



Opening Remarks:

I invite you to view this portable Art Exhibit of paintings which includes some of my thoughts as I painted the refugee experience and the consequences of war; especially the impact on women, children and young youths.

If any part of this program or the individual pictures will be of use to you in your Peace and Justice work feel free to borrow and I encourage you to pass it along. Please contact me for help using my work: mmcbushnell@gmail.com

Let us begin. Most of us wish to turn away from such sad images. But I decided that my job, as an artist, was to witness and interpret. Compassion more than condemnation is the subject and object of my paintings with an attempt to identify with these dear peoples who inhabit my canvases, even those youths drawn into wars.

I hope the paintings will work toward ceasing our endless wars by espousing the myths we share - that life has meaning, can have dignity, allows for creative differences, declares freedom of religious expression.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, from the pulpit of Old South Church said, "We live in a moral universe." But do we? Can we? Or does our ancient genetic inheritance defeat our best impulses: our love of beads, hierarchy, tribalism.

These paintings are a result of my search for answers and that I may not forget the plight of peoples living in and enduring the consequences of shameful new colonial enterprises.

The Paintings, done over 20 years, focus on three areas:

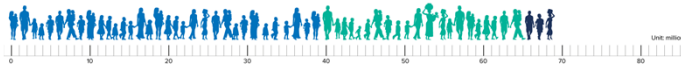
1. How the hero's quest affects all societies through myth and memory.
2. The consequences of war: The victimization of women and children and their refugee experience.
3. The genocidal and barbaric impulses that can rise in modern societies and are uncontrolled by international law.

The title is centered within a large, irregular orange watercolor splash that has a textured, painterly appearance with darker and lighter shades of orange and some brownish tones at the edges. The splash is set against a plain white background.

THE REFUGEE EXPERIENCE

68.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide

2018 UNHRC



Internally Displaced People
40 million

Refugees
25.4 million
19.7 million under UNHCR mandate
5.4 million Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA

Asylum-seekers
3.1 million

Where the world's displaced people are being hosted

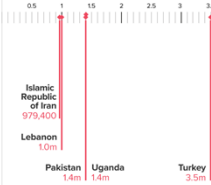


85 per cent of the world's displaced people are in developing countries

57% of refugees worldwide came from three countries



Top refugee-hosting countries



10 million stateless people

102,800 Refugees resettled

44,400 people a day forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution

16,765 personnel
UNHCR employs 16,765 people worldwide (as of 30 November 2018)

138 countries
We work in 138 countries (as of 30 November 2018)

We are funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions, with 87 per cent from governments and the European Union and 10 per cent from private donors

Source: UNHCR / 19 June 2018





And all of us, in this rapidly changing world, sometimes feel far from home; disoriented by a changing culture, our difficult national issues and a world trying to adapt to what the 21st century has wrought.

And all of us are on our life journey to find home, meaning and a faith that sustains. Some of us are just more refugeeed than others.

My thoughts as I painted? The little boy is too young to be carrying a gun. He will miss his school chums.

The extraordinarily difficult experiences of students in my ESL classes : their loss of culture and home, the struggles to adjust, their gratitude. I naturally began to focus on the issue of dislocation and reorientation And all of us, in this rapidly changing world, sometimes feel far from Home; disoriented as our culture, our changing nation and world tries to adapt to what the 21st century has wrought. And all of us are on our life journey to find home, meaning and a faith that sustains. Some of us are just more refugeeed than others.

My thoughts as I painted: The little boy is too young to be carrying a gun. He will miss his school chums. Like Joseph and Mary were refugees and are making their way to Egypt. Abraham & Moses led just such a families across the desert.



Exodus (from Kurdistan)

oil/canvas 38"x48"

This painting was one of my first to focus on refugees because in March 16, 1988, during the closing days of the Iran–Iraq War, Saddam Hussein gassed the Kurdish city of Halabja.

It was winter. Pictures in the news showed people trailing across the cold mountains. The barren land reminded me of the biblical stories of Moses in the wilderness. I could do nothing to help, so I began to paint.



Exodus 2

oil/canvas 38"x48"



Nativity

oil/canvas 42"x 52"

In America, Christmas had passed, the Christian creches were tucked away. Kurds were fleeing from Saddam Hussein across the barren, rocky, frozen mountains into Turkey. A newsman reported that the parents, of children who had died from exposure, did not have enough cloth to wrap the bodies of their dead children for burial.

This painting expressed my sadness after hearing that news. No inn, no stable, no manger, no swaddling clothes. Joseph digs. Elizabeth helps Mary and God's gift has been thwarted.

