

AMERICAN PRIMITIVE ABSTRACT ART

Artist Bill McKee

Protest Art* sold as set**

[** Price: Donations of \$900 for Jacumba Library
+ Donation \$600 to Mountain Health Center (Mountain
Community Center) and gift Art Supplies \$300 to artist]

**Showing: Jacumba Library
June 1-30, 2012)**



Painting #1 On the Right -Country Joe & the Fish (Circa 1970)

•Country Joe was a protest band of the 60's and 70's. They used to play in the Panhandle of Golden Gate Park (San Francisco) as well as other venues. Their best known song, *I Feel Like I'm Fixing to Die* became the definitive protest song of the Vietnam era. **Country Joe may be seen performing this song on the DVD Woodstock-available at the Jacumba Library**

[CHORUS. . .and its 1,2,3 what are we fightin' for?
don't ask me i don't give a damn, the next stop is
Vietnam . . . *

•People often ask, what's up with the swastika?"(center right of the large triangle) According to Bill, while the work was in progress, it was seen by Julian Hammer, son of tycoon Armand Hammer-he offered him \$500 to paint a swastika on the painting. Of course he refused but later, a swastika did appear in order to mark the event. This turned the work in a new direction

•Over the swastika, a Star of David was painted (center) and beneath that, a house depicting the Jewish Ghetto

•Above the Swastika and to the right of the star, is a face (circle),shedding tears for the victims of war and the Holocaust

Painting #2 –On the Left *Arab Spring* (Circa 2012)

▪ The red star of the Flag of Tunisia (where the "Spring" began) is in the center

▪ Surrounding it is the Sword of Allah shedding the blood of revolutionary martyrs
(this sword is also the beak of the Egyptian god Thoth)

▪ To the right of the sword a purple cloud sheds the same tears as in the *Country Joe* painting (shed above the swastika) for the victims of war and revolution

▪ The Star of David has been transformed into the Sheriff's badge (upper left corner)

**Bill was born in New Jersey
and attended Yale University
but obtained his B.F.A. from
UCLA. He has been an
Illustrator and Art Teacher**

•**Protest art** is a broad term that refers to creative works that are produced by activists, social movements or those simply seeking to relay a message to the public. This can be visual or audio art (Country Joe and the Fish, Joan Baez).