



Art of the American Soldier

Documenting Military History Through Artists'
Eyes and in Their Own Words

by Renée Klish

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Preface

We can look at an artist's work and try to visualize what the artist had in mind when he or she was creating the picture. When the artist's thoughts are available to us, they open a window into the creative process. This book, *Art of the American Soldier*, addresses creativity. When possible, the artist's words are used to enhance the visual story of the completed work. These words have been found on the artwork itself, in diaries, in notes, or in correspondence with the individual. The artist's statement also conveys information on the circumstances surrounding the artist in a combat environment, the artist's feelings about the role of a combat artist, or the comments of others who have known the individual or who have studied that person's works. Unless otherwise noted, the information and images are located in the Collection Branch files of the Center of Military History's Museum Division. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first time this information has been compiled and presented alongside the artwork. It is fascinating to go into the artist's mind and capture those thoughts and ideas that manifested themselves in a completed image.

I particularly wish to thank and honor the combat artists from different eras or their family members with whom I have been in contact for the past twelve years. It has been gratifying to deal with each and every one and to have the opportunity to meet many of them. One of my greatest joys has been for them to visit the Army Art Collection and "reacquaint" themselves with the artwork that they, their fathers, or grandfathers produced so many years ago. Seeing their faces, their tears, and their laughter at viewing their works and hearing them comment about the art to their family and friends have been a total pleasure.

I dedicate this book to them.

Washington, D.C.
16 September 2010

RENÉE KLISH



Introduction

One hears or reads the terms *Army art*, *combat art*, *military art*, or *Army artist*, *combat artist*, or *military artist* and wonders what they mean. The terms evoke images of soldiers in combat fatigues delicately dabbing strokes of paint onto a canvas while bullets whiz by and rockets explode around them. *Army* and *art* used in the same breath sound so contradictory. They are an oxymoron or a paradox. Why would the Army want to use artists? Why now, especially in this era of instant imagery? What does an artist bring to a painting or drawing to tell a story that a camera cannot?

These questions frequently arise when people learn that the U.S. Army still sends artists to document the efforts of soldiers wherever they serve their country. People are amazed to learn about the longstanding tradition of artists documenting the military and soldiers. The custom extends back to the early days of civilization, in which ancient battles are described in various styles such as in Egyptian tomb paintings, Sumerian steles, Greek temples or painted pottery, Roman mosaics, Japanese woodblocks, and Chinese statuary.



Greek amphora with battle scene, ca. 530 BCE, photograph by Peter Roan



The Battle of Issus [331 BCE] mosaic, originally located in the House of the Faun, Pompeii; copy of original by Apelles or Philoxenos of Eretria, ca.100 BCE; Naples National Archaeological Museum



Chinese Terracotta Warriors from Xian, 200 BCE, photograph by Tor Svensson

This practice continued during and after the Renaissance, as evidenced in tapestries, frescoes, or paintings by artists including Diego Velázquez, Jacques-Louis David, Nicolas Poussin, and Eugène Delacroix. In their depictions, they immortalized the battles and their heroes.



Siege of Osaka Castle, 17th century, photograph by Ira Block

The reasoning for recording the past in this manner is understandable; but again we ask, why pursue this approach of visually documenting history now? The representative pieces in *Art of the American Soldier* show what Army artists have experienced—through their artwork and through their words—since World War I and how artists interpreted those moments for themselves and their viewers. When you finish seeing their creations and reading their comments, you will know the answer to “Why now?”



Detail from the Bayeux Tapestry, ca. 1070, photograph by Gabriel Seah

The works reproduced here are a small sampling of the approximately sixteen thousand works of art that constitute the Army Art Collection at the U.S. Army Center of Military History. This incredible assemblage and its military imagery, witnessed firsthand and predominantly created by soldiers, visually conveys a compelling history of the U.S. Army in all its aspects.

