

# Performance Joseph Sassoon Semah with Friends - Display of the WOUND

On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) IV

How to Explain Hare Hunting to a Dead German Artist [The usefulness of continuous measurement of the distance between Nostalgia and Melancholia]

(September 2021 - February 2023)

*Display of the WOUND*

Performance Joseph Sassoon Semah with Friends

Baruch Abraham

Masja Austen

Jom Semah

General Practitioner David de Boer

Balthasar Floriszstraat 23

1071 VA Amsterdam

July 10, 2022

A critical project concerning post-war artist Joseph Beuys

Created by Joseph Sassoon Semah, curator Linda Bouws

*Camera & editing: Bob Schoo, [www.n-p-n.info](http://www.n-p-n.info)*

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# Arie Hartog - Reading Joseph Beuys after Joseph Sassoon Semah

On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) IV -How to Explain Hare Hunting to a Dead German Artist

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A critical project concerning post-war artist Joseph Beuys  
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*Lecture: Dr. Arie Hartog, director Gerhard-Marcks-Haus, Bremen - Reading Joseph Beuys after Joseph Sassoon Semah*

Deutsche Bank Netherlands,  
De entree 195, Amsterdam  
May 24, 2022

In the Dutch branch of the Deutsche Bank in Amsterdam, an exhibition was set up on two floors - from May 24 to September 24, 2022.

The exhibition was opened by Bas Martejijn, Chief Country Officer of Deutsche Bank Netherlands.

Created by Joseph Sassoon Semah, curator Linda Bouws

*Camera & editing: Bob Schoo, [www.n-p-n.info](http://www.n-p-n.info)*

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## Rick Vercauteren - After Joseph

# Beuys /After Wolf Vostell /After WWII

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*Lecture: Rick Vercauteren - After Joseph Beuys /After Wolf Vostell /After WWII*

Two post-war German artists - Wolf Vostell / Jose(f)ph Beuys -As will be clear, both of them became the (symbolic) Victim; Jose(f)ph Beuys a volunteer soldier in the Third Reich transformed himself into the Victim of the Nazi era, and with him, post-war Germany will cure itself.

On the other hand, Wolf Vostell simply transformed himself into a Jew, i.e. the Victim.

Joseph Sassoon Semah 2021

Goethe-Institut Amsterdam

Herengracht 470

Amsterdam

Created by Joseph Sassoon Semah, curator Linda Bouws

*Camera & editing: Bob Schoo, [www.n-p-n.info](http://www.n-p-n.info)*

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# **Mati Shemoelof - A Babylonian Jew Named Joseph Sassoon Semah**

On Friendship / (Collateral Damage) IV

How to Explain Hare Hunting to a Dead German Artist

[The usefulness of continuous measurement of the distance between Nostalgia and Melancholia]

A critical project concerning post-war artist Joseph Beuys

(September 2021 - February 2023)

Lecture: *Mati Shemoelof 'A Babylonian Jew Named Joseph Sassoon Semah'*

Goethe-Institut Amsterdam,

Herengracht 470

Amsterdam

October 28, 2021

Created by Joseph Sassoon Semah, curator Linda Bouws

Camera and editing: Bob Schoo, [www.n-p-n.info](http://www.n-p-n.info)

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## **The U.S. Foreign Policy Establishment Proves In Ukraine**

# That It Forgot The Lessons of Vietnam



*James W. Carden -  
Photo:  
Independent  
Media Institute*

Friday, January 27th, marks 50 years since the signing of the Paris Peace Accords by representatives from the United States, North and South Vietnam effectively ending American participation in the Vietnamese civil conflict. What the Georgetown University international relations scholar Charles Kuphan calls an “isolationist impulse” made a “significant comeback in response to the Vietnam War, which severely strained the liberal internationalist consensus.”

As the Cold War historian John Lamberton Harper points out, President Jimmy Carter’s hawkish Polish-born national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski scorned his intra-administration rival, the cautious, gentlemanly secretary of state Cyrus Vance as “a nice man but burned by Vietnam.” Indeed, Vance and a number of his generation carried with them a profound disillusionment in the aftermath of Vietnam which shaped their approach to the world. And for a short time, the “Vietnam Syndrome,” (shorthand for a wariness and suspicion of unnecessary and unsupportable foreign interventions) occasionally informed policy at the highest levels and manifested itself in the promulgations of the [Wienberger and Powell Doctrines](#) which, in theory anyway, were set up as a kind of break on unnecessary military adventures.

