

Traces of War

Cécile Bourne-Farrell and Vivienne Jabri

We see war in all kinds of spaces and locations, some predictable and others less so. The elements of war, its violence, antagonisms, discourses of exclusion, displacements, populations on the move, people killed and tortured, have a presence in our everyday lives, in our daily routine.

Artists throughout history have sought to capture the agony of war, its impact on combatants and civilians, on landscapes, and on the most hidden spaces: our memories, identities, and lived experience.

At the same time, the phenomenon of war is not confined to moments of crisis or battlefield locations. It somehow disrupts the normality of everyday life. There is a certain resonance in Michel Foucault's observation that the 'roar of battle' travels silently in our modes of being and interactions, our discourses and institutions, the practices that we take for granted. We wish, in this exhibition, to place the lens on this 'everydayness', this quotidian aspect of war, not only far away, but also ever-present viscerally and emotionally.

Our exhibition, titled *Traces of War*, reimagines war beyond its exceptionality, locating it in spaces where it would be least expected. At the same time, the art works reveal the sheer power of the everyday, as life itself and in its most ordinary makes its presence felt in the most dangerous locations of war. Artists from Goya to Dix variously and differently reveal the horrors of war and its imprint upon the body and the body politic, as if we might easily contrast the peace of the everyday with the destructive exceptionalism of war. However, the everyday also has a capacity to make its imprint on war, and this is shown most strongly in, for example, Mona Hatoum's steel installation, *Grater Divide* (2002), where an everyday object, such as a kitchen utensil, acquires a menacing, frightening presence.

Working with three outstanding and internationally renowned artists, **Jananne Al-Ani**, **Baptist Coelho** and **Shaun Gladwell**, our aim is to explore this most enduring and, some would argue, most dangerous aspect of war, namely its presence and intersection with the everyday. We wish to bring the paradoxical silent roar of battle to the gallery space so that we might understand its dynamic and its imprint upon the body politic and upon the subject of (international) politics. Working primarily with photography, film and multi-media installations, all three artists have direct experience of the zones of conflict and war, from Iraq, to India, to Bangladesh, to Afghanistan, and then 'back home' where the traces of war are revealed again, as if there is no such thing as leaving war behind. The intention of all three artists is to present works responding to our theme.

Born in Kirkuk, Iraq, London based artist, **Jananne Al-Ani**, reveals war's presence in seemingly unexpected places while at the same time depicting the historicity of war. In her films, *Shadow Sites I* (2010) and *Shadow Sites II* (2011), aerial views of archaeological sites suggest war's imprint upon a surface that is itself only comprehensible in terms of what lies underneath. For Al-Ani, aerial imagery might be used in archaeology *and* in intelligence gathering in times of war. However, it is at the intersection of the two that we see the archaeology of our knowledge of war in the present. History reveals itself in the present so that we can never again think of drone warfare and its reliance on aerial imagery of the terrain underneath without at the same time having full awareness that what lies underneath the targeted terrain can re-emerge with full force.

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The silent roar of battle is differently seen in Indian artist, **Baptist Coelho**'s multi-media installations. Just as Al-Ani travels sites of conflict and warfare, so too Coelho realises the everydayness of war by making use of what has referred to as the 'fabrics' of war; literally the materials of a life lived in battle zones where no battle as such takes place; where there is much waiting in the lives of soldiers mobilised in India's farthest mountain reaches. Here we see objects such as jars of food, bandages, soldiers' uniforms, and backpacks sent to unlikely spaces so that the audience is never quite sure of the measure of distance between home and the war front.

The echoes of war are interpreted differently in Baptist Coelho's multi-media works. Just as Al-Ani travels to the sites of conflict and warfare, likewise, Coelho realises the everyday-ness of war by making use of what is referred to as the 'fabrics' of war; literally the materials that have lived in battle zones where more lives are lost due to the extreme cold temperatures than the army bullet. His research based projects attempts to reveal and understand conflict and war through observations and conversations that have been woven into the fabric of the lives of people, whether directly or indirectly affected. These works reveal their challenges and valour, but also the paradox of heroism, confronted by extreme geographical conditions of the Siachen Glacier the highest battlefields in the world. Here we see objects such as jars of food, bandages, soldiers' uniforms, and backpacks experience unlikely spaces where the audience is never quite sure of the measure of distance between home and the war front.

Australian-born artist **Shaun Gladwell**, who has served as Australia's official war artist in the first Gulf War and later in Afghanistan, uses his camera work to destabilise the time and space of war. The materials of war are here revealed in the landscape, in soldiers' helmets, and in their corporeal movements. In a single shot of the everyday on a military base, we see soldiers filming each other in the heat of the day just as a drone lands safely having shed its deadly load on an other's terrain.

