

Courage 3.0 and King

reviewed by [Lil Copan](#) in the [October 3, 2012](#) issue



In the paintings of Tim Okamura, a Canadian artist working in Brooklyn, the hip-hop urban landscape becomes part of a contemporary icon. An urban setting that seems neglected, empty, disruptive or marginal frames the “sainting” of people. The images speak of courage, honor, strength, integrity, loyalty. *King*, in which various disciples, questioners or saints engage with a portrait of Martin Luther King Jr., is a kind of urban station of the cross. The image also alludes to iconic images of Veronica’s veil, which according to legend displayed the shape of Jesus’ face. Graffiti appears in Okamura’s paintings as a kind of calligraphy, as though a story is being written around each person. The scrawl that frames each image further ennobles the center figure.

—Lil Copan