

Night Journey 48: We Sleep In the World We Make

I see conflict not as a present, singular moment, but as a layered summation of time that is, as yet, incomplete and unresolved. Additionally, I am blind to the concepts of good, just, right, or wrong in the construction of conflict with devastating consequences. I find myself in agreement with Aristotle's statement that we learn more from art than we do from history. There are few works of art that psychologically analyze and dissect the human nature of war better than Homer's *Iliad*, just as there is no better example of the inhumane totality of contemporary conflict as depicted by Picasso's *Guernica*. I think the difference is that history favors a cyclopean nationalist view of events and circumstances, whereas the artist has the parallax view of humanism.

In this painting, I use elements of *Guernica* as symbols to illuminate and connect the viewer back to the origins of indiscriminant and inhumane warfare that have become the standard for modern conflict. The striped clothing of the sleeping person is meant to reference the concentration camp uniforms of the Holocaust, which in turn represent the magnification of centuries of social, religious, and ethnic intolerance. The use of *Guernica* symbols and the overlay of a war torn, Middle Eastern city fused with a view of 911 is an attempt to thread a line from the indiscriminant killings of national warfare to the indiscriminant killings of terrorism. They are both actions relating to the false ideal that the end justifies the means, wherein each act of inhumanity diminishes the chances for the desired outcome.

The severed *Guernica* horse head mimics the warning scene from the movie *The Godfather*. The painting itself is meant to be a warning to a society ignorant of the suffering it has helped to create in the world. In causing suffering, we have unwittingly become victims of our actions and now must create barriers to circumvent the world we have created.