
**ICONIC AUSTRALIAN ARTIST KEN DONE COMMISSIONED BY
MOSMAN ART GALLERY TO RESPOND TO THE JAPANESE MIDGET-SUBMARINE
ATTACK ON SYDNEY HARBOUR FOR 70TH ANNIVERSARY**

**ATTACK:
JAPANESE MIDGET-SUBMARINES IN SYDNEY HARBOUR
PAINTINGS BY KEN DONE**

Mosman Art Gallery exhibition: 19 May – 08 July 2012

2012 is the 70th Anniversary of the surprise attack by Japanese midget submarines on Sydney Harbour. To mark this important anniversary, Mosman Art Gallery has commissioned artist Ken Done to interpret and respond to this historical event.

On the evening of 31 May 1942 - three Japanese midget submarines slipped into Sydney Harbour initiating a brazen strike that created fear and havoc across the city and around the nation. War was brought home to Australia's Eastern States. Twenty-seven people died. It was the first and only time that Sydney came under foreign attack. But why is this historical event so little commemorated in art or our broader culture?

Through a series of fourteen powerful yet culturally sensitive paintings, Ken Done has explored this remarkable story and its impact on Australian society and Japanese/Australian joint histories.

As a 'chronicler of Sydney Harbour' this event is an almost perfect subject matter for Done. His work is synonymous with the daily life of the city and its iconic ocean harbour and Done and his art are also well known and respected in Japan.

However as familiar and as fascinated as Done is with Sydney Harbour's environment and surrounds, this exhibition and its themes were a challenge for the artist.

The joys of celebrative life that the public identifies Ken Done so closely with are replaced with a compelling and sensitive exhibition that deals with empire, self-sacrifice, death, destruction and honour. Twenty-one Allied Navy personnel aboard the HMAS Kuttabul were killed as a result of the attack - as were the six young Japanese submariners, the special forces of their day.

Done researched the attack with help from the Australian Navy and Japanese Consulate. He read poignant statements, legendary stories, prose and poetry about the event, gaining personal insights to the human tragedies that unfolded. This greatly assisted Done with explaining the principle behind this exhibition.

I didn't want to glorify war, however the courage and valour of these young Japanese submariners is to be respected and admired. I hope these paintings leave the viewer with some under-standing of this passage of Australian history. It was a great honour and challenge to be given this commission by the Mosman Art Gallery.

Ken Done Sydney 2012

Ken Done is donating this focused artwork series to the Mosman Art Gallery Collection and the Gallery plans to travel the exhibition in Australia and to Japan.

The exhibition is accompanied by a full colour catalogue (bilingual in English and Japanese) with a forward by Mosman Art Gallery Director, John Cheeseman, essay by Glenn Barkley (Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney) and historical overview from Tony Stephens (Author and Walkley Award winning Journalist).

This special exhibition for Mosman Art Gallery reaches beyond a local Mosman story. It touches national and international significance. The exhibition also arrives at a time when a new generation are discovering the work of Ken Done. Re-energised following a recent health scare, Done is collaborating on projects with contemporary artists and designers while museum curators and art educators are re-evaluating his considerable contribution to Australian culture.

Attack: Japanese Midget Submarines in Sydney Harbour – Paintings by Ken Done was initiated by Mosman Art Gallery Director, John Cheeseman and project managed by the Gallery's Assistant Director and Senior Curator, Katrina Cashman.

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A man may journey to a place he knows. But it takes a man of courage to go to a place from which there is little hope of return.

Tatsuo Kawai. Japan's first Ambassador to Australia

Note to editors: About Ken Done

Over the years, Ken Done's paintings have come to symbolize an optimistic Australia – promoting Australian art & design to a world-wide audience. Done and his art are also well known and respected in Japan. In 1988, Hanako, a Tokyo fashion and lifestyle magazine, was launched, and featured a Ken Done painting on the cover every week for over 15 years. In 1991, a major touring exhibition in Japan attracted over 200,000 visitors.

Done has held over 50 one-man shows, including major exhibitions in Australia, Europe, Japan and the USA. His works have been selected for the Archibald, Sulman, Wynne, Blake, Dobell and Mosman Art Prizes. Ken is an Alumni of the National Art School, Darlinghurst, NSW.

Although he has worked extensively for many charitable organisations, the welfare of underprivileged children has always been a special concern of Ken's. Father of the Year in 1989, Ken Done holds the honorary position of Australian Goodwill Ambassador for UNICEF. In 1992, Ken received the Order of Australia (A.M.), for services to Art, Design and Tourism.

Available for interviews: Ken Done – artist
John Cheeseman – Gallery Director, Mosman Art Gallery
Katrina Cashman – Senior Curator, Mosman Art Gallery

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> exhibition images available on request / electronic version of exhibition catalogue available for media use

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Where: Mosman Art Gallery - cnr Art Gallery Way & Myahgah Road, Mosman NSW

When: 19 May – 08 July 2012

Hours: open 7 days, 10am – 5pm

Admission: Free

PH: 02 9978 4178

www.mosmanartgallery.org.au

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