

A black and white close-up portrait of George Gittoes, an older man with long, thinning hair and a beard. He is looking slightly to the left with a serious expression. The background is dark.

GEORGE GITTOES **I WITNESS**

28 MAY - 21 AUGUST 2016

WINTER
EXHIBITION
SUITE



**PENRITH
REGIONAL
GALLERY**
& THE LEWERS BEQUEST

INTRODUCTION

DESCENDENCE 2010-11

Oil on canvas
200 x 300cm



WINTER EXHIBITION SUITE 2016

Welcome to Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest Winter Exhibition suite, *I Witness*. Comprising three exhibitions our Winter exhibition suite focuses upon war, human suffering and also, importantly, human dignity and resilience.

In the Main Gallery is *George Gittoes: I Witness* – a sweeping 45 year survey of the work of artist and filmmaker, George Gittoes. In this touring exhibition from Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre, Gittoes uses the language of film and paint to be a truth teller, to document, and to make us see the unconscionable, and the grotesque – that which many of us would rather turn away from. But Gittoes is also an artist who trades in hope. As curator Rob Pattenden writes in his exhibition essay, ‘Gittoes’ work as a filmmaker and artist continues to pose the possibility of art and the life of the imagination in bringing hope and change in the world. In many ways this is the gamble or the dare at the heart of his practice – to activate the imagination rather than fear, and to create hope in the face of chaos’.

A more gentle witness to the business of war is found in *Heth: Norman Hetherington – Artist at war*. In the Lounge Room Gallery is a series of watercolour, pen and ink sketches by Norman Hetherington, featuring scenes from WW2 unit stations and rest camps. A keen cartoonist and caricaturist, Norman Hetherington found himself in the 4th Detachment of the 1st Australian Army Entertainment Unit of the AIF. Here his drawing and comedic abilities came to the forefront to entertain the troops in Northern and Western Australia and Pacific theatres of war.

Heth: Norman Hetherington – Artist at war, has been lovingly curated by the artist’s daughter, Rebecca Hetherington. In Heth we are privy to the beginnings of Norman Hetherington’s cartooning career, examples of which are found in numerous magazines throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Hetherington was to become better known in later years as the creator of children’s television program ‘Mr Squiggle’. A careful eye across the exhibited artworks and ephemera will discover in Hetherington’s caricatures, and

playfulness which was to become a calling card of his Mr Squiggle character and act.

Zwolowa – a celebration of Lofa culture and community in Lewers House is an art and social justice project between members of the Western Sydney Liberian Lofa Community, Mamre House, Caroline Chisholm College and Penrith Regional Gallery. This project has sought to illuminate the experience of Lofa refugees in Australia, rebuilding their lives with the support and assistance of Mamre House Social Services and farm plot initiative. Foremost, *Zwolowa* celebrates the continuity of culture. Our thanks go to project participants and supporters, community leaders of Lofa NSW, especially Justin Koholo, Wemor Koholo and Vivian Flumo, Mamre House and Simone Taylor, visual art students of Caroline Chisholm College, teachers Karen King, Sarah Eyles, Felicity Wood and project artist Meywish Iqbal.

Please enjoy.

DR LEE-ANNE HALL
DIRECTOR
MAY 2016

HAIR

1971

from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'

etching, aquatint

19.5 x 22 cm



SUPER POWER
- NEW YORK - BAGHDAD

2004

oil on canvas
212 x 292 cm



CURATOR'S ESSAY

Rod Pattenden is a curator and art historian. He is chair of the Blake Society that coordinates the annual Blake Prize exploring the spiritual and religious imagination in Australian art. He has written widely on Australian visual culture, and curated a number of exhibitions with a special interest in the nature of spirituality and social justice.

CLEANERS

2013
ink and digital print
on paper
56 x 68.5 cm



GEORGE GITTOES: I WITNESS

Australian-born artist and filmmaker George Gittoes has had an extraordinary life, working in some of the most dangerous and difficult places on earth. For more than forty years he has pushed the boundaries of his art practice by positioning himself at sites where chaos and conflict mark moments of human history, challenging himself to create art in the face of degradation, violence and decay. His remarkable body of work emerges from his mobile studio of camera, video and richly illustrated diary. Consequently, his life and work do not fit easily into the usual story of Australian art; a broader and more international framework is required in order to fully comprehend his considerable achievements as both an artist and compassionate human being.

This exhibition, *I Witness*, does not therefore offer an exhaustive overview of Gittoes' work. There are simply too many interesting tributaries to follow in his long productive career that have seen his work footnoted in surveys of drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, holography, filmmaking, puppetry and theatre. Instead, the exhibition locates his work in a conversation about the capacity of figurative art to address the nature of the 'human person' with insight and understanding of an ethical and moral nature.

As an eyewitness to war and human excess, but also to the possibilities of compassion, Gittoes forces us to question how we negotiate our lives in social communities. His work is ethical, moral, spiritual and frighteningly apocalyptic. He has an amazing capacity to get up close and personal to situations in which individuals and societies are under stress. Gittoes puts people under the microscope where they squirm like insects awaiting dissection or escape categorisation through simple gestures of wonder. It is this complex and wide investigation – encompassing beauty and dismemberment, death and re-birth, heaven and hell – that gives his work its brittle visual impact. His images pry open the door to a conversation about what it means to be human at the very limits, where petty myths, tired illusions and worn-out symbols collapse. Gittoes' eye is unflinching in this scrutiny of the times in which we live.

Viewing his work is a tough activity. It requires us to keep our eyes open in ways that invite an awareness of the ethical, if not spiritual, nature of being human at this time in history.

