

Kevin Valentine
Chicago, IL
kevinjvalentine@gmail.com
www.kevinvalentine.net

Kevin Valentine works across disciplines creating artwork in paint, print, video, performance and installation. He has a BA in Art and Philosophy from Principia College, an MEd from Loyola University and an MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts & Media from Columbia College Chicago. Valentine's *Widowsweave* project, his first project as *Artistactivist*, highlights the living conditions of the overlooked survivors of Iraq's thirty years of turmoil. *Widowsweave* project is the natural outcome of twenty years of art focusing on the relationship between the U.S., Iraq, and justice.

Trained as a painter and printmaker, Valentine has exhibited figurative and landscape art in a variety of media since 1980, primarily in the Chicago area. In 1991, when Operation Desert Storm was fuelling CNN's cable broadcast, Americans were glued day and night to their TVs watching exciting, beautiful, compelling video footage of green bleeps shooting off into a night vision landscape without any blood. People couldn't take their eyes off the screen, but for the artist it meant sleepless nights.

Valentine responded with a series of etchings and songs. These earlier works about the 1991 Iraq War were representational and figurative and more often than not misconstrued. *Widowsweave*, however, addresses the subject with abstract lines and grids and seems to universally resonate. I have not met one person in over forty performances who didn't "get it," that is understand the meaning of the vast number of widows and the tragedy of that fact.

Widowsweave events and installations have received two grants in the last twelve months as well as substantial publicity support. This year the artist hopes to see the project prove its efficacy and sincerity by supporting Iraqi widows in a substantial way.