

New view of the world



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IS God a duckshooter? This mysterious character turned up for a sneak preview of Helen Norton's view of the world in New world Order at Monsoon Gallery last week. See story page 6.

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Get a glimpse of Helen Norton's New World Order

TEDDY bears and angels gathered at Monsoon Gallery last week for a one-night glimpse of Helen Norton's New World Order.

A few clowns and nuns were also on hand, and a lot of Very Important People milled about, discussing the state of world politics and exchanging favourite biscuit recipes.

Even God made a showing, dressed as a duckshooter, catching a sneak preview of Helen Norton's view of the world.

"Though this exhibit is filled with humour, it actually grew from a rather sombre source - watching a woman

snatched from her friends and family by cancer," Ms Norton explained to the gallery gathering.

"It lead me down a long road of introspection and searching.

"In the end, I didn't find any answers, just a lot of questions, and it all led me to wonder, is God a duckshooter after all?"

The show is scheduled to open in October at the Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, but for one night, without having to sell any pieces, Ms Norton wanted to give the Broome community a chance to view the exhibit before it headed south.

"This exhibition was inspired and born in Broome," Ms Norton said, "and I think it's important to show people what else I do."

The exhibition contains all of the humour and imaginative flair so characteristic of Ms Norton's work, but the underpinnings of a more serious nature gently make themselves felt.

Through the images filled with brilliant colour, comes a feeling of sadness mingled with hope - the spirit is snared in one painting, and compassion frees it in another.

It is a new world order of teddy bears, old fools, gunslingers and diplomats, and from her vantage point of relative isolation in the north-west corner of Australia, Ms Norton provides us with a unique view of the human condition.

"I have invented a story visually to expel frustration onto the canvas and hopefully exorcise, understand and explore the contradictions of our system of human management," she said.

"The condition of delegation of our responsibility to each other to a higher source, then our confusion, disrespect and disappointment at the result."

In short, Ms Norton



Angels, duckshooters and Very Important People were present at the opening.

shows us the foolishness in endowing power and granting stature to leaders with little more on their agenda than the wellbeing of us all.

Instead she challenges us to question our assumptions about how we contract our responsibilities to each other and the world in a disintegrating society.

"How," she asks, "are we to keep faith?"

Through humour, it would seem; introspection, most definitely; and from viewing the exhibition, it seems clear compassion towards the gentle spirits of the world is essential.



Helen Norton's 'New World Order Conference' - this and other pieces were on show for one night only at the Monsoon Gallery, before leaving for the Arthouse Gallery in Sydney.