Since the mid 1990s Gittoes' career has often been framed in terms of his work as a 'war artist'. He has, in fact, never officially had such a role, but has used the context of war to push his practice and explore new material for image making. However, the nature of war is not Gittoes' focus. His eye is rather more focused on the larger issues of peace making and politics, as well as the individual stories of war that he encounters. One of the defining characteristics of his work is its performative nature. He is an unstoppable storyteller, using narrative to get himself into and out of unlikely situations. This performative gesture underlies his entire practice: the making of images, surrounding them with texts, filming and photographing – and the bringing of them all together in immersive environments and performances.

His films are complex narratives filled with sharply drawn characters, who reappear in drawings and paintings that undergo grotesque transformation. They assemble as elements of a fantastic scenario that for Gittoes is an attempt to visualise what can be barely comprehended. Gittoes uses every means at his disposal to get us to experience his story as eyewitnesses; he is a pop artist and image scavenger who wants viewers to be alarmingly complicit in the unfolding narrative.

Gittoes' use of storytelling and image scavenging is a way of scratching away at the illusions and foolishness of political rhetoric and social belief. It is a practice most clearly seen in his diaries. This is the place where he records visual ideas that function as a conceptual platform for developing a narrative thread to make sense of the experience of being embedded in complex situations. In some ways the diaries are his most brilliant and surprising works. They show how he embeds himself in complex situations and works out his sense of self.

THE SPIDER

2009–10
from 'Descendence'
oil on canvas
200 x 240 cm



From early in his career Gittoes has used them as a kind of mobile studio and study library, their pages filled with written observations, collages, news headlines, photographs and experimental drawings that explore the authority of image making. Here the daily traffic of news stories is fearlessly interrogated, Gittoes using comic irony or surreal hyperbole to assess their appeal to truth and visual authority. The pages flash with unlikely connections, including horrible and grotesque accretions alongside transformative delights. The drawings are like sharp lines tattooing the skin of lived experience. They are key to understanding Gittoes' output as a filmmaker and artist. He uses these marks, which are almost cut into the page, to scrutinise and reactivate the image as a cultural resource. The diaries, in both format and content, are remarkable and important visual documents.

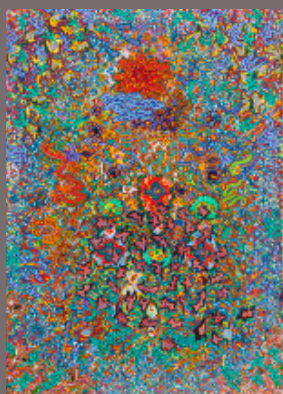
Gittoes was born in 1949 in the southern Sydney suburb of Rockdale. His mother Joyce Gittoes, a successful ceramicist, and his older sister Pamela Griffith, a painter and printmaker, nurtured his creative interests.¹ Rockdale was a tough neighbourhood with a rapidly changing social context as it was a landing point for European migrants arriving in Australia. The experience of growing up there made Gittoes curious about migrant stories, which for him were a door onto the world.

At school he took a strong interest in history and developed his artistic skills through puppet shows that he organised to raise funds for the International Committee of the Red Cross. At high school he persuaded his art teacher to lead a study of Islamic art, a cultural awareness that would be valuable for his later work. These experiences confirmed Gittoes' interest in the world outside the safe confines of his suburban existence. The storytelling skills he developed and his insatiable curiosity would eventually take him to some of the world's most difficult and dangerous places.

Gittoes' first paintings in the mid 1960s were influenced by the then focus on abstraction, which he explored through spare forms based on investigations into geometry. After meeting the American art critic Clement Greenberg after

UNTITLED

1969
oil on canvas
81.5 x 112 cm



his guest lecture at the University of Sydney in 1968, Gittoes was prompted to travel to New York the same year to see for himself the centre of the art world. In New York he befriended the African- American artist Joe Delaney, who taught at the Art Students League, and turned away from abstraction. He was exposed to the racial and political tensions in the United States in the period of Richard Nixon and the Vietnam War and turned to figuration as the most adequate means for dealing with the realities of this political ferment. The following year, in 1969, he returned to Australia to help set up the Yellow House artist cooperative in Sydney's Kings Cross.

The Yellow House was born out of conversations between Gittoes and the artist Martin Sharp who had recently returned from a high-profile career in London. It was established to provide studio and exhibition space for artists and filmmakers and was marked by a flamboyant pop art and psychedelic style. Gittoes' most important contribution to the Yellow House was a puppet theatre where he told stories using fabulously crafted puppets in a room created as a total environment, with decorative elements ranging from pop art to Islamic design.

He drew on traditional stories from various religious and mystical traditions, as well as elements of what was going on in the fluid community of artists around him. This work fitted well into the generally theatrical environment of the Yellow House. However, quite different to the work of his peers was his figurative practice, which gave expression to a powerful social critique. The most well known of this work is his series of etchings titled *The Hotel Kennedy Suite* (1971). These works addressed the political issues of the day and were a form of critique and protest at a time of political conservativeness and general support for America's role in the Vietnam War.

The Hotel Kennedy Suite, together with his puppet work, demonstrates Gittoes' capacity for a wide range of expression that explores mystical states of transformation while also offering pointed political critique. It was this wide vocabulary of political and spiritual ideas that prompted Sharp to describe

BLIND DANCE

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm



Gittoes as the 'William Blake of Bundeena' – a reference to the studio Gittoes developed at Bundeena in the Royal National Park south of Sydney, where he was based from 1972 until 2008. Gittoes' interest in the meeting of extremes is partly a response to an early trauma he experienced when his lover, the artist Marie Briebauer, committed suicide in 1971. Gittoes' has carried with him since this tragedy a certain tolerance for highly charged and emotional situations – a tolerance that has helped him survive dangerous and difficult contexts and to deal compassionately with others in chaos.