But only hours after the successful conclusion of the First Gulf War, President George H.W. Bush declared, “By God, we’ve kicked the Vietnam Syndrome once

and for all.”

And kick it Bush did: In the decades following his 1991 pronouncement, the United States has been at war in one form or another (either as a belligerent or unofficial co-belligerent as is the case with our involvement in Saudi Arabia’s war on Yemen and in Ukraine) for all [but 2 of the 32 years](#) that have followed.

The political-media atmosphere that now prevails in Washington makes it exceedingly difficult to believe such a thing as a ‘Vietnam Syndrome’ ever existed. Indeed, President Joe Biden’s handling of the war in Ukraine has been met with rapturous approval from the Washington media establishment, winning plaudits from all the [usual suspects](#).

But what kind of success is it really, when the entire thing might have been avoided by judicious diplomatic engagement? Are we really to believe that a war resulting, so far, in 200,000 dead and 8 million displaced, has been worth an empty promise of NATO membership?

While the war has currently ground to a stalemate, the legacy media and various and sundry think-tank-talking-heads issue regular assurances of steady progress in the field and victory soon to come.

- Writing in the *Journal of Democracy* this past [September](#), political scientist and author of the *End of History and The Last Man* Francis Fukuyama exulted: “Ukraine will win. Slava Ukraini!”

- Washington Post reporter Liz Sly [told readers](#) in early January 2023 that “If 2023 continues as it began, there is a good chance Ukraine will be able to fulfill President Volodymyr Zelensky’s New Year’s pledge to retake all of Ukraine by the end of the year — or at least enough territory to definitively end Russia’s threat, Western officials and analysts say.”

- Newsweek, [reporting](#) in October 2022, informed readers by way of activist Ilya Ponomarev, a former member of the Russian parliament, that “Russia is not yet on the brink of revolution...but is not far off.”

- Rutgers University professor Alexander J. Motyl agrees. In a January 2023 [article](#) for *Foreign Policy* magazine titled ‘It’s High Time to Prepare for Russia’s Collapse’ Motyl decried as “stunning” what he believes is a “near-total absence of

*any discussion among politicians, policymakers, analysts, and journalists of the consequences of defeat for Russia. ... considering the potential for Russia's collapse and disintegration."*

*- Also in early January, the former head of the U.S. Army in Europe, Lt. General Ben Hodges told the [Euromaidan Press](#) that, "The decisive phase of the campaign...will be the liberation of Crimea. Ukrainian forces are going to spend a lot of time knocking out or disrupting the logistical networks that are important for Crimea...That is going to be a critical part that leads or sets the conditions for the liberation of Crimea, which I expect will be finished by the end of August."*

As Gore Vidal once quipped, "There is little respite for a people so routinely—so fiercely—disinformed."

Conspicuous by its absence in what passes for foreign policy discourse in the American capital is the question of *American* interests: How does the allocation of vast sums to a wondrously corrupt regime in Kiev in any way materially benefit everyday Americans? Is the imposition of a narrow, sectarian Galician nationalism over the whole of Ukraine truly a core American interest? Does the prolongation of a proxy war between NATO and Russia further European and American security interests?

In truth, the lessons of Vietnam were forgotten long ago. The generation that now largely populates the ranks of the Washington media and political establishment came of age when Vietnam was already in the rearview. Today, the unabashed liberal interventionists who staff the Biden administration came up in the 1990s when it was commonly thought the United States didn't do *enough*, notably in Bosnia and in Rwanda. As such, and almost without exception, [they have supported](#) every American mis-adventure abroad since 9/11.

The caution which, albeit all-too-temporarily, stemmed from the "Vietnam Syndrome" is today utterly absent in the corridors of power in Joe Biden's Washington. The Vietnam Syndrome is indeed kicked: Dead and buried.

But we may soon regret its passing.

*Author Bio:*

This article is distributed by [Globetrotter](#) in partnership with the [American Committee for U.S.-Russia Accord](#).

*James W. Carden* is a former advisor on Russia to the Special Representative for Intergovernmental Affairs at the State Department and a member of the Board of ACURA.

