



From FireJohnYoo.org

Organizers of "Berkeley Says No To Torture" Week are grateful for Fernando Botero's statement of support for the Week (this internationally acclaimed artist offers a powerful vision of the atrocities of torture in the 56 paintings and drawings of [The Abu Ghraib Series](#), his extraordinary gift to the permanent collection of the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive):

Torture is often "justified" ("a means to gather information that can be used to save lives or protect society") and "excused" ("the inevitable excesses that soldiers commit when confronted with the atrocities of war") by some people. However, both are false. On no grounds can torture be justified or ever excused.

Torture represents an insult to the body and soul of the human being, and goes against any definition of civilized conduct.

I have denounced torture in my paintings because I believe that art can represent a permanent accusation, the only means we, as artists, have at our disposal to keep alive an idea that should never burn out:

that we must never accept the unacceptable, and that any group, people or nation, if it loses its moral compass, can descend into violence and succumb to the horrors of barbarism. --

Fernando Botero