The period following the Yellow House was a time of rich exploration for Gittoes, centred on his interest in light and photography. He exhibited innovative works based on underwater photography and reflected light that were received with wide interest and made two experimental short films, *Rainbow Way* (1977) and *Refined Fire* (1981). His concern at the lack of recognition of Aboriginal culture in Australia led him to switch to making mainstream television documentaries, including the program *Warriors and Lawmen* (1985). This experience led to his ongoing interest in the nature of cultures in conflict. He also participated in community theatre and developed large outdoor performances at Wattamolla in the Royal National Park.

In 1980 he married Gabrielle Dalton, who was actively involved in these projects and Gittoes' film work. Gittoes developed important skills in this period, including the ability to collaborate with artists and musicians on complex creative projects and the capacity to fundraise and produce large-scale events. He also honed his entrepreneurial skills, which have since enabled him to build his career largely outside of the commercial gallery and government-funding contexts.

A crucial turning point for Gittoes' career was his film *The Bullets of the Poets*, shot in Nicaragua in 1986. The film focuses on a group of Sandinista women poets influenced by the philosophy of externalism as developed by the Nicaraguan poet-activist Ernesto Cardenal. The women saw the role of poetry as that of finding inspiration in everyday life, which in their case was the

BULLIES IN THE GARDEN

1971–72

from 'The Kent State Suite'

etching, aquatint

30 x 45 cm



SOMETHING TO CHEW ON

1993
pencil on paper
44 x 62 cm



seemingly fantastic situation of conflict and war. Dealing with the realities of life in Nicaragua became significant in the development of Gittoes' work, which was spurred on by drawings he made there. This exhibition includes several eloquent large-scale drawings by Gittoes that express his compassion and involvement with the aspirations of these young women. A little later, in 1989, he visited the Philippines to work with artists actively trying to create social and political change. This experience reinforced Gittoes' return to drawing and painting and his sense that he could inspire change and justice through his work.

In late 1989 Gittoes began a large-scale project, *Heavy Industry*, documenting working conditions at industrial sites in Newcastle and Wollongong. The series showcases his strong graphic skills and explores the humanity of men working in difficult and dangerous conditions in mining and steel factories. An exhibition of the series travelled extensively to Wollongong, Newcastle, Broken Hill and Whyalla, exposing Gittoes' work to a wide audience. He gained further attention in 1992 and again in 1995 when he won the Blake Prize for Religious Art, as well as the Wynne Prize at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 1993. Of more significant influence on Gittoes in this period, however, was the lasting effect of his 1989 visit to the Philippines. This trip ignited his interest to see in art the possibility for social change and to imagine the role of the artist as a revolutionary. This led him to centre his work in conflict zones as part of a larger hope that peace was possible within the new world order of the time. He travelled to Somalia, Cambodia, the Western Sahara and the Middle East, culminating in his witnessing the great triumph of the first free elections in South Africa in 1994.

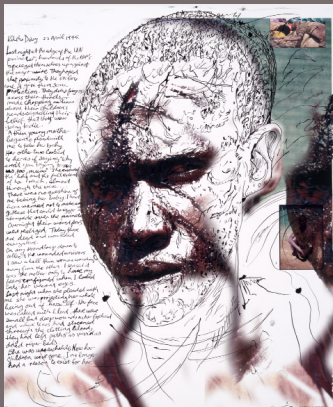
In 1995 Gittoes' exhibition *The Realism of Peace* toured Australia's regional galleries. The show established his approach as an artist working with diaries and simple drawing materials, and using storytelling to give revealing insights into the role of soldiers in conflict situations. The works, including drawings and paintings, document the complex conditions of each culture and bring humour and insight into the attempts to cross cultural differences. They reveal Gittoes' exceptional drawing skills, as well as his ability to gain the confidence

BLOOD AND TEARS

1997

oil on canvas

305 x 172 cm



of people in even the most difficult situations. The works vary in nature from the documentary to the more expressive and personal, the latter enabling him to include his own response to the situation around him and to convey a sense of the atmosphere, drawing viewers in. Gittoes organised his trips to Somalia, Western Sahara and the Middle East through his friendly relationship with the Australian Army but worked independently. Other visits were self-funded through the sale of works to a small number of collectors.

Gittoes continued to work in this manner for the rest of the 1990s, travelling to Rwanda and Mozambique (1995), Bosnia (1996), Northern Ireland (1997), Bougainville (1998), China and Tibet (1998), and East Timor (1999). It was his painting *The Preacher* – winner of the 1995 Blake Prize – that brought attention to his experiences in Rwanda where he worked alongside an Australian peace-keeping medical corps during the 1995 Kibeho massacre. Here, a small group of United Nations (UN) troops witnessed the slaughter by machine gun and machete of thousands of Rwandans who had gathered at a camp for displaced persons looking for UN protection. Gittoes has returned to this harrowing event many times and it is the focus of a significant body of his work, including a series of large paintings he showed in 1997 in a group exhibition, *Innenseite*, at Projektgruppe Stoffwechsel in Kassel, Germany – a satellite exhibition of Documenta X. Gittoes' visual response is focused on the nature of compassion and vengeance. As an eyewitness he invites the viewer to sit with profound moral and ethical issues about complicity in injustice.

Some of Gittoes' most interesting works about Rwanda are from his recent series *Nothing is Enough* (2013). Using an innovative method of digitally adding detail from original photographs to a drawing, Gittoes presents us with a series of ghost-like images that almost stain the page alongside sharp and expressive drawings. The result is images that are unstable to the eye, hovering in space like a premonition. They remind us that much of our seeing is fuelled by an anxiety to stabilise the world – to order it, to make it safe – an activity that these images resist. The works are a statement about the horror of war and violence, and an affirmation of the beauty of being human, even at the point of

THE KISS
2003
ink on paper
88 x 68 cm



death. As a group they are one of Gittoes' finest achievements. They belong to a tradition of artists – Goya, Otto Dix, Max Beckmann – who have dared to approach subject matter of this kind. Gittoes has an eye adequate to the difficult conditions of this century.

