

Human Evidence: The War in Iraq

Works on Paper by Daniel Heyman

Photography by Michael Kamber

Exhibition: 1 September – 24 October 2008

Bernstein Gallery, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs

Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey

Panel Discussion: 21 October 2008, 4:30 – 6 pm, with reception to follow in the Bernstein Gallery. Both are open to the public.

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Daniel Heyman, painter and printmaker, has concentrated his art on making images about the conflict in Iraq, specifically the abuse and torture of innocent Iraqis at Abu Ghraib and other prisons. Recently, he has begun to listen to testimony from Iraqi victims of violence at the hands of Blackwater Security Guards in Baghdad on September 16, 2007. For this work, Heyman has traveled to Jordan and Turkey where he has been part of face to face interviews with over 25 former detainees, and over 10 Blackwater victims. During preliminary interviews with their American lawyers, Heyman sits in as a witness, making the portraits of the men while they give their testimony, incorporating that testimony directly into his artwork. When working on copper plates to produce the series of drypoint prints presented in the exhibition, Heyman must write the testimony backwards so it is legible when printed. Other than the addition of some simple color, the work is never touched after the interviews, to heighten the direct effect of being in the interview, bringing back to the United States each Iraqi victim's own words.

On view in the Bernstein Gallery are 8 drypoint prints from Heyman's Abu Ghraib series on loan from the Princeton University Art Museum. These works are a museum gift of William J. Salman, Class of 1955. Also on view are 7 prints from the Blackwater series on loan from the artist.

Michael Kamber has been working as a photo-journalist in Iraq for the last several years, becoming chief photographer for the Baghdad Bureau of the New York Times in 2007. The emotionally charged photographs on view were taken when the photographer was on patrol with US soldiers. While Kamber was initially supportive of the invasion, he has watched what he describes as a "slow-motion descent into what I can only call madness." On exhibition are seventeen 16 x 20 inch color photographs.

On October 21 at 4:40 in Bowl 016 in Robertson Hall (adjacent to the Bernstein Gallery) there will be a panel discussion with the artists and Susan Burke, Lead Counsel for the Abu Ghraib torture litigation, Burke O'Neil, LLC, and Steven Simon, recently appointed as the John L. Weinberg/Goldman Sachs and Company Visiting Professor of Public and International Affairs at the Woodrow Wilson School, and also the Hasib J. Sabbagh Senior Fellow for Middle Eastern Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations.