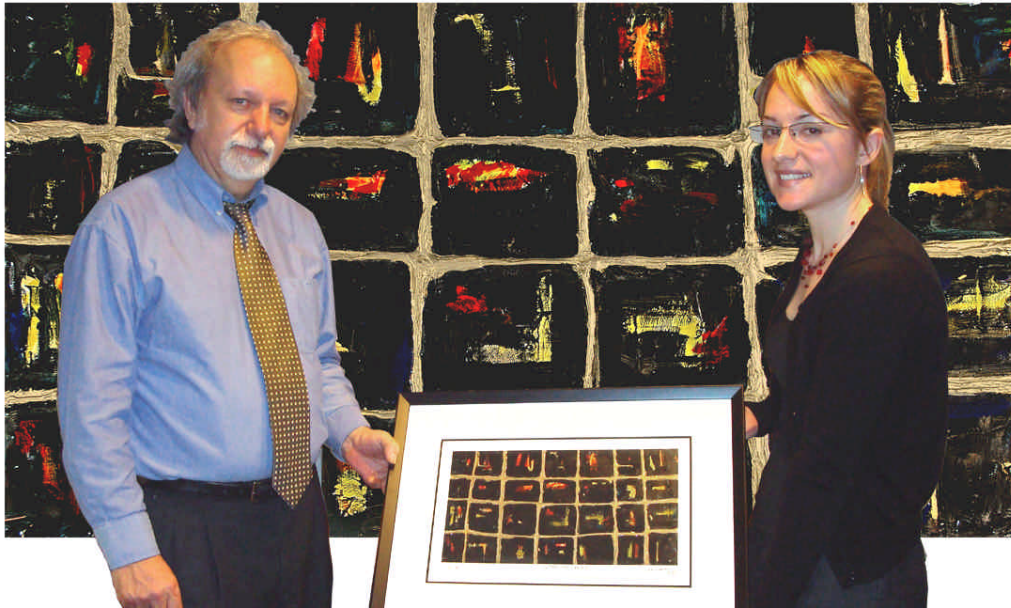


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Next stop for Newman's Gitmo painting: Underpinning Obama presidential plans.



Don't be surprised if you see one of Burlington artist David Newman's acrylic prints hanging at the home of Barack Obama in some future photo shoot.

Perhaps even in the White House.

Newman's protest painting, entitled *Gitmo, nay forever*, already has quite a history, and the Obama chapter would be another story for Newman to tell.

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

The original paint is already hanging at the Amnesty International office in Ottawa, donated by Newman in the spring and welcomed by Amnesty International official Cheryl Rooney of the Toronto office, who commented, "This is a very generous offer and one for which we are very grateful."

In June, *Gitmo, nay forever* became a postage stamp. In the fall, *Gitmo* will be showcased as part of the Burlington "Art in Action" tour in early November. Prints will be available with a portion being donated to Amnesty International.

And now, Newman, appreciative of presumptive U.S. Democratic presidential candidate Obama's pledge to close down the Guantanamo Bay judicial apparatus and therein reinstate Habeas corpus, has awarded a framed copy of *Gitmo, nay forever* to Obama for his humanitarian stand.

Newman already has a local connection to the candidate. He has just learned that the owner of the Burlington art store where he buys supplies and has his art framed, Joan Ng of Burlington Artist Gallery, has a son who is married to Obama's sister and lives in Hawaii.

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.

"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 hangs in the Amnesty International office Ottawa are four artist-embellished, original Giclee digitally mastered limited-edition prints, commissioned by Fiscal Agents, Oakville, Ont., that are to be auctioned at Amnesty International's AGM and fundraising event in Toronto in September and Halifax, Nova Scotia later its year.

"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 (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