In the year 2000, in Geneva, Sydney and Moscow, Gittoes exhibited *Minefields*, a work about countries dealing with the effects of landmines. This was followed by *Lives in the Balance*, a retrospective exhibition of his work held in South Africa. Since then Gittoes has centred his work on the troubled regions of Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan, creating a body of work on the cultural and religious tensions that mark our global situation. A series of films have arisen out of his presence in the region, including *Soundtrack to War* (2004), *Rampage* (2006) and *Miscreants of Taliwood* (2009). The most recent, *Love City Jalalabad* (2013), documents his work in Afghanistan and brings full circle his ideas about the role of the artist. He has also been developing *The Afghan Book of the Dead*, a performance that grew out of the *Descendence* series, which Gittoes began work on in Berlin in 2010, and which explores the suffering and torment of soldiers in twenty-first century warfare. Gittoes' otherworldly narrative reads like a tour of duty in Purgatory. Here he steps back from individual stories to illuminate the conditions of violence more generally as a way of promoting peace. In these works, he re-invents the genre of history painting in compositions that are like processions, setting out the passage of time through history. This interest in narrative time is also characteristic of his film and diary work.

The shift in political conditions since the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York in 2001 has given Gittoes' work a new urgency and relevance. His achievement in his recent practice has been to address the larger context of our global world. He dismantles the billboards and slogans of our day to reassess the myths of our future and the nature of peace-making in our time. He draws attention to the reality that images themselves are sites of conflict, where icons become idols and the traffic of images is often marked by violence. This is the condition of 'iconoclash', a term coined by French

¹Gavin Fry provides a more detailed overview of Gittoes' career to 1998 in his book *George Gittoes*, Craftsman House, North Ryde, NSW, 1998.

²Bruno Latour & Peter Weibel (eds), *Iconoclasm: Beyond the Image Wars in Science, Religion and Art*, ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany, 2002, pp 14–37.

³Graham Coulter-Smith & Maurice Owen (eds), *Art in the Age of Terrorism*, Paul Holberton Publishing, London, 2005, p1.

TRAVELLING COMPANIONS

1971

from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm



sociologist Bruno Latour to describe the process whereby images clash in the overlapping spaces when cultures collide.² In some ways Gittoes is attempting to create art in an 'age of terrorism', where often the most powerful visual signs are those of spectacle and where deeply held icons are destroyed in an attempt to erase their supposed power. The art historian Graham Coulter-Smith considers that making art in such an age is an attempt to 'visualise the unspeakable'.³ It is in this context that Gittoes has made his home. The whole of his career has been concerned with providing an imaginative response to these trigger points of cultures in conflict.

As this exhibition opens Gittoes is returning to Afghanistan with his collaborator and partner, the performance artist Hellen Rose, to begin shooting his next film project *Snow Monkey*. This follows their recent work in Jalalabad where they established a second Yellow House. Here artists, filmmakers and actors learn skills and develop collaborative projects that for Gittoes continue the spirit of Sydney's Yellow House. The difference is that the new Yellow House is situated not at a safe distance but right in the heart of the conflict of cultural collision. If art is going to make a difference, then Gittoes sees it at work in this artist community, giving life to the imagination and sponsoring social change.

This is what he asserts in his recent film *Love City Jalalabad*: that art making can bring change by activating the cultural resources of the human imagination. In a light-hearted moment at the beginning of the film Gittoes and his friends take to the streets of Jalalabad on the back of a truck with an enormous billboard that reads 'Love City'. The comic madness of this renaming of the city of Jalalabad 'Love City' raises the question of 'What if?' for the viewer. The wild ride of this film is an exploration of the possibilities of art making in the face of a disintegrating nihilistic imagination. What if the desire for love was stronger than the impulse for retribution and violence?

Gittoes' work as a filmmaker and artist continues to pose questions about the possibility of art and the life of the imagination in bringing hope and change in the world. In many ways this is the gamble or the dare at the heart of his practice – to activate the imagination rather than fear, and to create hope in the face of chaos.

ROD PATTENDEN
CURATOR AND ART HISTORIAN
MAY 2016

George Gittoes: I Witness 130 page printed catalogue, complete with full colour illustrations and further essays, is available for purchase at the Gallery shop.

BAGGAGE

2013

ink and digital print on paper

56 x 68.5 cm



SPECIAL EVENTS

GEORGE GITTOES DOCUMENTARY FILM PROGRAM

SUNDAYS IN JULY AT 2PM

3 JULY SOUNDTRACK TO WAR

10 JULY THE BULLETS OF THE POETS

17 JULY RAINBOW WAY

24 JULY THE MISCREANTS OF TALIWOOD

31 JULY SNOW MONKEY

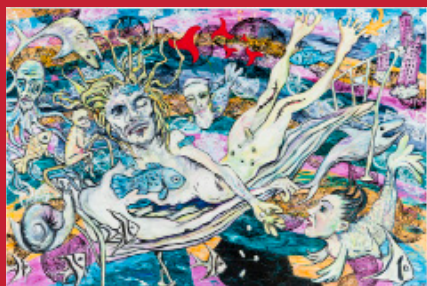
LIBERIAN BEAT AND MARKET DAY

SUNDAY 19 JUNE FROM 11AM TO 2PM

DRUMMING DEMONSTRATION AND MARKET STALL

OF TRADITIONAL LOFA PRODUCE

BELLY UP
2013
oil on canvas
200 x 300 cm



GEORGE GITTOES: I WITNESS

All works by George Gittoes.
All works courtesy of the artist
unless otherwise stated.