When available, the actual words and thoughts of the artists are presented alongside these artworks. These words reveal what inspired the artists to create the art and provide insight into their feelings on combat art, war, or the environments in which they found themselves.

World War I

The U.S. Army did not officially employ artists until World War I. Prior to that time, most artwork depicting military actions had been created by artists hired by magazines and newspapers, such as *Harper's Weekly* and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. These individuals were considered journalists. Paintings were done either on commission by professional artists, after the fact, such as that done by Isaac Eaton, or were created by the soldiers themselves and sometimes published. Examples of the latter include the works of Charles Johnson Post in the Spanish-American War.



We Leave the Trenches by Charles Johnson Post
War with Spain, ca. 1936
Watercolor on paper



Battle of Gaines Mill by Isaac F. Eaton
27 June 1884
Oil on canvas

Europe had a tradition of using artists in the field. Artists accompanied British soldiers to the Crimea and Asia. The French and the Germans also brought artists with them. This was especially true during World War I. The art that they produced supported and advertised the war effort and memorialized the hardships suffered by the soldiers. One of the strongest statements can be seen in a haunting painting now in the Imperial War Museum in London. *Gassed*, by John Singer Sargent, shows a column of blinded British soldiers, their eyes bandaged, each holding on to the man in front as they move through a field of the dead and wounded.



Gassed by John Singer Sargent, 1918, courtesy of the Imperial War Museum

After consulting with officials from Great Britain and France and learning how those countries had used their artists to portray the histories of the armies, the War Department's Division of Pictorial Publicity, led by renowned artist-illustrator Charles Dana Gibson, recommended eight artists to witness and document the battlefield efforts of the American Expeditionary Forces. These seven illustrators and one architect were commissioned as captains in the Corps of Engineers and were sent to France. Harvey Dunn, Ernest Peixotto, George Harding, J. André Smith, Harry Townsend, Wallace Morgan, William Aylward, and Walter Duncan were stationed in Neufchateau and allowed to travel freely throughout the war zones. They were given instructions to paint what they wanted in whatever style or whatever medium suited them. The only caveats were that the artists create pieces that were recognizable (not fully abstract) and that they not serve as the official portrait painters of the generals.



J. André Smith's identity card, courtesy of the Maitland Art and Historical Association



Storming Machine Gun by George Harding
October 1918
Charcoal on paper

While American infantrymen attack a German machine gun nest, a potato masher grenade flies in the air and a tank moves against the opposing forces.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

The war afforded to the American Official Artists unexampled opportunity to see modern fighting, to gather material for unlimited development; but it gave little opportunity of producing, on the spot, pictures that were in presentable condition for exhibition. Every artist first has to know his subject matter. If he is a landscape painter, he paints the same hills and valleys he loves, season after season under conditions of light that appeal to him. If he is a portrait painter, it is a question of mood if success comes in two or twenty sittings, in his own congenial studio.

With the war artist, however, there is little chance of studying the subject beforehand. If an attack is scheduled, it happens rain or shine, night or day. It comes after weeks of preparation, in which men are killed and maimed in exactly the same way they are in the actual advance. To see all this preparation, to know his material, the war artist puts on his steel helmet, his gas mask, his trench boots, his trench coat and laden with only a sketch book, a couple of pencils and some emergency rations in his pockets, like any soldier present, he takes his chances with shell fire, gas, airplane attack and snipers.

—GEORGE HARDING
*American Magazine of Art*¹



Wallace Morgan in Our Neufchateau Studio by J. André Smith
17 May 1918
Pencil on paper

They created approximately eight hundred works, most of which were sent to the United States, with the rest remaining with the artists. Of their artistic endeavors, J. André Smith wrote eloquently in 1919, "When a war poses for its picture, it leaves to the artist the selection of the attitude in which the artist may desire to draw it. And this attitude is the artist's point of view circumscribed by the boundaries of his ability and the nature of the work for which his training and practice have fitted him."

