Ashley Gilbertson

Bedrooms of the Fallen

1 April – 6 May | 10 am-4 pm Monday to Friday

About the exhibition

Bedrooms of the Fallen was conceived in 2007 as a way to memorialise soldiers and marines who died as a result of conflict in Iraq. It was expanded to include casualties from Afghanistan in 2009 and the project is ongoing. Gilbertson visited families in America, the UK and Europe who have kept their children's bedrooms intact. Gilbertson wanted people to realise that there was more to just the names and ranks of people who had died in a foreign place, he wanted people to feel the loss as one of their own.

About the artist

Assigned a squad and on his way to photograph a deceased insurgent who had been firing from a minaret (from which the Geneva Conventions prohibits acts of hostility), one of his escorts, Lance Corporal William Miller, was shot point-blank in front of Gilbertson moments before reaching their target. The photograph he could have taken then – a crumpled, dying man being carried away – would show the horror of war, but it's an image that had been seen countless times. It would not speak of the larger truth: war takes people away from those who love them. When Gilbertson returned home, he realised the photograph he needed to make was of Miller's absence.

Australian-born, New York-based Ashley Gilbertson is a photojournalist with VII photo agency, New York. Working mainly in Iraq, then on projects dealing with veterans' issues such as PTSD and suicide, Gilbertson won the prestigious Robert Capa Gold Medal in 2005 and the National Magazine Award in 2012. Gilbertson's work has exhibited internationally and is held in the collections of the National Gallery of Victoria, the National Library of Australia and the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago.

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA Worldly

AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR PHOTOGRAPHY
CELEBRATING 40 YEARS