sup>th</sup> century sculptures of workers’ Pietàs.”

**Komar and Melamid**  
**“The Deconstruction of Religion” – Art Exhibition**  
**August 18<sup>th</sup> – November 30<sup>th</sup> 2012**

The MBA - Museum of Biblical Art

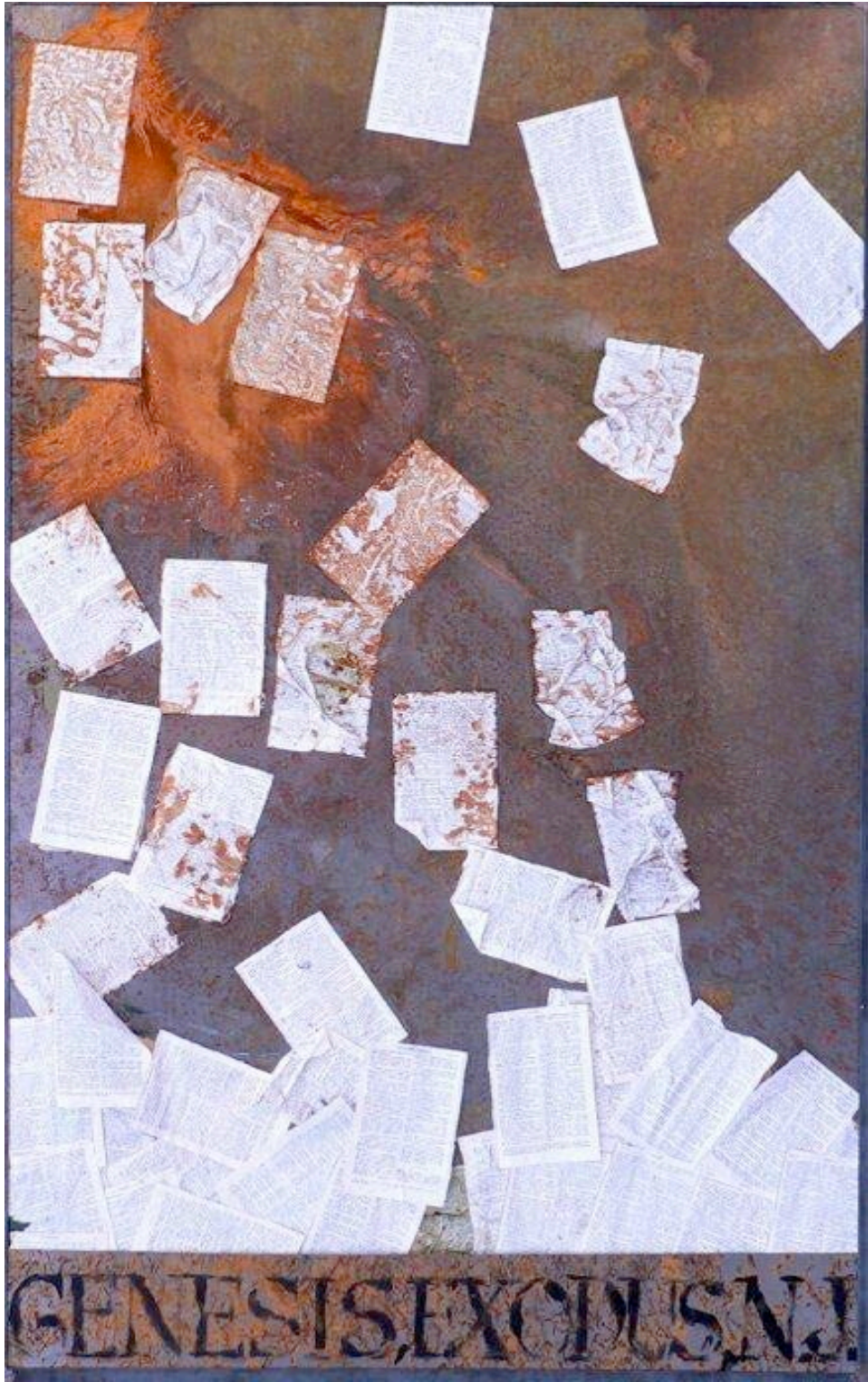
7500 Park Lane Dallas, TX Across from the North Park Nordstrom and Neiman Marcus 214-368-4622