After the armistice, Department of War historians, having no facility to store and care for the artwork, transferred the collection to the Smithsonian Institution where it still resides. Some pieces kept by the artists have since become part of the Army Art Collection.

The question posed in the introduction, "Why now?" arose in a 17 March 1918 *Chicago Daily Tribune* article, "Picturing War," by Rollin Lynde Hartt. He wrote,

No doubt some will ask, "Then, why not send photographers? Why not send movie photographers?" They are there already and useful in their way. Heroic, too. They risk their necks. But the camera lacks inspiration. It lacks the genius for selection. Not once in a thousand efforts does it contrive to tell the story with consummate "punch." Moreover, it is color blind.

Even then, the need for combat artists was questioned.

World War II

When the European nations entered into World War II, they assigned combat artists to the various armies, again producing documentary art on the conflict. At the beginning of World War II, the U.S. Army saw the need to revive its art program to record its activities. As early as September 1941, to surround the troops with attractive interiors reflecting the traditions, accomplishments, and high standards of Army life, “soldier art” decorated the interiors of recreation buildings and other places of assembly. The displayed creations were done by the men themselves, for themselves, thus building *esprit de corps*.

Late in 1942, the Corps of Engineers established a War Art Unit to include both military and civilian artists who would be dispatched to the various war theaters. The Army wanted to bring the reality of war to the nation and inspire those individuals or groups who would assist in the war effort. Washington officials recognized that “this phase of our national life as expressed by the artist should not be a blank chapter in our history.”

An advisory panel of art museum directors from the Carnegie Institute, the Chicago Art Institute, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Corcoran Gallery, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art was selected to produce a list of prospective candidates for the art unit. The panel was given four categories from which to choose: civilians, enlisted men who would be commissioned as captains, officers already in the Army who should be commissioned as captains, and officers in the Navy who might be transferred to the Army.

From these submissions, a composite list was created with the votes tallied. If all five museum directors mentioned a particular artist, that individual was placed first. Those mentioned four times were placed second, and so forth. Moreover, the director of the National Gallery of Art submitted his own nominees, who were added to the mix.

The panel considered all aspects of the artist, which included not only artistic talent, but also that person’s age and political leanings. Each panel member was encouraged to write comments about each artist, and these comments were subject to much debate. Candidates included some of the most well-known American names, as well as some relatively young and unestablished individuals. Although Andrew Wyeth did not subsequently participate in the combat art program, the Corcoran Institution director who proposed the 25-year-old artist as a potential candidate wrote about him, “*Very promising young man.*”

Eventually, the committee chose more than forty artists, both civilian and military, among them Reginald Marsh, Aaron Bohrod, and Sydney Simon. A draft instruction sheet, noting where the artists would be going and to whom they would report, informed them that the commanding general had been directed to provide whatever they needed to do their jobs. Further, it stated that

The objective for which the Art Units have been constituted is the creation of an historical record of the War, in the form of oil paintings, watercolors, drawings and other graphic media. The Unit is not to be employed in portraiture. It is hoped that you will be inspired to express in your paintings significant and dramatic phases of the conflict, to the end that the results may have a deep meaning for generations to come.

A few months into the program, Congress cut funds for the art project. Military artists were reassigned to other duties but continued to create artwork that was then sent to the War Department Art Committee for screening. The civilian artists, already in the war theaters, were subject to recall. *Life* magazine, which had artists in the field, became their salvation. Hearing of their plight, *Life* Executive Editor Daniel Longwell approached Assistant Secretary of War John McCloy with an offer to employ all the civilians. Of the nineteen civilians, seventeen joined the *Life* war art staff. In 1960, Time-Life donated the entire collection of *Life* World War II art to the Army Art Collection, thereby reuniting works by the civilian and military artists.

