



Women "Enduring Freedom"

the art of
Barbara Bicke

Mary Blaze

Women "Enduring Freedom"

*The Women's Freedom League for the Suffragettes were in
England, 1914-1918. The League for the Women's Suffrage
the art of Women's Suffrage, 1914-1918.*

the art of

Barbara Bickel

Acknowledgments

&

*Special thanks to my husband, Jerry, and Michael Fisher and
my children, Lauren and Elizabeth Fisher for their
compassion and patience. I hope the internet version
of my book, "Women's Suffrage: A History of the
Suffragettes" will be a helpful introduction to
the struggle for women's suffrage with Mary Blazer. It was
written with the help of my friend, Mary Blazer, and my family.*

Mary Blazer

This book is dedicated to

Dr. Sunera Thobani for her courageous voice in speaking truth in the face of great fear. Her voice inspired me to take the art of *Women "Enduring Freedom"* into the world.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge my family, **R. Michael Fisher** and my two heart daughters **Leah** and **Vanessa Fisher** for their compassion and patience in living with me through the intense period of creating *Women "Enduring Freedom"*. A heartfelt appreciation to the magical experience of collaborating with **Mary Blaze**, a wise woman who knows the power of allowing art to speak first and listening.

"Articulating the silent scream."

This collaborative art installation of two dimensional images of scarred surfaces and exposed vulnerability come together in an intimate relationship. **Blaze's** charcoal and graphite pre-literate, lunar-phase notations act as metaphor for time factored female experience and give **Bickel's** richly layered collaged warrior women a platform to express rage and grief. In union they challenge the politics of war and the denial of powerful female voices in the face of global lament and terror, screaming out for community dialogue.

Women "Enduring Freedom" opened on November 11th, 2001 at the *Ishtar Gallery* in Vancouver BC. The opening was accompanied by the performances of poetic dancer **Celeste Snowber**, poet **Anna Chiara Soole**, performance poet **Jan Skyheart Sheppard** and vocalist **Catherine Harris**.

Women "Enduring Freedom"

September 11th, The ultimate symbol of western patriarchy has been blown up.
We in North America are now awake.

The false shell of security,
the denial, shattered.
We now hear the terror.
We now smell the fear
in ourselves, in others.
Grief flows too late.
We live the war now,
Awake.

On *September 11th* I retreat to the ocean in solitude.

Every morning in September I read the headlines of the newspaper, walk and rage and cry.
Where are the women's voices? Why are the "old boys" still in power? Why are women still silent and without power in the larger political world? How are we contributing to these acts of violence in our silence?

October 1st, I am angry, at myself, at other women, my despair is constantly present. I am so angry I cannot speak to people. I am glad to be angry. I go to my studio. I look for images that will reflect my state. I open an envelope with photos taken for a past project where I explored the woman warrior. These images match my mood. I begin to collage the photo images onto cut up pieces of an old drawing of myself. **My cut up body is the ground of this work.** Text enters the collage "BUT", "RITE", I want more words to emerge but they elude me. The body speaks for me, the forceful gestures, the struggle, the exposed vulnerability.

October 2nd, I am encouraged when I hear a woman's voice and see her face on the front page of the newspapers. My rage builds as I hear the frightened responses to the truth she speaks. The art I am creating becomes very clear to me. It is a "war" series.

October 7th, I go to my studio, work and weep. I realise that the ground of the art pieces I am making look very much like the vague television-screen images of Afghanistan being bombed. The woman warrior is already there expressing her rage and pain at the acts of destructive insanity. **The unreality of the events are made graspable by her embodied response.** The presence of her body in the ground of human destruction offers my conflicting experiences of reality a "real" place to speak from.

October 18th, I write...