The project will enable these artists to develop new works as well as exhibiting a selection of their existing work.

Our aim is to create a space for an exploratory dialogue between academic research into the subject of war and its intersection with the everyday, as well as artists' encounters with war and the conceptual schema that render it both comprehensible and strange. We hope this collaboration can enable such a dialogue with students and researchers, as well as members of the general public, who will be able to experience the exhibition in the Inigo Rooms and other spaces at King's College London. Public events and colloquia will take place during the course of the exhibition. There will, in addition, be an exhibition catalogue, to incorporate selected essays and commentary.

Vivienne Jabri, Professor of International Politics, Department of War Studies and Director of King's ESRC Doctoral Training Centre, King's College London.

Cécile Bourne-Farrell, independent curator, based in London

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The artists:

Jananne Al-Ani, is a London based Iraqi-born artist. Working with photography, film and video, she has an ongoing interest in the representation of contested landscapes filtered through the technologies of surveillance and aerial reconnaissance in modern warfare.

Al-Ani has exhibited widely nationally and internationally. Recent solo exhibitions include *In-Dis-Appearance*, E-WERK, Freiburg (2015); *Excavations*, Hayward Gallery Project Space, London (2014); *Groundwork*, Beirut Art Center (2013) and *Shadow Sites*, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Washington DC (2012). She participated in *Mom, am I Barbarian?*, the 13th Istanbul Biennial (2013); *Re:Emerge Towards a New Cultural Cartography*, Sharjah Biennial 11 (2013); *all our relations*, the 18th Biennale of Sydney (2012) and *The Future of a Promise*, the 54th Venice Biennale (2011).

Recipient of the Abraaj Capital Art Prize (2011), her work is in the collections of the Tate and the Imperial War Museum, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; SFMOMA, San Francisco; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo and Darat al Funun, Amman.

Recent publications include *Documents of Contemporary Art: Moving Image*, edited by Omar Kholeif and published by the Whitechapel Gallery and MIT Press; *Hanan al-Cinema: Affections for the Moving Image* by Laura U Marks, published by MIT Press and an interview with Cécile Bourne-Farrell for Issue 59 of the journal *Multitudes*, published by Association Multitudes, Paris (all 2015). She is currently Senior Research Fellow at the University of the Arts London.



Jananne Al-Ani

Production still from *Shadow Sites II*, 2011 Single Channel Digital Video
Courtesy of the artist and Abraaj Capital Art Prize

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Jananne Al-Ani

Installation of *Shadow Sites II*, 2011 at ARTER, Istanbul

Single Channel Digital Video. Courtesy of the artist and the Istanbul Biennial

Baptist Coelho

Baptist Coelho is an artist from India, who lives and works in Bombay. A key focus of his practice is to uncover how conflict affects and relates to everyday life. His artistic process, fact-finding and engagement with military and civilian personnel in conflict zones leads his works in various media, including installation, video, sound, photography, performance and sculpture. These explore the notions of conflict, emotion along with the past and present experience of across varied geographies.

In 2006, Baptist received his Masters of Arts from the Birmingham Institute of Art & Design (BIAD), UK. He was awarded the 'Façade Video Award' (2011) by Art Today Association, Plovdiv-Bulgaria; 'Promising Artist Award' (2007) by Art India & India Habitat Centre, Delhi-India and 'Johnson Prize Fund' (2006) by BIAD, UK.

Solo Exhibitions include, Goethe-Zentrum, Hyderabad-India (2015); Project 88, Mumbai-India (2015); Ladakh Arts and Media Organization in Leh-India (2015); Pump House Gallery, London-UK (2012); Grand Palais, Bern-Switzerland (2009); Project 88, Mumbai-India (2009); Visual Arts Gallery, Delhi-India (2009) and BIAD, UK (2006). His works are in the collections of the Essl Museum, Klosterneuburg-Austria; Devi Foundation, Gurgaon-India and various private collections.

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Nowhere but here, 2015

Siachen thermal shirts and pants,
nylon cords and metal rings
Parachute's canopy dimensions: 812
centimeters. Display dimensions:
variable

Baptist's has exhibited at institutions including, Arab-Jewish Culture Center, Haifa-Israel (2015); Museo de la Ciudad, Cuernavaca-Mexico (2013); Jönköpings Läns Museum, Sweden (2013); CASS Sculpture Foundation, Goodwood-UK (2012); Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing-China (2012); Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo (MAXXI), Rome-Italy (2011); Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon (MAC), France (2011); Zacheta National Art Gallery, Poland-Warsaw (2011); Essl Museum, Klosterneuburg-Austria (2010); HEART - Herning Museum of Contemporary Art, Denmark (2010); Gwangju Museum of Art, South Korea (2010), amongst others. Baptist has also participated in various artist residencies; conducted workshops, artist talks and panel discussions across Asia, Europe and South Africa. He is the finalist for The 2016 Sovereign Asian Art Prize in Hong Kong.



