

MEDIA RELEASE

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New exhibition by world renowned artist considers peace through art

A bold new exhibition by internationally celebrated artist George Gittoes opens this weekend at the City of Launceston's Queen Victoria Art Gallery at Royal Park.

CIVILISTION is a large installation of painted canvas panels inspired by the paintings of Pashto heroes on rickshaws seen throughout Jalalabad, Afghanistan.

Gittoes has brought his own unique aesthetic to this epically-scaled work. *CIVILISATION* reflects on the violence that Gittoes has seen first-hand and in the media, as well as the popularity of dramatised conflict in action movies. Gittoes also celebrates the Pashto art and culture, which thrives in Jalalabad despite attempts from the Islamic State and Taliban to crush it.

George Gittoes has dedicated his life to documenting and pursuing peace in some of the world's most violent conflict zones. He passionately believes that to confront and overcome the abject horror of war, we need to reconnect with our humanity and find joy through the creation and sharing of artistic expression.

In 2011 Gittoes established Yellow House, a refuge for artists in the heart of Jalalabad. Gittoes has built other iterations of Yellow House around the globe, to offer a haven for creativity that reminds those living with war of the humanity that still exists around them.

Launceston Mayor Albert van Zetten says the exhibition is the first time Gittoes' work has been displayed in Tasmania.

"George and wife Hellen have worked tirelessly with the Afghani community during recent conflicts, and this work shows their dedication to offering a sanctuary amid the chaos of war."

"Some people may find the work confronting, but I encourage you to consider the message of peace and humanity behind each commanding panel."

The exhibition runs from 11 November to 18 February, 2018.

The Mayor and George Gittoes will be available for comment today at 11am at the Art Gallery at Royal Park.

A public program accompanies *CIVILISATION*. Please see qvmag.tas.gov.au for full details but dates as follow:

Friday 10 November 2017

CIVILISATION: A dynamic presentation by Gittoes, wife Hellen Rose and Pashtun film producer and director, Waqar Alam.

Saturday 11 November 2017

George Gittoes paints live at QVMAG Royal Park.

Please note that some visitors may find the themes in this exhibition confronting. Viewer discretion is advised.