Await
a reclining woman
cut
into pieces
destroyed
as an inadequate whole

now
parts struggle
speak tenfold of oppression
of silencing, of rage
cut open, torn apart

A woman
enduring freedom

The power to cut
to dismember
that which
is no longer good

The power to deny pleasure
to dismember
that which
perpetuates pain

The power to rage
to move beyond
the numbing
that which
binds the victim

The power to respond
with open body
with full voice
that is life
set free

October 21st, My art shifts. I want new images. I cut up another old drawing of myself. **The ground is red.** Bandages, gauze wrapping, grief. How do women in the Middle East feel? I can never fully know. But I have the same body, I can open to that knowing. The body speaks to me of grief that is fully alive and determined.

Being undone
her spirit stunned
jolted
in the aftershock

Her body
her being quakes
with held memories
of the assault
unconsciously, deliberately
delivered

Her bondage
shaken off
the sadness swells
her spirit weeps
the still entrapped
female.

Mary's art is with me in the studio while I am working. Her raw marks occupy the corners of my eyes at all times. She is not concerned with the "right" words coming out in these marks. She implicitly trusts the ancestral quality of these female notations. They came before and go after us. They have become a solid ally to my struggling art. In the collaborative installation *Women "Enduring Freedom"* our diverse bodies of work come together in an intimate relationship. **Overlapping the surfaces of our art as well as our voices risks a powerful fusion of female knowing.**

Barbara Bickel



Ishtar Gallery installation



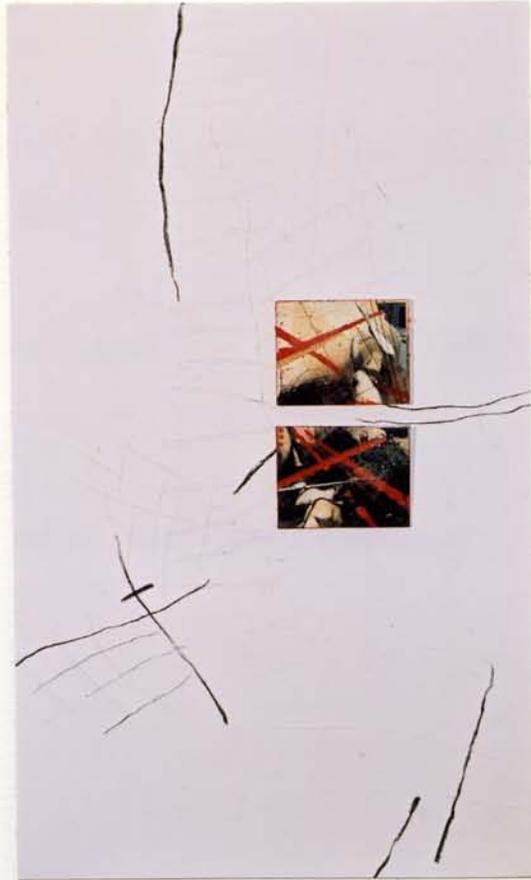
Lartet VI & Lartet VII



Isturitz II - Women "Enduring Freedom" - (L'Ecole Polytechnique)



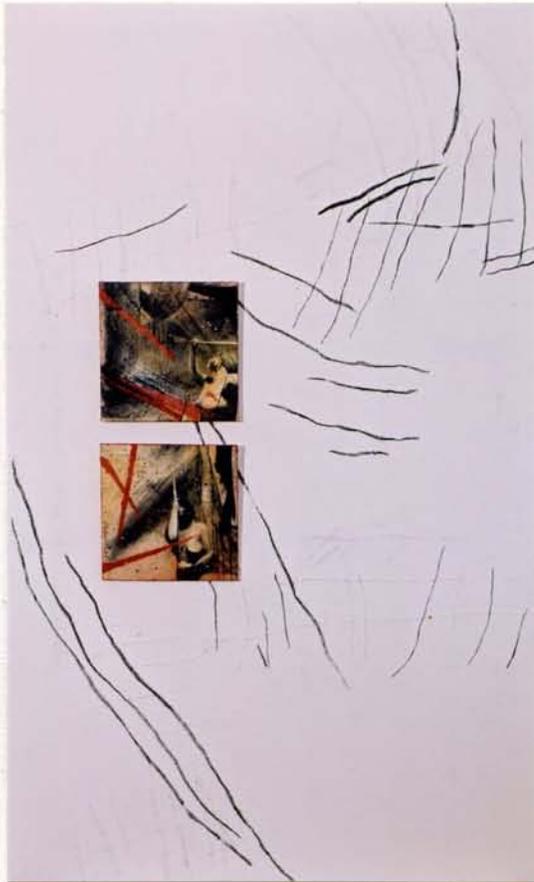
Barma Grande - Women "Enduring Freedom" I



