

***Never is forever***  
**Sharon Goodwin**

*The problem for those in power is how to get people to do the dirty work without turning them into monsters.*

Slavoj Žižek, 'The Depraved Heroes of 24 are the Himmlers of Hollywood', *The Guardian*, 10 January 2006.

Sharon Goodwin's graphic depictions of familiar yet strange and ominous forms allude to conflicts, neither real nor entirely imagined, but which present a frightening vision. Sourced from an extensive collection of comics, illustrated mythologies and art history, Goodwin adapts and reconfigures images into new compositions that combine different narratives and genres. In *Never is forever*, a stockpile of skeletons, a knotted host of angels tumbling through space, and a conglomerate of gremlins, griffins and gargoyles appear entangled in cyclic struggles. Having turned on themselves, hero and foe are one and the same, and any distinction of good versus evil is complicated by the metamorphosis of human and animal forms.

Goodwin's staunch linear renderings in acrylic and gouache refer to the drawings and prints of German artist Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528). His 1498 *Apocalypse*, a set of fifteen woodcuts illustrating the visions of horror and impending doom described in the *Book of Revelations*, reflected the artist's impression of the complexity of society and the breakdown of religious and political order. Goodwin's fantasies of internal upheaval and collective struggle, which manifest in unimaginable creatures and scenarios, could similarly be seen to embody menacing characteristics of contemporary social and cultural conditions. Her work refigures Dürer's allegories of power, beauty, morality and belief; issues that are as prevalent and contested today. Amidst the meticulous line work and fusion of fantastical motifs, an underlying turmoil hints at the all-too-real existence of 'dirty work' and monsters.

Lisa Radford

Lisa Radford is a Melbourne based artist and writer