

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier
University



Multi-media exhibition captures contradictions of war

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WATERLOO – The Robert Langen Art Gallery will take viewers on a voyage through the war-torn country of Afghanistan with the multi-media works of artist Allan Harding MacKay. His exhibition, entitled *Double Bind*, runs from March 14 to April 7.

In July 2002, MacKay participated in a pilot project of the Canadian Forces Artist Program as a war artist with Operation Apollo in Afghanistan. Based at the airfield compound at Kandahar, he recorded three and a half hours of video footage, which was used to make the videos and stills featured in this exhibition.

“Similar to an archaeology dig, MacKay’s work uncovers the ruins and cultural history of a country continually ripped apart by war,” said gallery curator Suzanne Luke. “A somber irony occurs in his visuals, as they depict a surface order that is catching its breath in anticipation of the next cataclysm.”

MacKay graduated from the Nova Scotia College of Art in 1967. His work has been exhibited throughout Canada and abroad, including at the Confederation Centre Art Gallery and Museum, Prince Edward Island; Paul Kuhn Gallery, Alberta; Art Gallery of Nova Scotia; Canadian War Museum, Ottawa; Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, Banff; and Kunstmuseum, Berne, Switzerland.

MacKay, in collaboration with Phillips Farevaag Smallemberg Landscape Architects, was commissioned to create the Veterans’ Memorial at Queen’s Park in Toronto. It was unveiled to critical acclaim in September 2006.

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As Wilfrid Laurier University's visual arts centre since 1989, the Robert Langen Art Gallery provides knowledge, stewardship, appreciation and enjoyment of Canadian art and culture to the local community. The gallery is located in the John Aird Centre and is open noon to 5 p.m., Wednesday to Saturday. Admission is free.