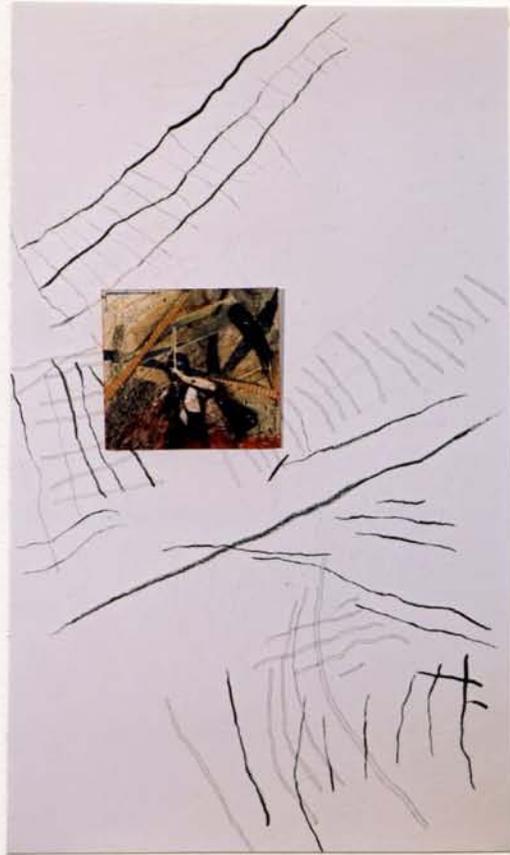
Barma Grande - Women "Enduring Freedom" II



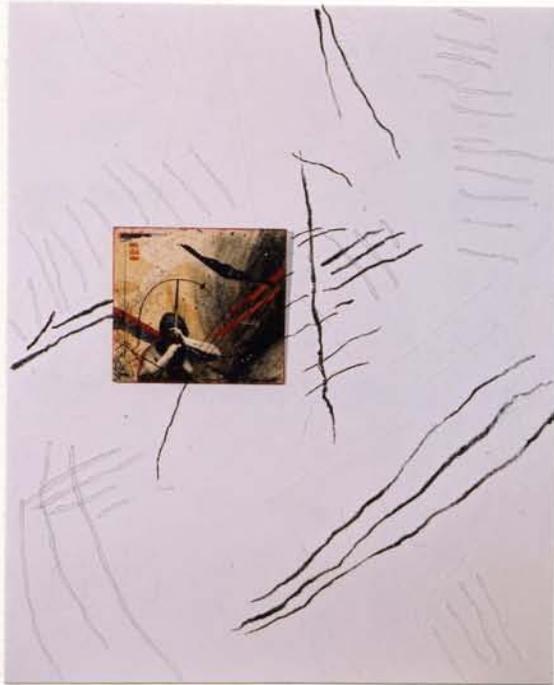
Barma Grande - Women "Enduring Freedom" III