PUSSY
1971–72
from 'The Kent State Suite'
etching, aquatint
30 x 45 cm



LIST OF WORKS

UNTITLED

1969
oil on canvas
81.5 x 112 cm

GENERAL WESTMORELAND

1971
oil on canvas
62 x 92.5 cm

INDECISION

(Self portrait)
1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

IN THE GARDEN OF CHILDHOOD

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

FROM THE DEPTHS

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

THE STREET 1971

from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

THE SKYSCRAPERS 1971

from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

SAN FRANCISCO

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

THE YELLOW BATH

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

HAIR

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

THE TELEPHONE

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

BLIND DANCE

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

THE GREEN LOUNGE

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

THE CAPSULE

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

TRAVELLING COMPANIONS

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

CROSSROAD

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

PAN AM

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

SVENGALI

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

THE DOORWAY

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

RWANDA MACONDE

1997
oil on canvas
305 x 172 cm



THE CONSULTATION

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

THE STEPS

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

THE ASCENSION

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

CHANGING ROOM

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

CONSUMPTION

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

THE SELF AND OBLIVION

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

DISINTEGRATION

1971
from 'The Hotel Kennedy Suite'
etching, aquatint
19.5 x 22 cm

WHEN IT IS OVER

1971–72
from 'The Kent State Suite'
etching, aquatint
30 x 45 cm

PUSSY

1971–72
from 'The Kent State Suite'
etching, aquatint
30 x 45 cm

WESTMORELAND – KENT STATE

1971–72
from 'The Kent State Suite'
etching, aquatint
30 x 45 cm

BULLIES IN THE GARDEN

1971–72
from 'The Kent State Suite'
etching, aquatint
30 x 45 cm

RAINBOW WAY

1977
16 mm short film

**MIRIAM GUEVARA:
GUARDIAN OF THE DEAD**

1986
compressed charcoal on paper
176.5 x 113.5 cm

PORTRAIT OF DORA MARIA TELLEZ

1986
compressed charcoal on paper
203 x 108 cm

THE CAPTURED GUN

1986
compressed charcoal on paper
198.5 x 108 cm

THE BULLETS OF THE POETS

1986
documentary film

NAPHTHALENE PLANT (NEWCASTLE)

1989
from 'Heavy Industry'
compressed charcoal and pastel on paper
99.5 x 140 cm

SALVAGE

1990–92
oil on canvas
170 x 250 cm

MADONNA AND CHILD

1990
from 'Crows Over Cane Fields'
oil on canvas
112.5 x 122 cm

GENERAL WESTMORELAND

1971
oil on canvas
62 x 92.5 cm



NEW THEATRE

1990
from 'Crows Over Cane Fields'
oil on canvas
112.5 x 122 cm

STARRY, STARRY NIGHT

1990
from 'Crows Over Cane Fields'
oil on canvas
112.5 x 122 cm

THE REVOLUTIONARY ARTIST

1990
from 'Crows Over Cane Fields'
oil on canvas
112.5 x 122 cm

DEATH AND THE BOY

1993
pencil on paper
200 x 285 cm

SOMETHING TO CHEW ON

1993
pencil on paper
44 x 62 cm

THE LEGLESS BIKE

1993
pencil on paper
44 x 62 cm

TRICK MINE

1993
pencil on paper
62 x 44 cm

NIGHT VISION

1993–94
oil on canvas
259 x 173 cm

BETHLEHEM HOSPITAL

1994
pencil on paper
44 x 62 cm

LIVING EVIDENCE

1994
pencil on paper
44 x 62 cm

MOHAD JABARY

1994
pencil on paper
44 x 62 cm

THE LONG AWAITED KISS OF FREEDOM

1994
pencil on paper
44 x 62 cm

EYEWITNESS

1995
pencil on paper
62 x 44 cm

THE PREACHER II

1995
oil on canvas
181 x 250 cm

BLOOD AND TEARS

1997
oil on canvas
305 x 172 cm

KIBEHO

1997
oil on canvas
305 x 172 cm

RWANDA MACONDE

1997
oil on canvas
305 x 172 cm

THE YELLOW ROOM (AFGHANISTAN)

1999
oil on canvas
172 x 257.5 cm

BULL RING

2003
pencil on paper
200 x 354 cm

SOUNDTRACK TO WAR

2004
documentary film

SUPER POWER – NEW YORK – BAGHDAD

2004
oil on canvas
212 x 292 cm

RAMPAGE

2006
documentary film

SHADOW

2013
ink and digital print on paper
56 x 68.5 cm

**KNIGHT, DEATH AND THE DEVIL**

2006-08
(also referred to as American Soldier)
oil on canvas
291 x 198 cm

**THE BLINDFOLDED LEADING
THE BLINDFOLDED (DIPTYCH)**

2007
ink on paper
77 x 223 cm

MISCREANTS OF TALIWOOD

2009
documentary film

**SELF PORTRAIT AS SENSITIVE
SOUL (AFTER DÜRER)**

2009
etching, aquatint
69.5 x 80 cm

MOJO RISING

2009-10
from 'Descendence'
oil on canvas
200 x 260 cm

THE SPIDER

2009-10
from 'Descendence'
oil on canvas
200 x 240 cm

DESCENDENCE 2010-11

from 'Descendence'
oil on canvas
200 x 300 cm

ASSUMPTION (TRIPTYCH)