Source: Globetrotter

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# Why A Small City In Ukraine Is A Focal Point In The War



*John P. Ruehl*

*The small Ukrainian city of Bakhmut has seemingly limited strategic significance. But coupled with its growing psychological value, Russia will continue attempting to take the city, despite high casualties, by whatever means necessary.*

Since the Ukrainian army's counteroffensive started [gaining momentum in September 2022](#), the Russian army has largely been on the defensive. Russian [drone and missile strikes](#) continue to target Ukraine's major cities, but its military forces have retreated from attempts to take [Kherson](#), [Kharkiv](#), or any other major Ukrainian settlement. Strong defensive fortifications built by Russian and Ukrainian armed forces across the frontline have stalled major advances as troops from both sides have mostly opted to dig in.

But the Kremlin has [directed thousands of its forces since August 2022](#) to attack the small Donetsk city of Bakhmut. The war has in [several ways been an](#) "old-fashioned conflict, based on attrition, on devastating artillery strikes, and on dug-



in positions reminiscent of the trenches of World War I,” as opposed to some of the quick offensives and counteroffensives that were seen during the first part of the current conflict.

According to a January 10, 2023, [article](#) in PBS NewsHour, the Ukrainian-backed governor of the Donetsk region, Pavlo Kyrylenko, “estimated more than two months ago that 90 percent of Bakhmut’s prewar population of over 70,000 had fled since Moscow focused on seizing the entire Donbas.” The fighting and destruction have only intensified since Kyrylenko made this statement, but the Kremlin appears intent on capturing Bakhmut for propaganda purposes and to tout a tactical victory after months of retreats. According to a Ukrainian analyst, “Bakhmut is mostly a political goal for Russia—it’s being done mostly for the sake of propaganda reasons to show everybody that after so many months and utter failures in Kherson and Kharkiv, it still can capture a more or less significant city,” [stated](#) a TRT World article.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has sought to prove that Ukrainian forces still have the capability to hold back the Russian advance, and made a [surprise visit to Bakhmut on December 20](#). On January 9, 2023, Zelenskyy declared that the defense of the nearby city of Soledar had led to the gain of “[additional time and power for Ukraine](#).” But the Ukrainian armed forces have had to divert “[significant reinforcements](#)” to the battle from other parts of the country since January, according to Britain’s Ministry of Defense. And despite [heavy Russian casualties](#), high Ukrainian casualties [have also become a concern](#) for Kyiv.

[Western](#) and [Ukrainian](#) officials have often downplayed the strategic importance of Bakhmut, depicting it as a sinkhole for Russian forces that may result in a “[Pyrrhic victory](#).” Nonetheless, the phrase “[hold Bakhmut](#)” has become a Ukrainian rallying cry, and Zelenskyy’s visit demonstrated the growing symbolic importance of controlling the city.

Bakhmut, however, does possess some strategic value. Few major settlements exist to its west until the Dnieper River, and the [flatter and open terrain](#) would make Ukrainian attempts to reinforce from this direction vulnerable to Russian surveillance and firepower. Ukraine also has [relatively poor road infrastructure](#), and [Bakhmut serves as a critical juncture of transport and communication lines for Ukrainian forces in the region](#), including [strategic supply lines](#) to the

Ukrainian-controlled settlements of Siversk, Lyman, Slovyansk, and [Kramatorsk](#).

For Russia, seizing Bakhmut would allow it to disrupt these supply lines, as well as take pressure off [the battle over Russia-controlled Kremmina](#), which Ukrainian forces have been fighting to recover. Bakhmut is therefore key to Russian attempts to consolidate and stabilize the Donbas, where Russia has fought since [2014](#) and initially made gains in 2022, before the Ukrainian counteroffensive in September.

Taking or destroying key industrial centers in the Donbas region will also reduce [Ukraine's industrial output, leading to its economy suffering further](#).

Bakhmut stands out as the only major area where Russian forces are on the offensive, but the frontline has been relatively stable up until recently. Yet throughout January 2023, Russian forces have moved to the city's flank and made increasing gains in the nearby town of Soledar. After weeks of fighting, the Kremlin stated that [Soledar had been captured on January 13](#), this was later confirmed by the Institute for the Study of War and [Ukrainian armed forces](#).

