



Nine-year-Old - Keeper of the Fire

Berrylyze blows on a cooking fire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. She and her family have fled from their home 3 separate times when soldiers took over the village by force.



Congolese man ready to fight

A Congolese man grabs his stick sword during a fight over buckets. An aid group brought buckets and water tablets to teach how to purify water but a fight broke out of the desired buckets forcing the aid group to run.

Photo Realism

War and your iPhone

She is a reserved looking woman whose scruffy black lapdog was not permitted into the restaurant where we met for the interview. We sit outside talking and within a few moments I begin to get a better understanding of photojournalist **Sherrlyn Borgkren**. “When the road is vibrating under you from an RPG blast, anything you thought you were brave about goes away,” she says, in a statement that sounds like it should be coming from the mouth of a scar-faced battle-hardened war vet. She grins then adds, “I’m thinking — they’re shooting at me — quick, stand up and take pictures!”

Borgkren is a veteran in her own right, she has seen combat on many occasions. Carrying her camera through

voluntary tours of duty in Iraq, the Congo and South America, she did it for the stories, and these stories have returned with her.

Friday, April 15 at the Oregon Arts Alliance, Borgkren’s multimedia journalism slideshow will be showcased, bringing battlefields of Iraq and paramilitary conflicts of the Congo to Eugene. Though her website declares her to be both a “real person” as well as a “real photographer,” Borgkren is even more principally a passionate artist-citizen. The content of her photographs reflect this. While she is full of action-packed eyewitness accounts, such as getting ambushed alongside American soldiers on patrol in Baghdad or being too close to a running gunfight in the streets of Guatemala, Borgkren seems driven by a calm and resolute humanist prerogative to inform her countrymen/women of realities we would otherwise never be exposed to. “Do you know what they call cell phones in the Congo?” she asks me. I admit my

very American ignorance regarding this topic and she proceeds to educate: “They call them blood phones because over there, the mineral that the militias fight for control over is used mostly in cell phones.” This mineral, coltan, is also used in videogame systems, DVD players and computers. Borgkren taught me that; her black and white pictures of fierce-looking armed men from the Congo teach me what the inside of my iPhone looks like from a whole other perspective. I ask her about Latin America, and she talks to me about her trip to Mexico, where she photographed incarcerated teenagers. “It’s incredible what people can adapt to. You have to just really see it to understand.” She has captured these sights for her viewers, so that they may see and understand. The images haunt and shout; they are beautiful, touching and scary. Her slideshow is not to be missed. Iraq to Congo Multimedia Journalism Slide Show at the Oregon Arts Alliance, runs from 7 to 9 pm Friday, April 15; \$2 - \$10 sliding scale.

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