2010-11
from 'Descendence'
oil on canvas
200 x 660 cm

LOVE CITY JALALABAD

2013
documentary film

BAGGAGE

2013
ink and digital print on paper
56 x 68.5 cm

BLOOD AND TEARS

2013
ink and digital print on paper
56 x 68.5 cm

CLEANERS

2013
ink and digital print on paper
56 x 68.5 cm

CONGREGATION

2013
ink and digital print on paper
56 x 68.5 cm

LAST ACT

2013
ink and digital print on paper
56 x 68.5 cm

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER OBLIVION

2013
ink and digital print on paper
56 x 68.5 cm

PHANTOM

2013
ink and digital print on paper
56 x 68.5 cm

PREACHER

2013
ink and digital print on paper
56 x 68.5 cm

RUBBER BANDS

2013
ink and digital print on paper
56 x 68.5 cm

SHADOW

2013
ink and digital print on paper
56 x 68.5 cm

BELLY UP

2013
oil on canvas
200 x 300 cm

SNOW MONKEY

2015
documentary film

HETH: NORMAN HETHERINGTON - ARTIST AT WAR

Norman Hetherington is best remembered as the creator of one of Australia's longest running children's shows Mr. Squiggle, but before he made his name on television he was a soldier in the 4th Detachment 1st Australian Army Entertainment Unit during WW II. In this Unit Hetherington entertained the troops, through acting, script writing, costume and stage design and the production of hundreds of pen and ink drawings of the life of the soldier. This exhibition, curated by the artist's daughter, Rebecca Hetherington is a selection of work produced while on duty in Northern Australia, New Guinea and the Pacific.

CAMEO THEATRE, JACQUINOT BAY NB

date unknown
pen and watercolour on paper



NORMAN HETHERINGTON OAM 'HETH'

Norman Hetherington was born on 29 May, 1921 in Balmain. His family moved to Burwood where he attended Fort St Boys High School before pursuing his real love for the arts at the National Art School in Darlinghurst. Norman went on to have a stellar career, which included his well-known and much loved character Mr Squiggle that ran on ABC TV from 1959 to 2001.

From a very young age Norman was single minded about becoming a cartoonist with the ultimate goal to work for The Bulletin; a long-running Sydney publication seen as the creative epicentre for writers and artists (1880-2008). Norman had to put his ambitions on hold when in 1941 he joined the Citizen Military Force and a year later, aged 21, he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force. The importance of entertainment in maintaining troop morale was acknowledged by the formation of the 2nd Division Concert Party (later called No. 4 Detachment, 1st Australian Army Entertainment Unit).

Recognised for his cartooning skills, Norman was transferred from his infantry unit and sent to Western Australia to begin his Army Concert career. He was given just days to prepare for his act and gather the materials required, such as paint, paper and inks. Norman combined his skill and wit to draw caricatures of notable identities, from Colonels to cooks, who were sitting in the audience.

He also had a comic felt act and did lightning sketches on stage with great flourish, drawing something then adding a few lines here and there, turning it upside down to produce a completely different cartoon. So as it turned out, and before Norman had even thought about puppetry, he was actually developing the Mr Squiggle concept and rehearsing it throughout the war.

A week after leaving the Army Norman realised his pre-war aspiration and secured a full time position as Staff Cartoonist on The Bulletin. From 1945 to 1962 Norman portrayed Australian life in full page cartoons. Norman had a fondness for the Australian character and his observations were keenly observed, but never unkind. He had a unique ability to capture a moment and convey its meaning in just a few strokes.

**HETH:
NORMAN
HETHERINGTON
– ARTIST
AT WAR**

The same can be seen in his war art. You can, for example, ‘hear’ the conversation of the women as they greet each other in front of the Church in *Sunday Morning, Merauke, 1944*, and you have a sense of the local community experience as they watch the army go about its business in *Douglas Refuelling, Jacquinot Bay, June 1945*.

Norman’s war experience expanded his horizons and put him on the stage, which eventually led him beyond his dream job on *The Bulletin* to a successful career in puppetry and television. As with many servicemen and women he did not often talk about his war experiences, so we are very glad and extremely fortunate that his artwork remains to tell some of his war story.

REBECCA HETHERINGTON
DAUGHTER OF NORMAN HETHERINGTON

**BOXING TOURNAMENT,
MERAUKE, DUTCH NEW**

Guinea
July 1944
watercolour on paper



HETH: NORMAN HETHERINGTON – ARTIST AT WAR

All works courtesy of the estate
of Norman Hetherington.

ROCKING THE BABY, MERAUKE

July 1944
watercolour on paper



LIST OF WORKS

BACKSTALLS, JACKY-JACKY

May 1944
watercolour on paper

BOXING TOURNAMENT, MERAUKE, DUTCH NEW GUINEA

July 1944
watercolour on paper

CAMEO THEATRE, JACQUINOT BAY NB

date unknown
pen and watercolour on paper

DOUGLAS REFEUILLING JACQUINOT BAY NB (NEW BRITAIN) JUNE 45

June 1945
pen and watercolour on paper

FILM FUN (2ND DIV CONCERT PARTY)

1943
ink and watercolour on paper

GYMKHANA, JACKY-JACKY

April 1944
watercolour on paper

JACQUINOT BAY

June 1945
pen and watercolour on paper

LOOSE LEAF PORTRAIT SKETCHES BK 1 AND BK 2

date unknown
pen and pencil on paper

MALAY DRIVER, MERAUKE

July 1944
watercolour on paper

MEAUKE

date unknown
watercolour on paper

MEAUKE

date unknown
watercolour on paper

MEAUKE

date unknown
watercolour on paper

MEAUKE

date unknown
watercolour on paper

PICTURE NIGHT – WONGABEL, AUGUST 1944

August 1944
watercolour on paper

REGATTA, JACQUINOT BAY NB

May 1945
pen on paper

ROCKING THE BABY, MERAUKE

July 1944
watercolour on paper

SUNDAY MORNING, MERAUKE

July 1944
watercolour on paper

THE ISLANDERS, NO 4 DETACHMENT, 1ST AUST ENTERTAINMENT UNIT AIF

date unknown
pen and ink on paper

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

(2nd Div Concert Party)
1942-43
ink and watercolour on paper

TURKISH DELITE (2ND DIV CONCERT PARTY)

