Racial Hatred Still Alive and Well?

Stan Korytnyj has completed a seven year painting project exploring the conflict of Christendom and Islam, culminating in a retrospective archive of works to be exhibited at the BDAS Gallery in Bowral New South Wales. (July 9th - July 14th.)

April 27, 2009 - PRLog -- With the advent of 9/11 and the subsequent occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq by coalition forces, Stan Korytnyj decided to adopt the theme of ‘Culture At War’ as a vehicle for his painting agenda.

In 2003 Stan Korytnyj was tentatively optimistic about the wave of political change in the Middle East. The explosion of Islamic refugees into the West and the melding of Islamic and Christian values would form a vibrant social tapestry of multiculturalism. He saw the burqa-clad women and the turbaned men bringing with them the might of an ancient culture.

Stan’s optimism eventually faded to melancholy and numb depression. The scourge of Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib’s clandestine interrogations had come to light. The casualty lists mounted due to increased skirmishes and suicide bombings and in Sydney, the suburban beaches exploded with race riots.

Stan continued to immerse himself in his art but his work suffered a cancerous transformation. The light-hearted token realism (Pope Benedict, Cathy Freeman Nun-Doll) was followed by tortured hallucinatory visions and nightmares. (Mother of Ali Abbas Cries for Help, Convulsing Monster in Detention Cell, Dead Marine’s Ghosts Boarding Helicopter Gun-Ship.)

That which was initially uplifting artistic expression gradually spiralled into Stan’s personal painting curse. The irresistible compulsion to lay paint on canvas was a futile attempt to exorcise the demons of ‘Culture at war’.

The 50 paintings and drawings to be exhibited at the BDAS gallery in Bowral New South Wales is a retrospective body of work resulting from the effort of the last seven years. (2003-2009)

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Stan was born in the year 1946 in post-war Germany to Russian parentage. The family migrated to Australia in 1953 to escape an oppressive war torn Europe. Stan developed an interest in art early on and gained a commercial art diploma while still in high school. This motivated him to strive for a scholarship to study at the South Australian School of Art; a prestige earned at a mere 17 years of age. Upon graduation, he taught art at Victor Harbor and Christies Beach High Schools from 1967 – 69. A serious car accident that left him in a coma for weeks and became a catalyst for change.

Up until this point Stan had always wavered between music and art. Although his art was of high renown, he also achieved a considerable profile as a member of the band Rashamra, playing with Dutch Tilders, the Four Tops, Normie Rowe and John Farnham. Not to mention sharing the stage with acts such as The Angels, Johnny O’Keefe, Johnny Young, Bo Diddley, Cold Chisel, AC/DC, Paul Rogers and Daddy Cool.

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