

George gittoes

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

George Gittoes Case Study George Gittoes, born 1949 in Rockdale Sydney, NSW has trained at, The Yellow House, Sydney, NSW 1970-1971, Art Students' league, New York, USA and The University of Sydney in 1968. George is an artist of many talents, he is known as a ceramist, screen artist, performance artist, printmaker, draughtsman, painter and photographer. Gittoes is also a filmmaker, known well for his documentary Soundtrack to War filmed throughout 2003-2004. His documentary captures authentic recounts from individuals who have experienced or are experiencing the war in Iraq.

In this quote George explains why he partakes in works about war and humanitarian issues in today's world, " Why do I do it? As far as choosing the roads I have traveled, I have this instinct that if I get comfortable, the work will lose its ' sting', so I go out of the comfort zones and into the wilderness to find my art. In the past it was the natural world where predators fed on gentler creatures. In the contemporary context, I go alone into a different kind of human wilderness - Rwanda, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq - not to contemplate nature, but the basics of humanity... George Gittoes (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Gittoes) George Gittoes artwork, white earth is oil on canvas portrays political corruption and how youth were immersed in the propaganda of Nazi Youth. On the work, the boy's ears are distorted, expressing the impossibility of closing them now and not listening to the lies he is immersed in. By using blue and yellow dividing lines in the background it separates the boy from the two official behind him giving orders and leading him.

Gittoes witnessed an Afrikaner-Weerstand Beweging (AWB) rally during his visit to South Africa in 1994, there he saw a 15-year-old boy immersed in the propaganda of Nazi Youth. Whilst being pestered by photographers, Gittoes sympathises for the boy, as he recounts the rape and torture. The boy in the work is too young to fully understand the political corruption circling around him and was stuck between being used by the AWB and being tortured by international press. You can relate to why the boy has shut his eyes, to lock out the controversy, but it is near impossible to shut his ears to the hate propaganda being inflicted on him by Terre Blanch (the figure to the right as explained by George). One side of the boy's body is unnaturally enlarged as if expressing his sway toward Terre and away from the other figure. If this is what is happening it explains why the other figure has one hand raised over his face in despair. This explains the world now and the world almost 20 years ago, as one of propaganda, corruption and the influences of political figures.

The artwork *White Earth* explains in the title the racism that is ever so abundant in our world even to today. This belief of an all-white country is thrust upon many, especially the young and naive like the boy being harassed in South Africa by corrupt political leaders or figure of authority. Gittoes is renowned about the way he creates works by inspiration of his life experiences. He has a great deal of passion for art and humanity to be an eyewitness to the struggle of mankind throughout the world is carried in his work. The social class portrayed in this painting is high and low.

The political leader and dictator Terre Blanch is high in social class, whereas the boy may be lower in class making him an easy target for manipulation

and subject to receiving hate propaganda from authority figures. The meanings shown in this is the meaning or influences, that what you here you are persuaded to believe even if you shut your eyes they cannot be blocked out. George Gittoes works are controversial but inspiring based on the true-life events that he witnesses he tries to portray, the emotions, beliefs, and stories through elements and aspect of the artwork.

This artwork was well received by some but not all as some don't believe in the Nazi youth propaganda and support Terre Blanch's views. In conclusion this artwork 'White Earth' by George Gittoes is an in-depth representation of corruption, racism and power held by those few people trust and look to-political leaders. George has captured what I assume many are trying to get away from, hearing about hate propaganda, we can all shut our eyes but not many can shut their ears as well.