1943
ink and watercolour on paper

UNLOADING, MUTTEE HEAD WHARF

May 1944
watercolour on paper

WEIGHING-IN, JACKY-JACKY

April 1944
watercolour on paper

WHARF, RED ISLAND POINT

May 1944
watercolour on paper

WILD WEST SCHIENOR

(2nd Div Concert Party)
1942
ink and watercolour on paper

**HETH:
NORMAN
HETHERINGTON
– ARTIST
AT WAR**

EPHEMERA

**CORPORAL NORMAN FREDERICK
HETHERINGTON'S ARMY HAT**

c1941

KODAK PAINT BOOK

c1940

watercolour, paper

NORMAN HETHERINGTON DRAWING

1942

Photograph

**NORMAN HETHERINGTON PERFORMING
LIGHTENING SKETCHES**

1944

photograph

SCRAPBOOK OF HUMOUR MAGAZINE

1943-1946

magazine cuttings, scrapbook

SCRAPBOOK OF QUIZ MAGAZINE

beginning 1943

magazine cuttings, scrapbook

**SCAPBOOK OF THE
BULLETIN MAGAZINE**

beginning 1983

magazine cuttings, scrapbook

BACKSTALLS, JACKY-JACKY

May 1944

watercolour on paper



TURKISH DELITE
(2ND DIV CONCERT PARTY)

1943

ink and watercolour on paper



WILD WEST SCHIENOR
(2ND DIV CONCERT PARTY)

1942

ink and watercolour on paper



ZWOLOWA: A CELEBRATION OF LOFA CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Zwolowa is a collaborative project between members of the Western Sydney Liberian Lofa community, Mamre House and Visual arts students from Caroline Chisholm College. The exhibition uses art, artefacts, photographs and audio to reveal the life of Lofa refugees in Australia and to celebrate the continuity of culture.

All works courtesy of the artist unless otherwise stated.

ISABELLA RICHARDSON FARM BOOTS

2016

acetate drypoint etching with chine colle

Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College: Access Artists Project



ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

This exhibition uses art, artefacts, photographs and audio to explore the experiences of Liberian Lofa refugees and to celebrate the continuity of culture. The importance of traditional foods, craftsmanship and entertainment are central to community identity and are, therefore, highlighted through a selection of favourite Lofa community produce and tools, fabric and clothing as well as musical instruments and artworks depicting cultural practices.

Working with project artist, Mehwish Iqbal, the Caroline Chisholm College students visited Mamre House in St Marys to document objects and plants of significance to the Lofa community. The students then later used this documentation to create a series of drypoint etchings.

FOOD

Food is central to cultural identity, belonging and celebration. It is also a source of great comfort to people dislocated from cultural roots. Women are principally responsible for the growing, harvesting and preparation of food. The farm plots at Mamre House enable refugee groups such as the Lofa community to grow native produce like garden egg, okra, rosella, cassava, pumpkin and beans which are important ingredients for traditional recipes. The simple process of preparing a garden bed and sowing seeds is both therapeutic and useful. Bitter and sour flavours, such as fever leaf and rosella are included in recipes but also often eaten on their own or as a side dish with rice or in tea. Some of the vegetables grown also have medicinal properties and are relied on to heal basic ailments.

The Maggi Chicken Booster stock cube is a popular cooking product in Liberia that has continued to be a household staple for the Lofa community in Australia. Used in almost all cooking, this humble, salty stock cube is imported from Africa. 'Everything we cook with chicken booster'.

IMPLEMENTS

While manufactured tools and implements such as work boots and wheelbarrows aid present-day farming, handcrafted traditional tools continue to be used. The wood mortar and pestle is used for pounding all manner of food into both paste and or flour. This laborious work is undertaken by women, albeit with a great deal of pride. The fishing nets on exhibition here are handmade by women using recycled ropes, string and plastic cord. These weaving skills are passed on from generation to generation.

ZWOLOWA: A CELEBRATION OF LOFA CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

RECIPE DUBORREE

Cassava Leaf (4 bags)

Meat (Beef) or Fish (2 kilograms)

Green Chilli (Pepe)

Chicken booster –

Maggi Cubes (4-5)

Baking soda (pinch)

Oil

Wash Cassava leaf and place in a blender. Boil the meat or fish until soft. Add Chilli, baking soda, stock cubes. Cook until flavours mix.

Serve with rice, pour oil on top.

Serves 8.

AMY DICRISTOFORO FEVER LEAF

2016

acetate drypoint etching with chine colle

Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College: Access Artists Project



CLOTHING

Traditional cotton garments were made by women who use a spool held in their feet to pull cotton bolls into long pieces of thread. In recent times, Lofa use machine made wool and cotton yarn to weave on a loom into 'scarf like' strips. These strips are then sewn together to create larger pieces of material for clothing, for example men's shirts worn for special occasions.

As is the case in much of Africa, Lofa women wear garments fashioned from brightly printed and dyed cotton, layered with jewellery.

Bright colour and distinctive patterns are used liberally in Liberian clothing.

As stated by community leader Wemor Koholo, 'colour is important because it helps you stand out, I don't know why everyone wears so much black here!'

Colour has symbolic value in all cultures. For Lofa, green has a particular resonance, as it represents the soil or earth from which life springs. Green is the forest and mountains of the Lofa homeland. Green represents hope, regeneration and abundance. Green paired with orange is 'the beginning and end of happiness'.

CELEBRATION

Sharing music, singing and dance are central to Lofa community celebrations with a focus on inclusion and happiness. Celebrations such as weddings and Independence Day on 26 July, bring Lofa communities together with feasting, music and dance.

