

SOMETIMES IT MAKES ME WONDER WHAT I FOUGHT FOR: KATRI WALKER

SWG3



Upon entering the dark warehouse, Katri Walker's video triptych dominates the far wall. The three projections side by side create an atmosphere while building a fuller picture of the life of the piece's subject, Jimmy, a veteran Black Watch Paratrooper. Walker's film presents the viewer with a portrait of a man, often emphasising his at times painfully apparent loneliness through her juxtaposing of images. An image that stands out for me in the film is that of Jimmy sitting on his own in his regular café while on the other side of the frame another elderly man sits with (probably) his grandchild, illustrating Jimmy's lack of even a family for company. This becomes apparent in the shots of his home, dirty and squalid, indicative of someone who has given up on life, as the

title of the piece suggests.

Walker's videoed still lives are also worth a particular mention. They are keenly observed stills of the café counter tops and of the surfaces of Jimmy's home. The lack of human presence in these shots again continues the thread of loneliness that runs throughout the piece and the natural lighting and apparently spontaneous composition give the shots an ordinary beauty.

Walker deals with her subject in a sympathetic manner and doesn't shy away from the hard fact that this is a forgotten man, a man who once fought for a country that ignores him, as its inhabitants walk past him on the street. As Jimmy himself says, "It's a mug's game, you never win." [Suzanne Neilson]

