

Amnesty International welcomes Gitmo acrylic

The human tragedy that is Guantanamo Bay has inspired Burlington, Ont. artist David J. Newman to donate one of his prized acrylic paintings to Amnesty International.

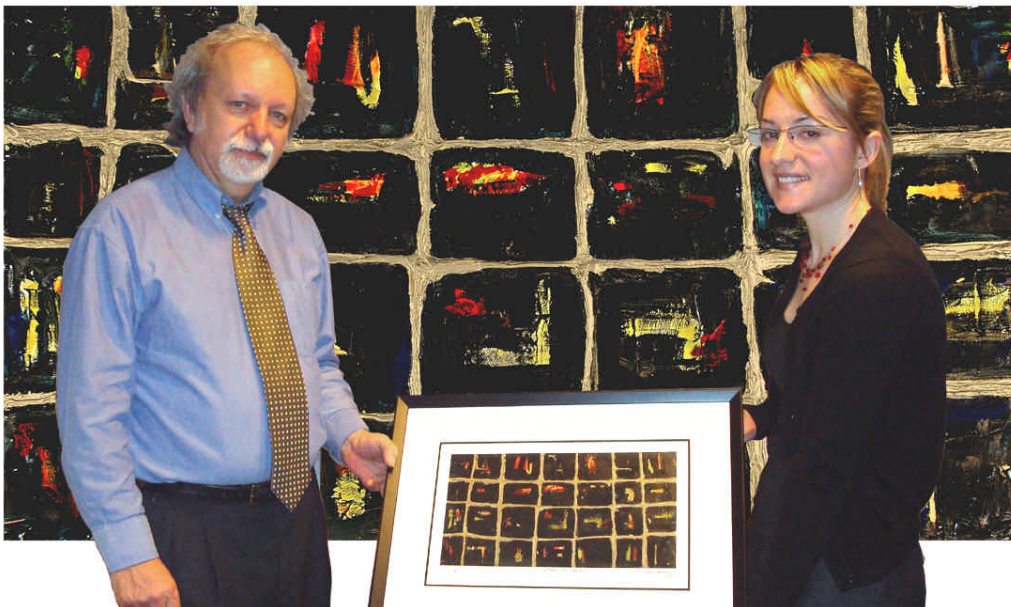
The work, entitled *Gitmo, nay forever*, will hang in the Canadian headquarters of Amnesty International in Ottawa.

The original rendering was inspired by the ongoing injustices at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba, where detainees are held under blanket "terrorist suspect" labeling, without trial nor charges laid, nor in most cases having legal representation.

In accepting Newman's donation, Amnesty International official Cheryl Rooney of the Toronto office commented, "This is a very generous offer and one for which we are very grateful."

Newman produced the work in 2005. Recounting its creation, he notes, "I was influenced, no aghast, by TV images of people caged like animals, wearing those iconic bright orange overalls." He recently added a descriptor that reads, "*Orange forms overshadowed / in despair of innocent detainees / as darkness and hope of release /are quelled by Midas might - nay forever.*"

"The concept was to express the gloom and despair that one would experience if willfully detained and stripped of some of one's basic human rights, yet while hope remains," says Newman.



David J Newman presenting "Gitmo" prints to Cheryl Rooney at Amnesty International's Toronto office. The background photo is of the original work at 22 x 48 inches acrylic on plaster on board.

"The bright Caribbean colours and erratic shapes represent the location of the internment camp and furthermore that of the individual human spirit in suppression within the dark shadows underlining the 18 carat gold fence, signifying the overwhelming power and injustice that Midas or totalitarian governments impose," he added.

Accompanying the original painting that's to be hung in Ottawa are four artist-embellished, original Giclee digitally mastered limited-edition prints, commissioned by Fiscal Agents Savings & Investment Centre, Oakville, Ont., that are to be auctioned at Amnesty International's AGM and fundraising event in Toronto in June.

"However small a candle of hope illuminates, it's in the years to come that *Gitmo, nay forever* will remain as a reminder that such small universal efforts can and do make a difference," Newman said.

About:

Amnesty International welcomes donations in many forms, provides ongoing updates of troubled spots around the world, and champions human rights within Canada and abroad. Call 1-800-AMNESTY (1-800-266-3789) or go to <https://www.amnesty.ca>

David J. Newman. For more than 20 years, David Newman's artistic endeavours have provided a sanctuary from his business activities. For more information visit www.davidJNewman.ca. David is the director of information services at Fiscal Agents, a financial services enterprise that services both individual investors and the national media. He was also the president (seven years) and is now serving as past president and chair of compliance and regulatory affairs of a \$40-billion professional standards organization.