Ribbons I, 2015

6 bars made of various Siachen soldier's clothing, sponge and wood
Single bar dimensions: L 72 X B 9.5 X D 1 inches
Approximate display dimensions: L 70 X B 68 X D 22 inches

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Shaun Gladwell

Based in London, Gladwell's art is known primarily for its investigation into contemporary forms of human movement, spatial experience and transformation. These themes have been explored through video and photographic recordings of the artist himself, as well as other athletes involved in extreme sport. Gladwell uses activities such as skateboarding, parkour, BMX bicycle riding, graffiti, urban exploring or "buildering", as well as completely invented actions, as a means to rethink the function of objects and environments. Through his work, Gladwell proposes alternative representations of the individual and their agency to directly author or re-author their environment.

Gladwell has been exhibiting extensively throughout Australia, Asia, the United States and Europe since 2001. He has participated in many international biennales and triennales, including: the Yokohama Triennale (2005); Busan Biennale and Bienal de São Paulo (both 2006); La Biennale di Venezia (2007 & 2009); the Biennale of Sydney, Taipei Biennial and Biennale Cuvée, Linz (all 2008); Cairo Biennial (2010); the Shanghai Biennale, China (2012); The California-Pacific Triennial and SCAPE 7, Public Art Christchurch Biennial, New Zealand (both 2013); as well as la Biennale d'Arte Contemporain, Douai (2015). In 2009, Gladwell was Australia's representative at the 53rd Venice Biennale.^[25]

The artist's solo exhibitions include: *The Lacrima Chair*, Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, *Collection+*: *Shaun Gladwell*, UNSW Galleries, Sydney (both 2015); *Afghanistan: Field Recordings*, Samstag Museum of Art, Adelaide, Australia (2014); *Shaun Gladwell: Cycles of Radical Will*, the De La Warr Pavilion, UK, *Shaun Gladwell: Afghanistan*, Australian Embassy, Washington, and *Morning of the Earth*, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne (all 2013); *Broken dance (Beatboxed)*, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney (2012); *Perpetual 360° Sessions*, SCHUNCK* Heerlen, The Netherlands, *Shaun Gladwell: Matrix 162*, Wadsworth Atheneum, Connecticut and *Stereo Sequences*, ACMI, Melbourne (all 2011); *Portrait of a man: alive and spinning/Dead as a skeleton dressed as a Mountie*, Georgia Sherman Projects, Toronto, Canada and *Interior Linework/Interceptor Intersection*, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney (both 2010).



Shaun Gladwell

Double Field / Viewfinder, (Tarin Kowt), 2009–10

Two-channel HD video, 18:39 minutes, 16:9, colour, stereo sound

Commissioned by the Australian War Memorial

Collection: Mainland Art Fund, Tasmania, Australia; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia, gift of the artist 2012; donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program; private collection



Shaun Gladwell

BPOV MEAO, (behind point of view, Middle East Area of Operations)

edition 1/1, 2009–10, digital colour photograph, inkjet on paper, image size: 95.0 x 63.3 cm

acquired under the official war art scheme in 2010, collection of the Australian War Memorial, P10015.003

This project is an initiative of the Department of War Studies, King's College London, and is led by Professor Vivienne Jabri.

Vivienne Jabri is a leading voice in developing understandings of war, violence, security, and conflict, drawing on critical, post structural, and feminist social and political theory. The author is widely published, with four monographs, two co-edited volumes, and a number of peer reviewed articles in leading International Relations journals, including *European Journal of International Relations*, *International Theory*, the *Review of International Studies*, *International Political Sociology*, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, and *Security Dialogue*, amongst others. Vivienne Jabri has served on the Economic and Social research Council's professorial fellowships selection panel (2010); on the ORA Plus final assessors' committee (2013), and on the *Politics and International Studies* subject panel for the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) of the UK's Higher Education Funding Council. She serves on the Editorial Boards of the journals, *International Political Sociology*, *the Journal of Global Security Studies*, *Security Dialogue*, and *Alternatives*. Jabri's most recent books include *War and the Transformation of Global Politics* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) and *The Postcolonial Subject* (Routledge, 2013).

