

underworld travels by the spirit of the Roman poet Virgil, Dante told of encounters with devils and condemned sinners.

Indeed, it's been often said that "war is Hell." The stale smoke and alcohol stench in this nuclear underworld recalls the



Dante Alighieri and Virgil exploring Hell

macho office culture of the 1950s and '60s, when men led the war effort, women supported the men, and everyone smoked cigarettes — indoors. Much time has passed since then, and the smell has become stale. The suggestion of smoke and spirits — and the remembrance of old fears of a nuclear Armageddon — return us to thinking about Hell.

So, who are these devils and sinners? Maybe the devils are the kind of people who delight in war and urge us to make war upon one another. Every country has its gang of "war hawks," whose influence always extends far beyond their numbers. For their part, the sinners are almost always pretty good people — loyal, patriotic, hard-working — whose sins, like most such people, are believing in the leaders, fearing for their own careers and futures, and thus failing to ask the uncomfortable questions soon enough.

GAUNTLET

Location: 100 Level — Narrow Hallway Around Vault

To be consistent with the history of human myth, fable and literature, no descent into the underworld can be complete without having to pass through narrow, hellish passages to confront the king of the underworld — some evil or menacing figure — and thus achieve a personal transformation. Here, hemmed in by thousands of tonnes of concrete and four-inch rebar, you've

arrived at the bottom of your descent, the end of the line. Time to see the Big Guy.

But this narrow corridor, illuminated in a baleful, hellish red glow, has an unusual soundtrack — the theme music, in fact, from the old 1960s T.V. series, *Get Smart*, in which the bumbling CONTROL counter-espionage agent, Maxwell Smart (Agent 86), fights the good fight against the sinister international KAOS organization.

As the music plays, so does the sound of large doors slamming shut — in this deep place, a sound guaranteed to provoke anxiety in this deep place. At the same time, the music is such an over-the-top rendition of "spy music" that it almost parodies itself, perhaps generating humour and laughter — and nostalgia, in the case of visitors who remember *Get Smart*.

Emerging at the other end of the passage, visitors find themselves back where they started, perhaps dimly aware of having been the butt of some kind of joke. Some modest anxiety, laughter, nostalgia ... but in the end, no evil Big Guy, no menacing kingpin — just our own selves. Is this a rip-off? We surely haven't been transformed by this experience ... or have we?

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GUYS IN CAVES

A Four-Part Visual Art Exhibition by Edwin Janzen

The Diefenbunker, Canada's Cold War Museum
Exhibition runs from August 13 to September 30

Grand opening: Tuesday, August 31, 5 to 8 p.m.
All are welcome and refreshments will be served. Tours of the exhibition will be available.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to my exhibition, which I've installed in the Diefenbunker, Canada's Cold War Museum, as the thesis component of my studies towards a Master of Fine Arts Degree. This work is a four-part meditation on what I see as an increased appetite for militarism and an unhealthy preoccupation with security in our country.

I am very happy to have the opportunity to show this work in the Diefenbunker, because it represents so much in our country's history and politics. It was built at a time of high fear and paranoia, and in this respect it remains today a sort of underworld of the psyche, of the human mind in a defensive (and thus also aggressive) posture. Built deep into the ground, it certainly is a kind of physical cave, but it is also a psychological cave — a metaphor for the human mind in a closed state. Can we descend into the depths of the closed mind, and reflect upon it so as to open our own?

Please feel welcome to share your comments!
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VIGILANT

Location: 400 Level — Public Corridor Areas

At first glance, my signs look like they might belong in a place like the Diefenbunker. But they are in fact a reflection upon the relationship between language and militarism.



We tend to think of our language as something solid and unchanging, which it is not. Languages always change, sometimes slowly over a long period — but at other times, a major event can cause language to change more quickly. Before September 11, 2001, how many of us in this country would have recognized the terms “freedom fries,” “IED,” “Fallujah,” “Axis of Evil,” or “neocons”? Prior to that tragic event, some of these terms didn’t even exist.

Like the changes that happen in language itself, my signs creep up on the viewer. In the context of this old nuclear bunker, which is already alive with all kinds of signage, my signs brings people face to face with the language of the new wars of the past decade. The title of the piece, *Vigilant*, suggests a fighter’s defensive posture. However, in a world where our perception is defined — expanded or limited — by language, we all need to be vigilant.

ADVERSARY

Location: 300 Level — Various Television Monitors

Somewhere in Pakistan, Osama Bin Laden sits in a cave and directs Al Qaeda’s terrorist operations. At least, that’s what we think he does. In reality, who really knows? Did we just think that because we heard someone else say it — someone in the media, maybe?

This installation consists of six video loops playing on six television sets in the museum’s 300 level. Each in some way addresses the concept of “the enemy.” How do we perceive our enemies? How is our perception of such enemies constructed for us?

Minutemen

Located in the Emergency Government Situation Centre, *Minutemen* uses edited footage from the 1980s anti-war movie *The Day After* showing ordinary Americans regarding the naked power of their country in the form of launches of nuclear Minuteman missiles toward the Soviet Union. Surely somewhere across the world ordinary Russians must be witnessing similar launches and experiencing similar thoughts and emotions?

Big Daedalus

Screens on two monitors in the back offices off Room 363A (External Affairs), *Big Daedalus* uses edited footage from the 1960s television cartoon series *The Mighty Hercules*, showing the evil wizard Daedalus grown to giant size manhandling the hero Hercules. There are various ways to dehumanize an enemy, but one of the most effective ways is to “super-humanize” him, to exaggerate his power and, thus, the threat he poses.



Red Telephone

Continuing the reflection upon superhumanization of the

enemy, *Red Telephone*, located in the Room 353A (Prime Minister’s Secretariat) employs edited footage from old James Bond 007 movies to construct a superior Soviet enemy. Equipped with slick smart rooms, swaggering generals and incredibly well-put-together secretaries, this popularly derived and highly unrealistic depiction of Soviet capability represents everything we wished we were — and perhaps still wish we were.

The Woods

Located in Room 303A (Energy, Mines and Resources), this video uses edited images of the forest from David Lynch’s 1990s series *Twin Peaks* to represent the primordial human fear of the unknown. Today we are encircled by surveilling media: closed-circuit cameras, satellites, GPS, Google Earth, etc. But for most of human existence, our concept of security extended only as far as the trees surrounding our village. Considering all this technology, how have our conceptions of security changed ... or not changed?

Ranger Station

This video, located in Room 354-1 (CBC Conference Room), reflects upon the idea of “us” and “them,” and explores what happens when this dichotomy infects our own country’s government. The video uses edited footage from the 1960s television cartoon series *Yogi Bear*, in which Ranger Smith has cameras and speakers installed throughout Jellystone Park, the better to monitor Yogi’s activities. As we increasingly become targeted by intrusive opinion-making strategies and are surveilled by omnipresent security cameras, can it be that we are becoming like these bears? Do the government and the people really need to be enemies?

INFERNO

Location: Room 311A (Department of Health and Welfare)

In the Middle Ages, the Italian author Dante Alighieri wrote his masterpiece, *The Inferno*, a colourful tale of his descent through the various levels of Hell. Guided in his