Bunbury Regional Art Galleries presents Of Spears and Pruning Hooks II

Every year, the WA Police take possession of firearms, knives and other weapons during scheduled amnesties as well as the routine implementation of their duties.

These items are systematically dismantled for safe disposal, the residue often being shipped off-shore for melting down and recycling.

So, what happens if you allow artists to use these weapon remnants as materials for their art practice?

The idea to use the deconstructed weaponry in artworks emerged through negotiation between Ian Boyd from the Police Department and well-known Perth artist Stuart Elliott.

Selected artists were invited to sift through mounds of broken, sawn-up pieces of weapons such as rifles, knives and guns, and return a few months later with an artwork using said material.

It was proposed that a generous portion of any sales from the subsequent exhibition would be donated to the Bright Blue Charity Organisation to raise money for sick children.

The first Of Spears and Pruning Hooks exhibition was held in October 2011, at the Junction Gallery in Midland.

Based on the resounding success of the first show, Of Spears and Pruning Hooks, is now scheduled as a biennial exhibition at Edith Cowan University.

Curated by Sue Starcken and Stuart Elliott, Of Spears and Pruning Hooks II, was first displayed at Spectrum Project Space and now comes to Bunbury Regional Art Galleries.

Bunbury Regional Art Galleries Director Julian Bowron said Galleries staff were very excited to be able to present this remarkable exhibition in Bunbury.

“Of Spears and Pruning Hooks shows artists working in highly innovative and resourceful ways with these loaded materials,” Mr Bowron said.
“The results are spectacular.”

The exhibition’s premise draws on the biblical reference to the metaphorical reconstruction of negative into positive.

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."
ISAIAH 2:4
KING JAMES BIBLE

Participation in the show is by invitation only, and this years’ group of 34 artists have created some extraordinary works using negative connoted objects and taking them somewhere sociologically, philosophically or politically interesting.

Of Spears and Pruning Hooks II is on display at Bunbury Regional Art Galleries from 5 September to 30 September 2014.

BRAG is open 10am to 4pm daily, free entry.

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