Abbott Laboratories, in conjunction with the Surgeon General's Office, additionally documented the war effort, concentrating on medical-related subjects. More than thirty civilian artists, including Peter Blume, Joseph Hirsch, and Franklin Boggs, spotlighted all facets of the Army Medical Service from laboratory work at Walter Reed Hospital, training of nurses, actual care of the wounded in the field, and the rehabilitation of injured soldiers on their return to the United States. In 1946, Abbott presented the Army-related material to the Art Collection.

The lighter side of war and observations of Army life provided another facet of the documentation of World War II. This included the drawings and cartoons that appeared in publications such as *Yank* magazine and *Stars and Stripes*. Among the military members who satirized their day-to-day existence and the situations in which they found themselves were Dave Breger, Bil Keane, Bill Mauldin, and Wayne Thiebaud. They were able to laugh at their foibles and those of their fellow service members, providing a much-needed voice of the ordinary military man.

Yank also published artwork that, though considered cartoons, nonetheless showed the poignancy of conflict, capturing moments of fear, death, and battle. Howard Brodie's work, for example, moved away from humor but still encompassed the soldier's experience.

All in all, soldiers and civilians produced more than five thousand works of art covering World War II Army activities. Importantly, the Army realized that nothing could be left undocumented, and the result is a compelling body of work. A 1943 memorandum to War Art Units provided guidance to the artists:

What we insist on is the best work you are individually capable of; and the most integrated picture of war in all its phases that your group is capable of. . . . Any subject is in order, if as artists you feel that it is part of War; battle scenes and the front line; battle landscapes; the wounded, the dying and the dead; prisoners of war; field hospitals and base hospitals; wrecked habitations and bombing scenes; character sketches of our own troops, of prisoners, of the natives of the country you visit;—[but] never official portraits; the tactical implements of war; embarkation and debarkation scenes, the nobility, courage, cowardice, cruelty, boredom of war; all this should form part of a well-rounded picture. Try to omit nothing; duplicate to your heart's content. Express if you can—realistically or symbolically—the essence and spirit of War.

They were told that they were not merely there to gather news but to use the latitude afforded them as outstanding American artists to document, from sketches done on the spot or from their memories, notes, and sketches, all that they saw and the impact it had on them as artists and individuals.

A painting and diary entry by Floyd Davis exemplify attempts to capture the ambiance as well as the specifics of warfare.



GI's in Paris by Floyd Davis
France, 1944
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

October 28. We made a few sketches in the morning. It's a rare sunny day, cold but wonderful. . . . On the way to lunch we pass the Rainbow Club—a dozen trucks are unloading boys from the front. They are dirty, tired, their eyes are strangely unsmiling. They move slowly in line, with all their equipment, an unforgettable picture.

—FLOYD DAVIS
Time Inc. archives

The Korean Conflict and the Vietnam War

When the United States entered the Korean War in 1950, there was no Army program in place to document it through art. In 1951, a program similar to the one during World War I was proposed, but it was never finalized. There were, however, six artists assigned to Korea: three of whom were nonfederal civilians—one each affiliated with *Life* magazine and *Collier's* magazine and one, John A. Groth, with the Association of American Artists. The three remaining artists were a Marine Corpsman, an Air Force sergeant assigned to *Stars and Stripes*, and Robert “Weldy” Baer, a Department of the Army civilian. Baer created a number of sketches and some paintings that are among the few representations of the Korean War era in the Army Art Collection.

Groth completed a group of paintings depicting nurses with the 8063d Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) near Chongwon-ni.

In 1966, harking back to the lack of coverage during the Korean conflict, Army policy changed. The Vietnam War provided the opportunity for volunteer military and civilian artists to produce on-the-spot coverage of Army operations. Beginning in August 1966, twelve teams of artists were sent to Southeast Asia to document events. The objective was to portray military operations in Vietnam through art media, obtaining the soldier's impressions and thereby to supplement the existing documentation of military history.