Included are the figures of Justice and Peace in whom our hope lies.



Food Fight in Camp

oil/canvas 22"x28"



Fleeing Serbia

36"x40"

Oil/canvas

"The basket shields a little kitten."

The woman has tucked her cat in that basket.



Refugee Camp in Sudan

Floods, Rainy Seasons, Global Warming

“If we remember those times and places – and there are so many - where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction.”

Howard Zinn from You Can't be Neutral on a Moving Train

Oil/Canvas 48"x28"

The misery in most of the camps is dehumanizing. Lack of water, food, hygiene. Protection from the cold and rain is at a minimum. The humanitarian agencies are overwhelmed by the need.

I painted this defiant, indignant woman looking out at us and challenging us to adhere to our moral responsibility.



Thousands of Yazidi women and young girls, deeply Christian, were captured and sold into slavery. Those that were released, were psychologically destroyed. On their return to their communities, a ritual cleansing ceremony was arranged for them to help with their reconstruction from shame.



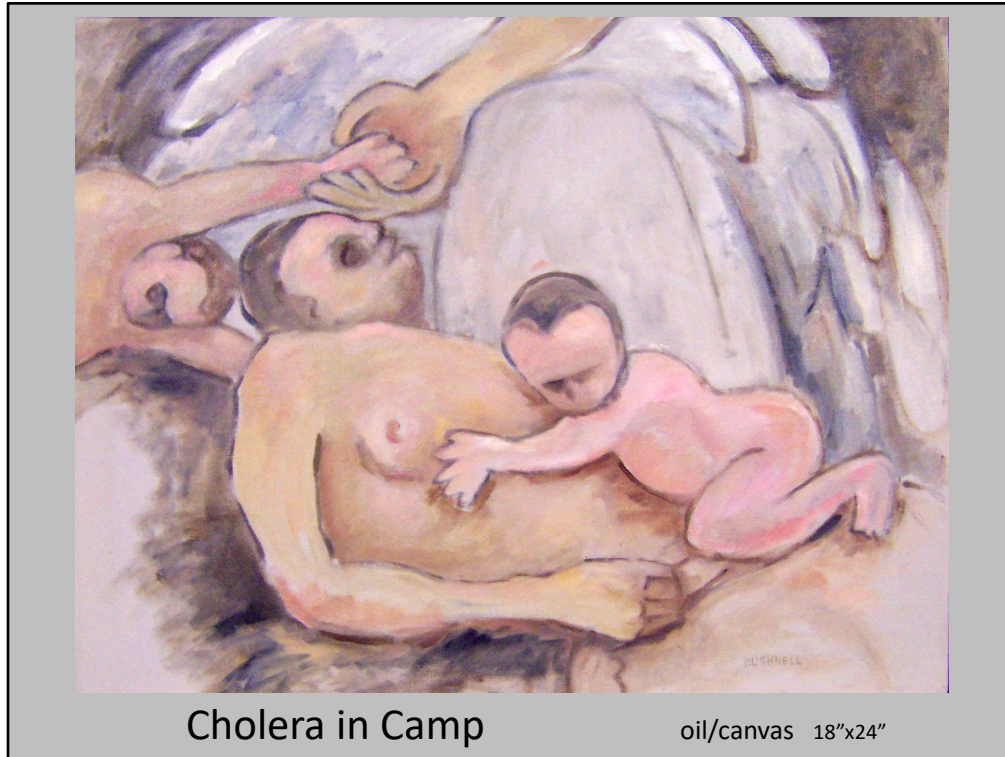
Note the school pack, the comforting hand in the upper left, the women looking out to survey the countryside, the dislocation of the spirit, bewilderment, pain, fear. Again, my painting focuses on women and children who suffer the most in war.



Fleeing Rwanda

oil/canvas 24"x 28"

The Rwandan Crisis, that occurred during the Clinton Administration, erupted between the Hutu's and the Tutsis. The genocide left between 800,000-1million deaths, 250 – 500,000 thousand rapes and the creation of 2 million refugees for aid agencies to protect. Cholera and dysentery killed many in the camps, 80,000 children were orphaned. Another gross failure of the international community to intervene in these wretched conflicts.



After the Rwandan genocide, Cholera took hundreds of lives. Aid agencies were overwhelmed with the need for sanitary provisions. This picture was suggested by a photo of a woman whose baby was clinging to his dead mother's body. I painted them with the only blessing I could give.



Aftermath: Ruanda 80 K homeless children. Many mutilated. 28"x40"

Fleeing Kosovo by Ferry to Italy

This painting was inspired by armies of volunteers, Doctors Without Borders, and photographers who record in pictures that we may comprehend and send assistance privately or through legislation.