Cécile Bourne-Farrell is an independent curator who worked for the Musée d'Art Moderne Ville de la Paris (ARC) and for both public and private institutions in Africa, Asia and Europe. One of her recent projects was for Es Baluard Museu, Palma, Mallorca and she has been appointed curator of SUD triennale, Douala, Cameroon. She served the committee of the NMAC Foundation, Spain (2002-06) and since 2006 the curatorial delegation of L'appartement22, Rabat, Morocco. She is currently working with M. Linman (www.newpatrons.eu) for the implementation of public projects for Fondation de France in the suburb of Saint Denis, Paris, and was the Fondation's Spanish mediator for 5 years. See www.chooscone.org.

Traces of War (13/04/2016)

King's College London

King's College London is one of the top 20 universities in the world (2014/15 QS World University Rankings) and among the oldest in England. King's has more than 26,500 students (of whom nearly 10,400 are graduate students) from some 150 countries worldwide, and nearly 6,900 staff. The university is in the second phase of a £1 billion redevelopment programme which is transforming its estate.

King's has an outstanding reputation for world-class teaching and cutting-edge research. In the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) King's was ranked 6th nationally in the 'power' ranking, which takes into account both the quality and quantity of research activity, and 7th for quality according to Times Higher Education rankings. Eighty-four per cent of research at King's was deemed 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent' (3* and 4*). The university is in the top seven UK universities for research earnings and has an overall annual income of more than £600 million.

The Department of War Studies

War Studies is a multi-disciplinary department devoted to the study of all aspects of war and conflict and the broad remit of international relations. The department has a global reputation for excellence in teaching and research; it offers wide-ranging and intellectually stimulating degree programmes. The Department offers the BA War Studies degree, the BA International Relations degree as well as two joint BA programmes – one with the Department of History & one with the Department of Philosophy; 11 campus taught MAs; 3 War Studies Online MA programmes and the MPhil/PhD programme. Each year the department hosts Junior Year Abroad students from the USA; as well as a number of exchange students under the Erasmus scheme. Currently the department has over 200 undergraduate students, 500 MA students and 200 postgraduate research students. The Department currently employs over 80 staff engaged in a diverse range of activity.

Events

The Department of War Studies (DWS) has an extensive events programme. On average the DWS hosts 100-150 events per year. These include weekly seminars, annual and inaugural lectures, prize-giving ceremonies, book launches, careers forums and panels, alumni networking events, book launches, film screenings, Research Centre launches and workshops, residential conferences and other ad hoc meetings. The programme caters both for members of the DWS and College as well as focusing on public engagement.

The Arts & Conflict Hub

The Arts and Conflict Hub based in the Department of War Studies provides a focal point for work exploring the relationship between the arts and conflict, including visual arts, dance, music, theatre and film. Using artistic mediums to communicate, teach and research the complexities of conflict we aim to expand the interdisciplinary agenda of war studies, opening new dialogues and engaging new audiences.

Research Activity

The Department of War Studies (DWS) is the largest and most successful European university group of scholars focused on research relating to all aspects of war, peace, security and international relations past, present and future. The Department actively supports the King's College London mission to carry out research and the generation of new knowledge in the service of society - its academic staff advise governments, serve on commissions and public bodies, are seconded to national and international organisations and work with the public and voluntary sectors and industry to help ensure that the expertise developed within the Department is transferred to the wider community. The Department houses 19 [Research Groups, Centres and Units](#). Each group is made up of academic staff and PGR students from within the DWS as well as academics and professionals from external institutions. See <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/warstudies/index.aspx>.

Collaboration with leading institutions

The Department of War Studies has an excellent working relationship with a number of leading establishments in the field of security, defence and international relations. These include: [Ministry of Defence](#), [Foreign and Commonwealth Office](#), Home Office, [Chatham House](#), [International Institute of Strategic Studies](#), [Royal United Services Institute](#), [Royal College of Defence Studies](#), Joint Services Command and Staff College, Air Power Studies Division at the Royal Air Force College, The MacArthur Foundation, Chicago. We seek to develop these collaborations and expand to new areas.

The project is supported by the **Cultural Institute at King's College London, part of Culture at King's**. The Cultural Institute at King's College London connects the university with practitioners, producers, policy makers and participants across arts and culture, creating space where conventions are challenged and original perspectives emerge. Through its programmes and activities, the Cultural Institute aims to put academic research to work in the cultural sector, enhance the student experience, inspire new approaches to teaching, research and learning and increase public engagement with the work of King's. The Cultural Institute is a flagship initiative for Culture at King's. [@CultInstKings](http://kcl.ac.uk/culturalinstitute)

The project is supported by:

The Cultural Institute at King's College London.

The Leverhulme Trust (Baptist Coelho, Leverhulme Artist in Residence).

Department of War Studies, King's College London (Arts & Conflict Hub).

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