

University of Dayton eCommons

News Releases

Marketing and Communications

11-10-1998

Painting that Captures Irrepressible Human Spirit to be Dedicated at Dayton Art Institute to Symbolize Peace Accords

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls

Recommended Citation

"Painting that Captures Irrepressible Human Spirit to be Dedicated at Dayton Art Institute to Symbolize Peace Accords" (1998). *News Releases*. 8646.

https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/8646

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marketing and Communications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in News Releases by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact frice1@udayton.edu, mschlangen1@udayton.edu.

Nov. 10, 1998
Contact: Teri Rizvi, rizvi@udayton.edu

(Editor's Note: Reporters are welcome to attend the dedication, which will take place at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 21, at the Dayton Art Institute. Congressman Tony Hall, DAI and UD officials are expected to participate in the ceremony.)

**PAINTING THAT CAPTURES IRREPRESSIBLE HUMAN SPIRIT
TO BE DEDICATED AT DAYTON ART INSTITUTE TO SYMBOLIZE PEACE ACCORDS**

DAYTON, Ohio — When Bruce and Rebecca Hitchner began looking for a piece of art to symbolize the Dayton Peace Accords, they found it in an unusual place: an artist's rustic cottage studio in the small English village of Swaffham Prior near Cambridge.

"Thomas Newbolt's painting was the first piece we saw that could transcend race and culture. It could bring tears to the eyes of someone in Bosnia as well as in Dayton. As soon as we saw it, we said, 'This is it,'" recalled Rebecca Hitchner, a member of the board of the Dayton Peace Accords Project and an adjunct professor of English at the University of Dayton.

Newbolt's oil painting, "Nocturne," will be dedicated at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 21, at the Dayton Art Institute, before an invitation-only reception and dinner. The dedication ceremony is part of a three-day series of events marking the third anniversary of the Dayton Peace Accords. The University of Dayton will award an honorary degree to Richard Holbrooke, chief architect of the peace agreement, on Nov. 20 and gather together international experts to recommend a strategic concept for NATO in the Balkans during a Nov. 21-22 workshop.

"'Nocturne' was selected to commemorate the end of the conflict in the Balkans because of its powerful depiction of a fallen figure being carried by his brothers or comrades," said Bruce Hitchner, director of UD's Center for International Programs, who arranged the purchase of the painting with the help of private donors. "This work of art serves to remind us of what is most universal in our human experience: that as individuals — young or old, rich or poor, soldiers or civilians — we must live, learn, love, suffer, grieve, mourn and die one at a time.

"But we must also respond to one another's lives collectively with celebration and joy or mourning and grief."

Newbolt's paintings have typically centered around human figures and "refer to myth or archetypes and have three or four possible interpretations. ... I hope to keep a great deal unsaid or unexplained" in the pieces, the artist has said in describing his work.

"Paintings have lives through time, and often they come to support meanings that are different, and in some cases are richer, than the meanings with which they were originally

-over-

invested and understood," said Roger Crum, associate professor of art history at the University of Dayton.

Newbolt used a universal theme — "the bearing of the body of a fallen loved one, comrade or savior" — to illustrate that Bosnia is "not a problem 'over there,' of no concern to us safely 'over here,'" said Crum in an interview from the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, where he is a faculty member in the School of Historical Studies while on sabbatical leave from UD. "In the history of visual imagery, its ancestor images are as diverse as ancient Greek relief sculptures of the bearing of Hector's body, Christian images of the transport of Christ from cross to tomb, and more modern images of Vietnam soldiers carrying a wounded or dead comrade to the safety of nearby brush or a waiting helicopter.

"Because of the universality of Newbolt's theme, and from the evident passion of the artist who produced it, the painting can and does serve to heighten consciousness of Bosnia, even if it does not speak specifically to the horrors of that conflict or to the afflictions of the Bosnian people," Crum said. "Like images of Christ's body borne by mourners, this painting encourages viewers to empathize and hopefully to act — in this case in the interest of Bosnia and the continuing plight of its citizens."

Chris Saunders, travel coordinator for the Dayton Art Institute, visited Bosnia one year after the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords as a member of the Friendship Force contingent. "It's a powerful painting with brushworks strong and free and bold," she said. "It represents compassion, salvation, rescue. It symbolizes the world support for the Bosnian people."

Saunders hopes the painting will inspire people to "sit and meditate in front of it and think of our obligations to those war-torn countries."

Other paintings and drawings by Newbolt are on display at the Arthur Andersen Co. in Chicago, Churchill College in Cambridge and in private collections. Newbolt graduated from England's Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts in 1974. He was an artist-in-residence at Trinity College in Cambridge, England, from 1979 to 1981 and received a fellowship to teach at the University of Virginia from 1981 to 1983. Newbolt currently teaches at Anglia Polytechnic University and in private studio classes. His work has been shown in galleries in London, New York and Chicago.

For media interviews, call **Thomas Newbolt** before Tuesday, Nov. 17, in England at 44-1638-74-2905 (England is 5 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. Newbolt will not be attending the dedication ceremony.) **Bruce Hitchner** can be reached at (937) 229-3652; **Rebecca Hitchner** at (937) 294-9557; **Roger Crum** at (609) 734-8161; and **Chris Saunders** at (937) 223-5277.