52"x48 " oil/canvas



This painting is peopled by symbolic ikons: Mary with child, Joseph on the steps above her, Doctors without Borders, St. Francis of Assisi in the white robe.

Far from Home

Central America on Fire

Resilient, defiant,
Athenian women
fleeing the death
squads in Nicaragua:

An illegal Reagan War

Oil/canvas 30"x28"





Crossing the Night Desert

oil/canvas 24"x32"



What was I thinking? My favorite period in art history is the 9th – 12th century when Early Christian Churches painted their walls with teaching frescos that used rhythmic line and coded symbols. For symbols I used a dysfunctional dove of peace; the snake, symbol of wisdom; the tempting devil, Eve's apple that brought self knowledge and the men in the boat contemplating what to do with these struggling refugees. All the participants in this scene are facing moral moments that define if we will live in a moral universe.

A large, irregular orange ink splatter or blotch is centered on a white background. The splatter has a textured, painterly appearance with darker orange and brown tones at the edges and bottom, and lighter orange in the center. The text "War on Civilians" is written in white, sans-serif font across the middle of the splatter.

War on Civilians

What We Carry - War & Its Causes

Buried in our Psyches is a Primitive Nature
that is the task of civilization, to curb and direct.

The source of our troubles often is our:

- Love of Beads/Belongings
- Hierarchical Social Behavior
- Ego Domination
- Hero Quests for Meaning
- Tribal Codes of Belonging
- Reverence for Myth & Ritual
- Food and Sex Drive

First Refugees: Adam & Eve

12"x16" watercolor





"Run if You Can"

oil/canvas 28"x32"



Under Fire

oil/canvas 32" x 36"

I have honored, in my mind and my work, the beautifully realized drawings and paintings of Kathy Kollwitz whose drawings speak for themselves as icons of compassion.



Genocide happens so frequently in human history.

It is beyond imaging and a challenge to paint.

But we must look. We must name it and condemn it wherever it occurs.

We need to look at these dear souls, just like us, caught in the fire of human rage.

The "Angel of Mercy's," wings are just barely visible on the bottom right - also a casualty.

Samantha Powers wrote, A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide.



The Phoenix Will Not Rise Again

Chernobyl and Fukushima Oil/Canvas 24"x28"

Joseph Campbell, who spent a lifetime studying world cultures, showed us that myths and the stories that inhabit our psyches become motivating life forces and are universally shared experiences. They define what is sacred and what is not, what is moral behavior and what is not.

The Phoenix was described by Herodotus as a red and gold bird who resembled an eagle. a mythological bird, a symbol of death and resurrection. It burned itself in a funeral fire and from the ashes a new Phoenix arose.

Now we, in our hubris, have created places where life on earth will not rise again. After the catastrophic meltdown of two nuclear plants: Chernobyl and Fukushima, and the destruction of two cities of peoples, Nagasaki and Hiroshima, that the U.S melted, we have harnessed forces that we cannot control and have disturbed the balance of both nature and challenged a re-creative psychic myth.



Interrogation

oil/canvas 28"x32"

This painting wishes to honor the incandescent human spirit which allows it to survive both spiritual and bodily terror and degradation. Sometimes.

Torture is a form of bestiality, that diminishes us all.

Does our failure to respond to this moral outrage, define who we are as a nation - as human beings?

Are we, as a society, immune to, or addicted to the thrill and excitement of the power unleashed by violence?



Oil/canvas 28"x32"

Dresden
Hiroshima
Chechnya
Homs
Fallujah
Mosel
Aleppo
Idlib
Grozny
Raqqa

To name
just a few.

In addition to the loss of life, in the past twenty years many beautiful cities have been raised to the ground and ancient sites and temples wiped away.

These metaphorical angels of my imagination came from a seminal resource photo. Two brave Palestinian women, dressed in black, were rescuing a youth from armed Israeli soldiers. Their moral courage turned them into angels.



Brave Rescue

Oil/canvas 32"x30"



Pity the Loss – Cambodia

oil/canvas 36"x48"

Prayer on the Threshold of Tomorrow

Lord, now is the time
to send your wisdom and kindness
to the tortured who,
although they have forgotten, need you.
Let the trouble of our time be short.
Let it be settled with justice.
Let the fortress of egos,
that huge barricade, crumble.
And let every treasure go to every man.
Let every garden gate be open.
But let no flower be crushed.
No single branch fall.

By Vahan Tekeyan (1878-1945): He survived the Turkish execution of over 2 million Armenians in 1915. He was outside his country at the time. He lived in exile until his death.