Barma Grande - Women "Enduring Freedom" IV



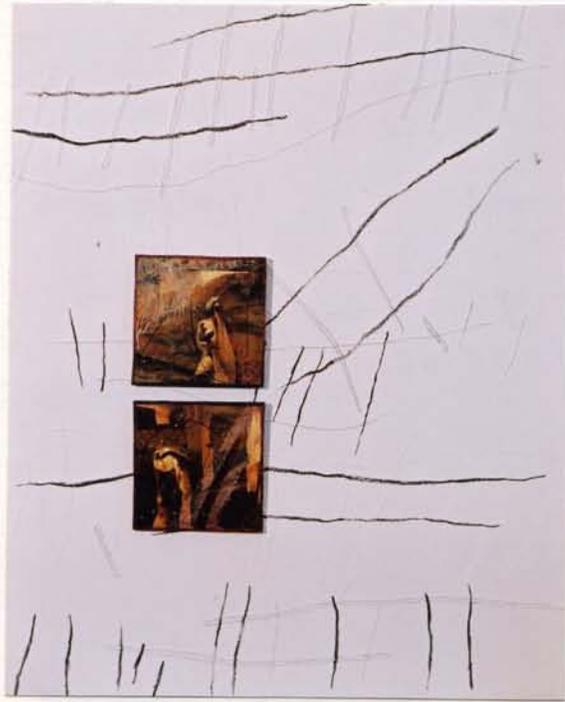
Barma Grande - Women "Enduring Freedom" V



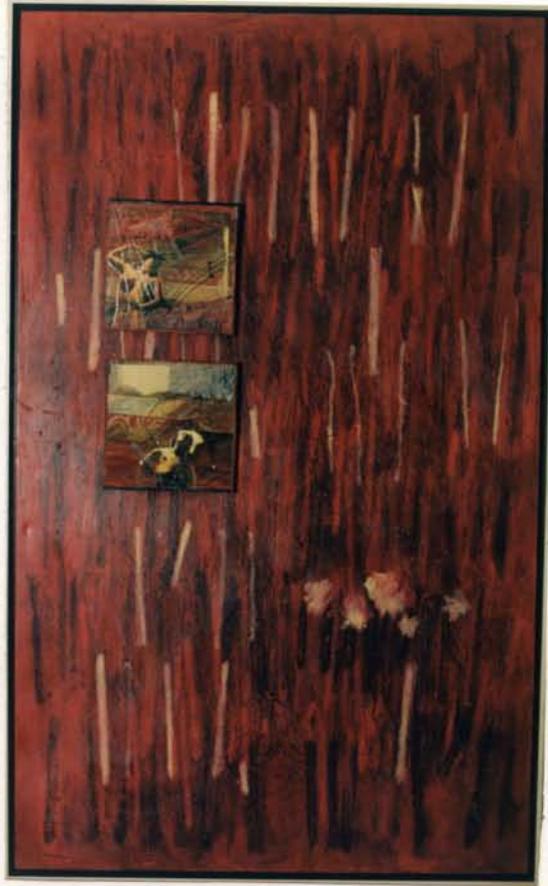
Barma Grande - Women "Enduring Freedom" VI



Barma Grande - Women "Enduring Freedom" VII



Barma Grande - Women "Enduring Freedom" VIII



Body Force - Women "Enduring Freedom"



