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Peace of mind: Timely eyefuls

Robin Tierney, The Examiner
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WASHINGTON -

Was your holiday dinner seasoned with spirited discourse on recent elections and war? Work off steam and calories at local galleries featuring artfully expressed opinions.

By coincidence, the Art League's new "Art and Politics" show was juried on election day by crack curator Jack Rasmussen. "I was struck by the engagement of the artists with the same themes that got me energized growing up in the 1960s: war, poverty, and civil rights. It's a sad testament to the illusion of progress."

Show highlights include the award-winning "Let There Be Life" by Jude Nagel of Silver Spring. The mixed-media collage layers images, color and English and Arabic text in an eloquent condemnation of war. Arlington-based Teresa Oaxaca is stoking reactions from rage to fascination with her powerful oil of a finger-pointing "Saddam on Trial." Also riveting eyes and riling emotions among the 100-plus works: "Which Kills More? Politics or Religion," a charcoal by Kathryn Trillas; Lilianne Milgrom's porcelain "Silent Scream"; and "Water Torture," Julia Dziekiewicz's encaustic with vintage postcards.

Heating up Warehouse's sprawling "Shock & Awe" are Gabriel Bulovosa's photographs of clusterbomb devastation in Lebanon and art-scrolls just in from Iraq. Laugh, and cry, at painter Dana Ellyn's brilliant political all-star finger puppets. Resist the urge to touch "War Memorial," Karl Kressbach's oil on utlra-stone cast. Imagine the conversation sparked by setting your holiday table with Ruth Trevarrow's cynical ceramic "White House China." Stop at Ellyn Weiss's monnoprint checkpoint for "Time of War/Go Away." Save time to survey group storyboard projects patching disparate pieces of art and text into gripping narratives.

Then on Friday [Dec 1], "VISUALIZED PEACE" opens at Foundry Gallery with an all-media armada of works from local artists. Mixing the personal with the political, they wordlessly say holiday prayers for a better world.

Art and Politics

» Venue: The Art League, 105 North Union St., Alexandria

» Info: 703-683-1780; www.theartleague.org

Shock & Awe

» Venue: Warehouse ARTS, 1017-1021 Seventh St. NW

» Info: 202- 462-6331; www.warehousetheater.com

VISUALIZE PEACE

» Venue: Foundry Gallery, 1314 18th St. NW

» Info: 202-463-0203; www.foundry-gallery.org

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