A large, irregular red ink splatter or blotch serves as a background for the text. The splatter is centered on the page and has a rough, textured appearance with some darker and lighter red areas.

The New Barbarians

**Another Category of
Refugee**

The New Barbarians Among Us

- Historically, barbarians are described as peoples who have overturned societies by invasion, disruption, and revolution. Some of these uprisings have been positive by renewing, as in the Arab Spring, or Occupy Wallstreet, but other groups have been destructive.
- Worldwide 13 % of youths 14-24 are unemployed. 20 countries have youth unemployment between 20 and 50 percent. Kosovo, S. Africa, Palestine, Namibia, Greece, Algeria,
- These vulnerable are needy souls who fill courts of law, prisons, become child soldiers and disrupt the general quality of life for the global family. How to employ and educate these millions.





The New Barbarians

oil/canvas 36"x48"



Riot

oil/canvas 28"x32"

This painting depicts the challenge of our time. In the inner cities, on the edges of most societies, the lack of jobs, education, moral leadership, hope for the future, separate these young from life, liberty and a future of happiness. They tear at the fabric of societies. How can we help integrate, educate, give hope to those who are dispossessed?



Child Soldiers – Far From Home

oil/canvas 24"x28"

From broken & rival villages, youths are captured or lured from their homes to be soldiers.

These young men and women are a new kind of refugee.

Fear and carnage are their lot.

Some survive and some are rehabilitated.



Believing Tomorrow

oil/canvas 36"x48"




Follow the Leader

Need, Greed, or Rage

oil/canvas 36"x 48"

Disenfranchised youths are motivated by discontent and will follow leaders that promises a self-actualized life.



The Hero Myth and Its Consequences

- **Human Sacrifice was and is practiced today: Often it is a Hero's death.**
- **It is surrounded by sacred rituals, initiations, burials, ceremonies of remembrance or recompense.**
- **It was and is demanded by Gods, Shamans, Nations, Religious Sects, Cults, Gangs.**
- **It is fed by the human desire for transcendence and the desire for belonging and acceptance.**



Human Sacrifice has been practiced widely in human history - even today.
Collective and singular Sacred Sacrifice is the basis of the Hero myth.

Millions of youths are recruited and sacrificed for the common good on the altars of wars or to quell local disturbances.

We declare some outward danger, or we need some golden resource that will make us great and then, perhaps, Gods will shine on our greatness and bless our endeavors.

Crusades against the religious orders of others can be useful to unite self-righteous peoples. To honor this ritual, the dead hero is mourned, ceremonies are held to make the death a sacred remembrance and often, therefore, a source of vengeance: 9/11, Battle of the Bulge, D-Day, Hiroshima, Revolutionary War, Bombing of Pearl Harbour.

William Shakespeare: King Henry V, Act IV Scene III speaks to his troops before the battle of Agincourt

King Henry, as the classic Hero, who on the brink of the decisive battle of Agincourt, between France and England, looks forward to how history will remember the English victory "to the ending of the world."

Like all heroes on their journey for acclaim and self validation, he envisions victory and honor. Heroes are also made because they risks all. The danger and peril

are part of the excitement, the lure of facing dragons that can destroy in the testing. Gods, countries and hubris of soul demand such sacrifice? But I ask of the dilemma,

"Were we not meant to sacrifice or conquer our egoistic selves to the common good?" Shakespeare tells of one such incident when men were called to courage.

*Henry V: "This day is called the feast of Crispian:
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when the day is named,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian:'
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars.
And say 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
Old men forget: yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day: then shall our names
Familiar in his mouth as household words
Harry the king, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,
Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd.
This story shall the good man teach his son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remember'd;
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition:
And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.*



Sacrifice By The Elders

oil/canvas 36"x42"

This painting was about the onward rush to war by the elders in the society who use the young to protect their political positions and declared national interests. Colonial wars, territorial wars, wars of religious aggrandizement, oil wars, resource wars, drug wars, racial wars, remembered vengeance, collective righteousness. Most, except wars of resistance to oppression, are fueled by powerful ego impulses: a failure to see the other as like ourselves.

This painting can also be viewed in reverse: the sadness and loss by peoples who have sacrificed and died for their right to live peacefully on their land , the struggle of Palestinians whom the world refuses to save from Israeli -American aggression. or the native peoples who were driven to extinction and made virtually landless. Silence in the face of grief in the name of failed attempts to shake oppression,



The Anointing Photoshoot

oil/canvas 32"x 36"

My painted critique of Junior ROTC, a program offered to teens in many schools in America.