Russian forces have enjoyed an [advantage over Ukrainian forces in artillery numbers](#), and an [early transition to a wartime economy](#) by the Kremlin has further helped sustain months of [relentless artillery](#) strikes by it. Nonetheless, Russia has [turned to countries like North Korea](#) in recent months to obtain more artillery, and its artillery fire has decreased in recent days, [according to U.S. and Ukrainian officials](#).

But Ukraine's more limited artillery capabilities [have also recently been threatened](#). Despite pleas for more 155-millimeter artillery rounds, [Western manufacturers have struggled](#) to supply an adequate quantity and ramp up production. This has forced the U.S. to [ask South Korea for artillery](#) and [Washington also secured hundreds of thousands of 155mm artillery shells](#) for Ukraine from its stockpiles in Israel. Meanwhile, according to [U.S. defense officials](#), "A third of the roughly 350 Western-made howitzers donated to Kyiv are out of action at any given time."

Western countries have now been focusing on delivering more advanced weapons to Ukraine, such as [missile defense systems, tanks, and armored vehicles](#). Recent pledges by the [UK](#) and [Canada](#) to supply Ukraine with heavy vehicles ([as well as pressure on Germany and the U.S. to do so as well](#)) will no doubt help Ukrainian

forces on the frontline. But with Russia currently dictating where the fiercest fighting will take place, Bakhmut's vulnerability to artillery has made holding it a significant challenge.

Local militia groups and the Russian military have naturally played essential roles in the ongoing battle for Bakhmut and its surrounding regions. But perhaps most notable is that [much of Russia's recent progress](#) has been made by the Russian private military company, Wagner.

Wagner has [operated](#) in Ukraine since 2014 and has expanded its reach to countries [across Africa and the Middle East](#), while the company's owner, Yevgeny Prigozhin, has been keen to [demonstrate](#) his private army can accomplish major military objectives. Additionally, the [deaths](#) of Wagner mercenaries are not counted as official Russian casualties, making the costly effort to take Bakhmut easier for the Russian public to stomach. In early January 2023, the first Wagner fighters, who were "secretly pardoned convicts" recruited by the company returned home after completing their contracts, [causing controversy in Russia](#) and highlighting the role of the non-state actor in the conflict.

Western and Ukrainian observers believe that Wagner troops [have suffered casualties in the thousands](#). Prigozhin, meanwhile, stated [on a telegram channel](#) in November 2022 that "Our goal is not Bakhmut... [itself] but the destruction of the Ukrainian army and the reduction of its combat potential, which has an extremely positive effect on other areas, which is why this operation was dubbed the 'Bakhmut meat grinder.'"

It is also suspected that Prigozhin [aims to seize the salt and gypsum mines in the region](#), similar to other Wagner efforts to gain [access to resources across conflict zones](#) in Africa and the Middle East.

The outsized role of Wagner in the battle, as well as [Prigozhin's growing profile in Russia](#), has led to significant [tension between the oligarch and the Russian military](#). After the capture of Soledar, Prigozhin claimed this was solely due to Wagner, while the Russian Defense Ministry [claimed](#) a few days later that victory was thanks to the Russian armed forces without mentioning the Wagner mercenaries.

The dispute between the Russian military and Wagner has come [amid a leadership shakeup](#) among the top brass of the Russian military. Valery

Gerasimov, chief of the Russian general staff, replaced Sergei Surovikin as the Ukraine campaign's overall commander on January 11. The change indicates the Kremlin's frustration with the fledgling promises of the Russian armed forces. Nonetheless, the slow success of Russian artillery strikes in Soledar combined with Wagner troops shows that the two can work together.

But Bakhmut, so far, remains elusive for the Kremlin. Whichever side controls the city will have an advantage over any potential offensives later in 2023 and will have more say over where the next major battles take place. While Ukraine's armed forces remain united under a more centralized command, the Kremlin will have to be careful of the growing tension between its armed forces, local militia groups, and private military companies.

*Author Bio:*

This article was produced by [Globetrotter](#)

*John P. Ruehl* is an Australian-American journalist living in Washington, D.C. He is a contributing editor to Strategic Policy and a contributor to several other foreign affairs publications. His book, [\*Budget Superpower: How Russia Challenges the West With an Economy Smaller Than Texas\*](#), was published in December 2022.

*Source:* Globetrotter