



*Visual Perceptions*  
(Acrylic and oil on board, 2007)

# ***Visual Perceptions***

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The most perplexing aspect of the ‘war through terror’ or the ‘war against terror’ is the imperceptibility of the enemy, the lack of a defined combat zone and a clear-cut border between ‘them’ and ‘us’ that creates a social anxiety interface in the interactive multicultural nature of the Australian ethos.

The notion of terror as a strategy with the aim of affecting public opinion is aided by popular media, the nefarious images that metamorphose into the privacy of our home: scenes of torture, brutality and death, acts of willful profanity that undermine basic human and moral principles.

The enemy cannot be located in a distant clearly defined battlefield, but shows up as a terrorist in the global space that we call our neighbourhood. Refugees and those whose lives have been affected by dispossession, war and cultural dispersal are now viewed as persons of interest by a society that is suspicious of cultural difference. Since the events of 11 September 2001 the binary rhetoric of Orientalism once again dominates, emphasising the dialectics of Christian and Muslim, right and wrong, good and evil, democratic and dictatorial, reinforcing the binary contradictions of ‘them’ and ‘us’.

My creative work is about the juxtaposition of culture, contesting the dominant binary paradigms of East and West, and seeking to transform local perceptions by provoking engagement with social and political issues through visual art. Taken from the Greek *katharsis*, meaning ‘purification’ or ‘cleansing’, the creative activity constitutes vast feelings of great pity, sorrow, laughter, or any intense change in emotion resulting in renewal, restoration and revitalisation for living.