Militarism, in my mind, has no place enticing children with guns and military discipline when sports, community service, scouting, music, etc. should be their emphasis; not preparation for wars: even defensive wars.

From a battlefield photograph.

In the Iliad, Homer articulates the ageless mentality that drives endless wars: The male life made valuable by courage on the battlefield defending home and treasure from the designated enemy. The poem expresses Homer's condemnation of war.

Hector, Prince of Troy, explains to his wife Andromache why he must fight the Achaeans though he knows the Trojans will lose.

*"But I would die of shame to face the men of Troy...
And the Trojan women trailing their long robes
If I would shrink from battle now, a coward.
Nor does the spirit urge me on that way.
I've learned it all too well. To stand up bravely
always to fight in the front ranks of Trojan soldiers,
Winning my father great glory, glory for myself. "*
Iliad by Homer

This program includes two great examples of the Hero story from the voices of great authors, Shakespeare and Homer, who framed this ethos in brave, proud words. This quote is from Homer's Iliad. Hector, prince of Troy is about to go into battle outside the walls of Troy to defend the city which he believes is doomed. He says farewell to Andromache, his wife, as their infant son plays nearby. Hector is the archetypal hero speaking out of the traditions passed on from fathers to sons about what rules his behavior.

"In the same breath, shining Hector reached down
For his son – but the boy recoiled, cringing against his nurse's full breast,
screaming out at the sight of his own father,
terrified by the flashing bronze, the horsehair crest, the great ridge of the helmet
nodding, bristling terror - so struck his eyes.
And his loving father laughed,
his mother laughed as well,
and glorious Hector quickly lifted the helmet from his head,
set it down on the ground, fiery in the sunlight,
and raising his son he kissed him, tossed him in his arms,
lifting a prayer to Zeus and the other deathless gods:
"Zeus, all you immortals! Grant this boy, my son, may be like me,
first in glory among the Trojans,

Strong and brave like me, and rule all Troy in power,
and one day let them say, "He is a better man than his father!"
When he comes home from battle bearing the bloody gear
of the mortal enemy he has killed in war – A joy to his mother's heart.
So Hector prayed and placed his son in the arms of his loving wife.
Andromache pressed the child to her scented breast, smiling through her tears.,
Her husband noticed, and filled with pity now,
Hector stroked her gently, trying to assure her, repeating her name:
"Andromache, dear one, why so desperate?
Why so much grief for me?
No man will hurl me down to Death, against my fate.
And fate? No one alive has ever escaped it.
Homer: Iliad.



The Hero is Mourned oil/canvas 28"x32"

As I painted, I asked myself, “Who is being mourned:” the moral hero or the despotic anti-hero, the sly dictator, military leader, autocrat, or the peacemaker like Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, the Dalai Lama, Gandhi, and William Sloan Coffin.

How, I pondered, do societies motivate citizens to follow democratic goals and moral ideals or instead cause predator behavior?

In his book The True Believer, a book about man's search for meaning, Eric Hoffer posits, 'identity' comes when we attach ourselves to groups or follow charismatic leaders whose beliefs inspire us and give our lives a sense of purpose. What are the images and stories that have influenced us and currently are used to influence our pride of belonging and allegiance? What gives you your identity?





Thank you for your attention. If any part of this program or the individual pictures can be of use as resources in your Peace and Justice work, please feel free to borrow and share.

Contact me if I can be of assistance.

Marcia Cowles Bushnell mmcbushnell@gmail.com

Reading List:

1. William Sloane Coffin: *The Heart is a Little to the Left: Essays on Public Morality* and the amazing *Credo*.
2. Howard Zinn: *A People's History of the United States*
3. Eric Hoffer: *The True Believer*
4. Paul Woodfuff & Harry A Wilm, editors: *Facing Evil: Confronting the Dreadful Power behind Genocide, Terrorism and Cruelty*
5. James Carroll: *Constantine's Sword & Jerusalem*
6. Chris Hedges: *War Is The Force that Gives Life Meaning*
7. Robert D. Kaplan *Warrior Politics: Why Leadership Demands a Pagan Ethos*
8. Jeffrey Kaye: *Moving Millions: How Coyote Capitalism Fuels Global Migration*,
9. Chalmers Johnson's trilogy: *Blowback, Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy and the End of the Republic, Nemesis: The last days of the American Republic.*
10. Homer: *The Iliad*
11. *The Epic of Gilgamesh*
12. Mark Juergensmeyer: *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*
13. *The Little Red Hen* believed to be of Russian origin.

Thank you for your attending this Gallery Exhibition

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