



The
Glorious
Art of
Peace

Art can act as a witness to injustices, traumas, the horror of war and brutalities undertaken in conflicts. It has considerable potential in peace-building. It is a universal language. Art can provide a voice to the voiceless, the disappeared, the marginalised and oppressed.

The Movement for the Abolition of War (MAW) is part of an ongoing world-wide uprising, challenging the inevitability of war and guided by the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations signed in 1945; a vision of a world in which conflicts are resolved without resort to violence, to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” which to this day continues to bring untold suffering to humankind as well as deepening the climate crisis.

‘I dream of giving birth to a child who will ask, “Mother, what was war?”’. *Eve Merriam*

All At Sea 3 – mixed media on canvas. Alison Lochhead
‘Conflicts force people to leave their homes and walk vast distances, enduring unimaginable hardships. There are 82 million people fleeing from their homes worldwide as it is not safe enough to stay. Would you like to be one of those trying to find safety for your families’ future?’. (*UNHCR*)



We Are the Shoes

We are the shoes, we are the last witnesses
We are the shoes from grandchildren and grandfathers
From Prague, Paris and Amsterdam,
And because we are only made of fabric and leather
And not of blood and flesh,
Each one of us avoided hellfire.

Moshe Szulsztein

What do you think about when you see an abandoned shoe?

Cast iron, ceramic and mixed media. Alison Lochhead
People undergo unimaginable journeys to seek
safety. Then they often only face hostility.



'We did not make the planet, we do not own the planet and we have no right to wreck the planet. We are not freeholders, but tenants holding on trust the world in which we live. Irresponsible, greedy and violent, we have brought that world to the brink of destruction. We can blow it apart, pollute it, exploit it and turn it into a desert, is that the way we want to go on? I doubt it. There is a deep goodness in the human heart and a conscience which will not be silenced...'

Bruce Kent, from 'Building the Global Village

Israel Bombed Lebanon 2006
– and so it goes on
Acrylic on canvas. Alison Lochhead



'Nations are quite capable of starving every other side of life... education, sanitation, housing, public health, everything that contributes to life, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual, in order to maintain armaments'.

G. Lowes Dickenson, 1862-1932, British political scientist and philosopher

'When people recognise the futility of war, it will cease to be seen as a sensible way to settle disputes. But the abolition of war needs ACTION. There are too many people who are against war but do nothing about it.

Of course, everybody cannot do everything, but everyone can do something'.

Professor Robert Hinde FRS, 1923 -2016, zoologist, former President of MAW

They Bombed Aleppo Library

Burnt books. Alison Lochhead
Libraries have been wilfully destroyed for centuries. You cannot wipe out identities, histories, knowledge and cultures. Words live on.



'If the majority of human beings do not want wars, but at the same time believe that it is impossible to stop them, then the first change we must bring about is in our hands.

'We must change the idea that "it is not possible" because it is only what we believe about reality that prevents us from transforming it'.

Mikhail Gorbachev, 1997

'If you want to make peace, you don't talk to your friends. You talk to your enemies'.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu and also Moshe Dayan, Israeli military leader



**Half Way Between Life and Death:
No to Nukes**

Textile which incorporates dyed silk, felting, hand embroidery. Geraldine Bridges

Irreverence

In a clearing, I beheld the sun,
Our life, benevolence.
In the distance, a mushroom cloud,
Irreverence.



Trees of Life

Felting, pulled and drawn thread work, needle-weaving, hand embroidery. Geraldine Bridges

What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans and the homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or in the holy name of liberty or democracy?'

Mahatma Gandhi, 1869-1948, leader of India's independence movement

'A war is not an earthquake or a tornado. It is an act of men and women. Wars will cease when men refuse to fight and women refuse to approve. Do not let people lead you to think for a moment that war is a necessary institution'.

Dr. Jessie Wallace Hughan, 1875-1955, American educator, socialist, pacifist

The Weight of Waiting 2

Acrylic on canvas. Alison Lochhead
People seek safety and have to live often for
decades in limbo. Waiting.



'Instead of building the peace by attacking injustices like starvation, disease, illiteracy, political and economic servitude, we spent a trillion dollars a year on war since 1946, until hatred and conflict have become the international preoccupation'.

Daniel Berrigan, 1921 – 2016, American priest and peace activist

Gaza 2021

English arpillera, Linda Adams

Conflict Textiles collection

Photo Martin Melaugh, © Conflict Textiles





They Bombed Libraries

Acrylic on canvas. Alison Lochhead



What Happened in Beirut August 2021?

Acrylic on canvas. Alison Lochhead.

'Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. .. The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral; returning violence with violence only multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars'.

The Rev Dr Martin Luther King, 1929 – 1968, US Civil Rights leader, Nobel Peace laureate

'War has today become an industry which benefits the rich and powerful, while consuming the impoverished, deprived and marginalised. It suffices to see how the arms industry flourishes every time a war looms, to see who sits on the boardrooms of these corporations, and who ultimately pays the price with life, limb and property, to appreciate that no war today is based on morality, ethics, nor the value of humanity.

It is also incredible that no one mentions the immeasurable devastation that wars and military conflicts inflict on the planet, whilst politicians berate (rightly or wrongly) ordinary citizens for driving the wrong sort of motor vehicle or for leaving the light on in an unoccupied room. As though wars must happen, regardless of the damage to life and the environment'.

Dr Anas Al-Takriti, President of the Muslim Association of Britain



'War is organised murder, and nothing else ...War isn't worth one life..It's the calculated and condoned slaughter of human beings....all these young lives lost in a war which ended across a table. What's the sense in that?'

Harry Patch, 1898 – 2009, last surviving soldier of World War 1

No war has resolved a problem. It may put it on hold for a while but inevitably it will raise its head again and the reaction is to violence and conflict.

Windows or Graves?

Acrylic on canvas. Alison Lochhead



‘Nothing is more useless in developing a nation’s economy than a gun, and nothing blocks the road to social development more than the financial burden of war. War is the arch enemy of national progress and the modern scourge of civilized men’.

King Hussein of Jordan, 1935-1999

As individuals or groups, there is a lot we can do to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

We have all the potential tools, skills and laws needed to abolish war.

So why do we continue to wreck such devastation on humanity and the whole world?

'War has today become an industry which benefits the rich and powerful, while consuming the impoverished, deprived and marginalised, and inflicting devastation on the planet.

We need to make the connections more strongly – intellectually, politically and practically. The time is right, now, for dreams, for protest, and for radical change. The place is everywhere. Whoever we are, and wherever we live, it is up to all of us to change the political climate to a culture of peace.'

www.abolishwar.org.uk

Exhibition and live events at Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot, UK

5 April – May 1 2022

Taking part: Frankie Armstrong, singer and peace activist; John Gittings; journalist, author, peace activist; Geraldine Bridges, textiles and poems; Alison Lochhead, sculptures and paintings; Conflict Textiles, arpillera; Rana Ibrahim and Iraqi Women Art and War group; Sue Gilmurray, songs; Sea Green Singers; Clare Davis; Sally Mears, poems; Rona Topaz, singer and actor.

Movement FOR
Abolition of War