But



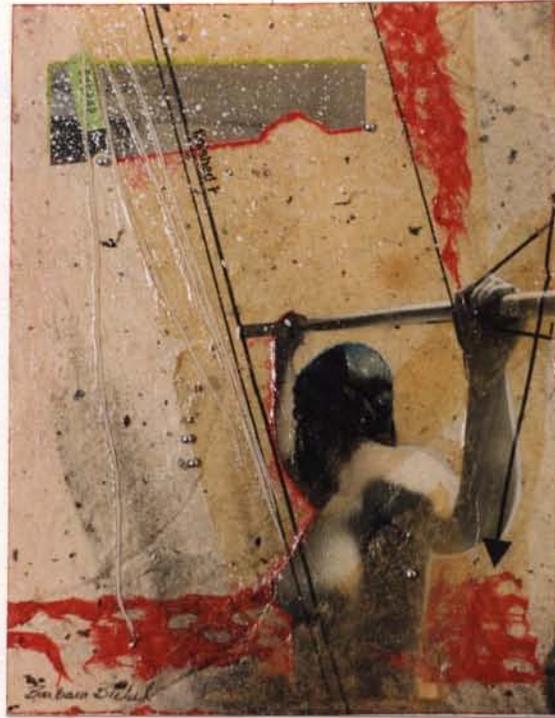
Rite



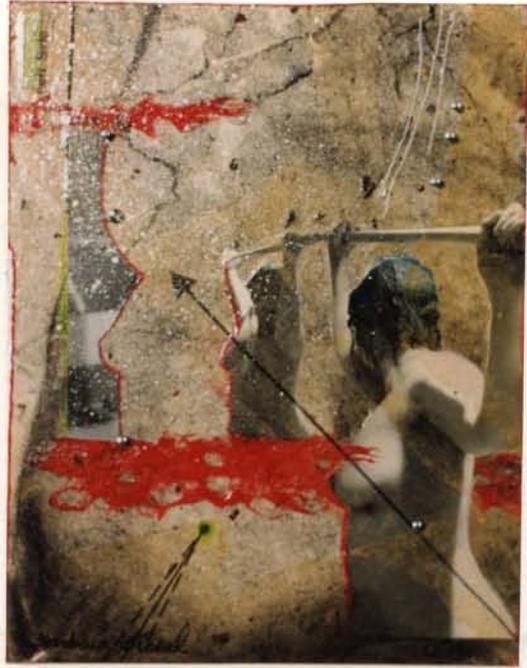
Cut



End



Finished



Left side



Enduring Freedom



Patience



Woman



Lunatic



Ghost



Struggling with freedom



Crosswise

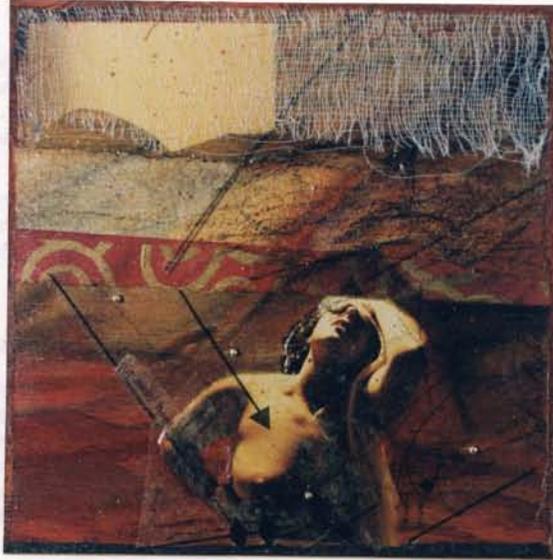


Toxic



Not in my name

Art Inventory List



Cut away here

Shouldering with violence	2 x 2 inches
Cherub	2 x 2 inches
Head	2 x 2 inches
Cherub	2 x 2 inches
Head in profile	2 x 2 inches
Head in profile	2 x 2 inches

Art Inventory List

Mary Blaze

(Installed with Barbara Bickel's art)

charcoal + graphite drawing on grounded canvas

Barma Grande I - VI - Women "Enduring Freedom" 60 x 36 inches

Barma Grande VII - VII - Women "Enduring Freedom" 49 x 39.5 inches

Body Force - Women "Enduring Freedom" 60 x 36 inches m/m on canvas

Lartet VI 12 x 12 inches mixed media on canvas

Lartet VII 12 x 12 inches mixed media on canvas

Isturitz II - Women "Enduring Freedom" (L' Ecole Polytechnique)
45 x 33 in. m/m on mylar + poppies, wax collage on glass

Barbara Bickel

mixed media collage on board (paper, photo, nails, charcoal, ink, watercolour pencil crayon)

Rite	11 x 11inches
But	11 x 11inches
Cut	9 x 7inches
End	9 x 7inches
Finished	7 x 9inches
Left Side	7 x 9inches
Enduring Freedom	9 x 9inches
Patience	9 x 9inches
Women	12 x 11inches
Lunatic	12 x 11inches

mixed media collage on wood

(paper, photo, nails, string, cheese cloth, charcoal, ink, wc pencil crayon)

Struggling with violence	9 x 9inches
Ghost	9 x 9inches
Toxic	9 x 9inches
Crosswise	9 x 9inches
Not in my name	9 x 9inches
Cut away here	9 x 9inches



Mary Blaze at William St. Studio