Hours: Tuesday – Saturday 10:00 to 5:00 Sunday 1:00 to 5:00 [www.biblicalarts.org](http://www.biblicalarts.org)



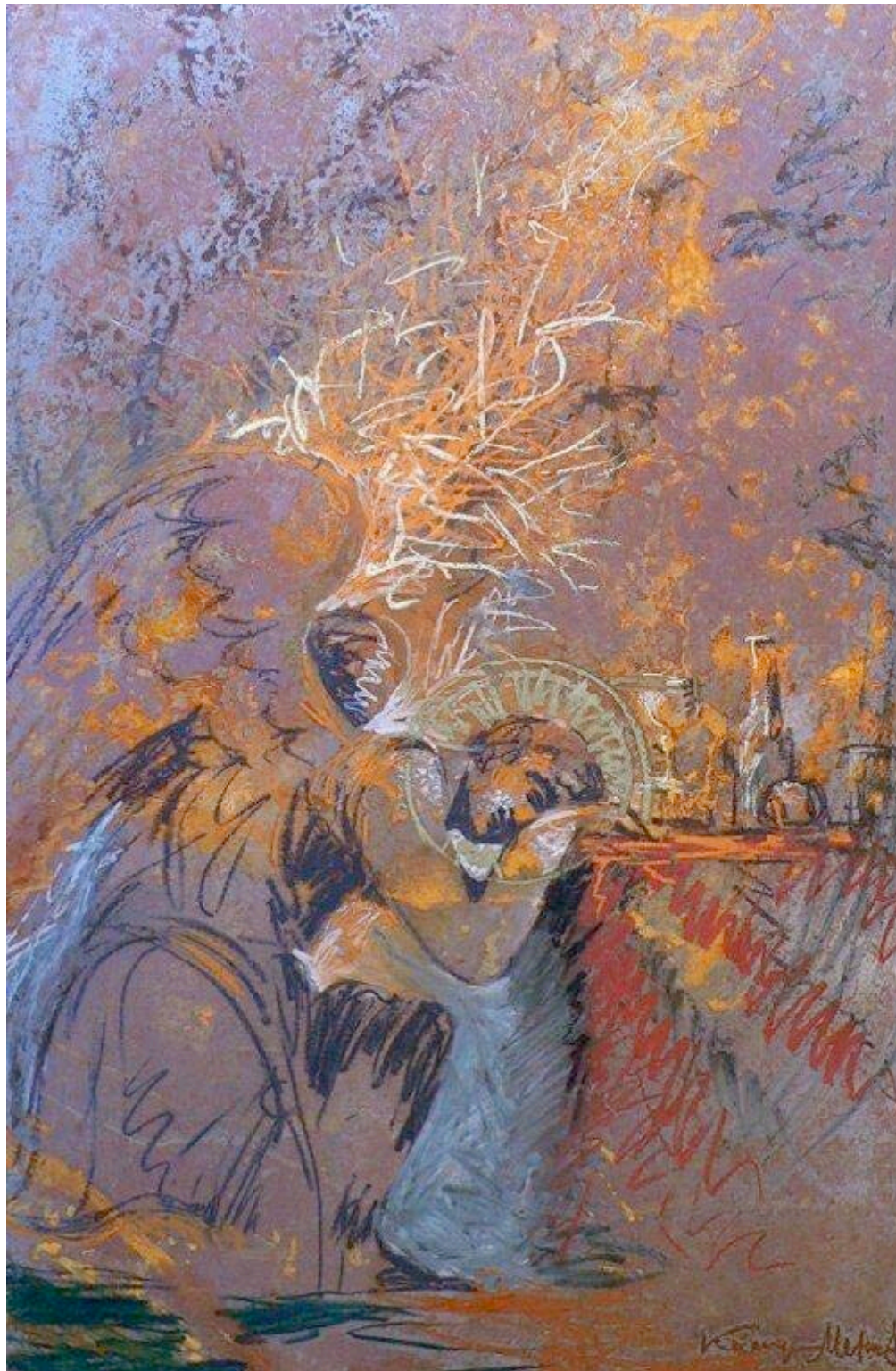
“Michael the Archangel in New Jersey” Komar and Melamid





"Genesis, Exodus" Komar and Melamid





"Worshipping Angel" Komar and Melamid