The title of the exhibition, Zwolowa, comes from a Lofa song. Zwolowa has been recorded for inclusion in this exhibition by participating students from Caroline Chisholm College.

ZWOLOWA: A CELEBRATION OF LOFA CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

All works courtesy of the artist
unless otherwise stated.

MADISON D'ANGELIS WEMOR'S GIFTS

2016
acetate drypoint etching
Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College: Access Artists Project



LIST OF WORKS

NATALIE ACHAMPONG

Celebration
2016
acetate drypoint etching with chine colle
Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College:
Access Artists Project

ROISIN CAIRNEY

Lofa spice
2016
acetate drypoint etching
Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College:
Access Artists Project

VICTORIA CUTTS

Zwolowa
2016
acetate drypoint etching
Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College:
Access Artists Project

MADISON D'ANGELIS

Wemor's gifts
2016
acetate drypoint etching
Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College:
Access Artists Project

KIANI DENOORD

Well worn
2016
acetate drypoint etching with chine colle
Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College:
Access Artists Project

AMY DICRISTOFORO

Fever Leaf
2016
acetate drypoint etching with chine colle
Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College:
Access Artists Project

KATRINA JAMES

Untitled
2016
photograph

KATRINA JAMES

A.Kotu Kawala
2016
photograph

KATRINA JAMES

Foday Bawoh
2016
photograph

KATRINA JAMES

Samukai Bawoh
2016
photograph

KATRINA JAMES

Lebba Bawoh
2016
photograph

NADYNE KEMISTER

Traditional Shirt
2016
acetate drypoint etching with chine colle
Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College:
Access Artists Project

WEMOR KOHOLO

Lapa
2016
acrylic on canvas

WEMOR KOHOLO AND VIVIAN FLUMO

Lofa
2016
acrylic on canvas

LOFA COMMUNITY AND CAROLINE CHISHOLM STUDENTS

Zwolowa
2016
audio

LOFA COMMUNITY

Beating the Sasa
2016
acrylic on canvas

LOFA COMMUNITY

Chicken Booster
2016
stock cubes

LOFA COMMUNITY

Cultural Troupe Dancers
2016
acrylic on canvas

LOFA COMMUNITY

Dance
2016
acrylic on canvas

DRUM

date unknown
animal skin, paint, wood, metal and thread
Courtesy of the Lofa Community



LOFA COMMUNITY

Drum
date unknown
animal skin, paint, wood, metal and thread

LOFA COMMUNITY

Everyone Eats
2016
acrylic on cotton

LOFA COMMUNITY

Fenna
date unknown
woven basket

LOFA COMMUNITY

Jacket and Dress
date unknown
printed cotton

LOFA COMMUNITY

Ghost Chillis
date unknown
preserved produce

LOFA COMMUNITY

Hand Made Fishing Nets
date unknown
nylon and hessian thread, wood and metal

LOFA COMMUNITY

Harvesting
2016
acrylic on cotton
Painted in Liberia

LOFA COMMUNITY

Man's Formal Dress
date unknown
cotton

LOFA COMMUNITY

Man's Formal Shirt
date unknown
cotton

LOFA COMMUNITY

Monkey Bridge
2016
acrylic on canvas

LOFA COMMUNITY

Mortar and Pestle
date unknown
wood

LOFA COMMUNITY

Mother and Child Pound Rice
2016
acrylic on cotton

LOFA COMMUNITY

Sasa
date unknown
gourd, beads, nylon

LOFA COMMUNITY

Traditional Shirt
cotton
date unknown
hand woven cotton, thread, nylon zipper

LOFA COMMUNITY

Traditional Weave Story Cloth
date unknown
paint and dye on hand woven cotton

LOFA COMMUNITY

Village
2016
acrylic on canvas

LOFA COMMUNITY

Wedding Dress
1980
synthetic and cotton
Courtesy of Vivian Flumo

LOFA COMMUNITY

Women's Party Dress
date unknown
cotton

TIA MADDEN

Living Well
2016
acetate drypoint etching with chine colle
**Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College:
Access Artists Project**

ANGELIQUE MCERLAIN

Sweet Potato Leaf
2016
acetate drypoint etching
**Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College:
Access Artists Project**

**LOFA COMMUNITY
WOMEN'S PARTY DRESS**

date unknown

cotton

Courtesy of the Lofa Community



LILIAN NEAL

Garden Egg

2016

acetate drypoint etching with chine colle

**Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College:
Access Artists Project**

KIARA PEARCE

Sustenance

2016

acetate drypoint etching

**Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College:
Access Artists Project**

MADDISON PEPPERLL

Garden Eggs

2016

acetate drypoint etching with chine colle

Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College: Access
Artists Project

ISABELLA RICHARDSON

Farm boots

2016

acetate drypoint etching with chine colle

**Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College:
Access Artists Project**

BAINDU TAMBA

Traditional Weaving

date unknown

cotton fibre weave

SIMONE TAYLOR

Justin Koholo

2016

photograph

SIMONE TAYLOR

Mamre Garden Egg

2016

photograph

SIMONE TAYLOR

Wemor Koholo

2016

photograph

NATALIE ACHAMPONG
CELEBRATION

2016

acetate drypoint etching with chine colle

Courtesy of Caroline Chisholm College: Access Artists Project



Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest is operated by Penrith Performing & Visual Arts. It receives the funding support of Penrith City Council and Arts NSW.

86 River Road
Emu Plains NSW 2750
02 4735 1100

penrithregionalgallery.org

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#penrithregionalgallery

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George Gittoes: I Witness exhibition photography by silversalt

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Opening address: George Gittoes



Cover Image: George Gittoes at Occupy Wall Street, 2011. Photo by Zony Maya

Hazelhurst
REGIONAL GALLERY & ARTS CENTRE
A facility of Sutherland Shire Council

Sutherland Shire
COUNCIL



access
—artists

