

## Imperial Delirium

*Art Hazelwood and Sol Aquino bring another war back home.*

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Now that we Americans are hung over from our long spending/credit binge, it's easy to forget about the tar baby we kicked in Iraq, with hundreds of thousands dead, millions displaced — and \$400,000,000 added to our kids' bill every day. The show ***We're All Outside the Green Zone*** at **Front Gallery** reminds us that neocon hubris followed the old path of empire and Greek tragedy. When will we ever learn?

**Sol Aquino's** three Bush piñatas make an eye-catching introduction. Hanging upside-down like toppled statues, these painted papier-mâché busts stand, or, rather, hang as metaphors for the imperial ambitions and the inglorious end of the Bush regime. Bushisms, written right-side-up on the bases, remind us of the famed bonhomie of our outgoing beer-buddy-in-chief; his blithering malapropisms and misstatements should have embarrassed even the hockey and plumbing affinity group.

**Art Hazelwood's** political prints and posters by various artists participating in his Art of Democracy project (to which the Inferno Gallery's show, discussed here several weeks ago, also belongs) cover most of the gallery. Hazelwood is an allegorist and satirist, so his imagery draws on a repertory company of characters or social types that will be familiar to activists: gluttonous businessman, venal politician, hectoring general, sanctimonious minister/priest, doll-like or skeleton soldier, Lady Liberty, and Third World innocents. The small woodcuts near the entrance make their points with graphic punch. In "Good Iraq/Bad Iraq" a GI stands dividing the two groups behind him, unable to tell them apart. In "Extinction" an emaciated mastodon or elephant stands in a boneyard, waving a flag. The tanks, missiles, planes, and soldiers in "New Weaponry," advancing in a cloud of dust, look more like an Old Testament pestilence than the march of freedom. "The Shrinking President," a toddler lost in a business suit, continues waving flag and cross. Hazelwood's larger prints have bigger casts of characters, but also



Art Hazelwood's "Good Iraq/Bad Iraq."

indict our socio-cultural flaws. "Ship of Fools" depicts the plight of various social types adrift in a tub amid shark-infested waters; the WASP-y main figure stands, playing tennis. "The Sower" transforms Millet's and Van Gogh's eternal agriculturalist into a profiteer sowing coins, while a herd of monsters follows. Hazelwood has also constructed an "Iraqopoly" game, should you want to play at nation-building with your family; kids of all ages love it. *We're All Outside the Green Zone* runs through November 25 at Front Gallery (35 Grand Ave., Oakland). [FrontGalleryOakland.com](http://FrontGalleryOakland.com).