As in past conflicts, artists were given the same instructions: “paint what you see in whatever medium.” As in the past, portraits were prohibited. Artists were not limited to any particular subject. Because these were to be historical records, the subject matter needed to be recognizable. Recognizing artistic



John Groth, above, second from right, and bottom, right, on the Korean truce line in 1957, courtesy of the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution





Scene in Receiving Tent by John A. Groth
Korea, 1950
Watercolor on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

No one is turned away from MASH. Korean villagers, from miles around, brought in their sick and injured who received the same treatment as UN soldiers, though sometimes they had to wait. Soldiers are treated first.

—JOHN A. GROTH
*Studio: Asia*²



Landing Zone by John O. Wehrle
8 November 1966
Oil on canvas

A radio telephone operator moves through elephant grass after having been deployed from a UH-1 Huey helicopter.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This painting in oils was created out of whole cloth in the warehouse studio at Schofield Barracks. Based on a composite of memories it conveys a soldier in tall grass with Huey in background—on alert wearing radio and camouflage, scanning the horizon for something unseen. The chopper rotors are blurred, still in motion giving a sense of immediacy to the scene. I think it is the unspoken mystery of what lies outside the frame that gives this dramatic composition its appeal. I don't recall any preliminary sketches for this painting. It is pure fabrication based on memory.

—JOHN O. WEHRLE

individuality, soldier-artists were permitted freedom to depict their subjects in their own way and to show all activities, not only combat, but also combat support, recreation, religion, the customs and occupations of the local population, and organizations such as the Special Forces.

A joint effort by the Center of Military History and the Army Crafts Program sponsored the program. Under the technical supervision of Army Craft Shop directors, each team went on temporary assignment for 120 days—60 days in Southeast Asia making on-the-spot paintings or preliminary sketches and color studies, and 60 days in Hawaii producing finished compositions from the initial works. During the first 60 days, the artists were exposed to the same rigors as other soldiers. The teams experienced being caught in sniper fire, slogging through the soggy rice paddies, and avoiding land mines.

Civilians sent to Vietnam were seasoned professionals chosen from artists in New York and Boston. The Army provided their transportation and other expenses and furnished art supplies. They spent thirty days “in country,” observing and sketching, and returned to their homes to create the finished works that they then could donate to the Army.

The Vietnam art program proved to be an unqualified success with the creation of two thousand works of art. It expanded to areas outside of Vietnam, such as Thailand, Germany, Korea, the Canal Zone, and Alaska. The 1970s brought with it soldier documentation of bicentennial activities in the United States, Corps of Engineers construction projects, the resettlement of Vietnam refugees, and other aspects of military life.



Combat Art Team Number 1, Vietnam, 1966

DESERT STORM and the New Millennium

In 1990 and 1991, the events of Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM became the new focal point, and five artists were dispatched to Southwest Asia to depict military operations in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Given the same orders as to the World War I soldier-artists, these five created pieces evocative of the places and the times.



Army Artist Sfc. Peter Varisano in Saudi Arabia, 1991

On the artists' return to the United States, the Center of Military History exhibited their most current works. General Gordon Sullivan, chief of staff of the Army, was so impressed by this show of talent that he formalized the position of staff artist, which still exists today. These soldier-artists are combat-ready and deployable. They have produced pieces depicting events of the 1990s including actions in Haiti, Rwanda, Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo, as well as humanitarian efforts such as Hurricane Andrew relief in Florida.

Civilian recreation specialists sent to Saudi Arabia organized programs and provided arts and crafts supplies for use by the soldiers. One such program, the Army Humor Cartoon Contest, had approximately three hundred entry submissions. Like the cartoon art from the past, the drawings are a personal commentary on life and experiences in the military.

The tragic events of 11 September 2001 brought the U.S. Army into Iraq and Afghanistan. Official staff artists accompanied the Army to these countries to gather impressions and translate them into finished works. Moreover, individual soldiers have creatively produced works on paper or canvas that they have generously donated to the Art Collection. As in previous times, the artists were given the same set of instructions—paint what you see in whatever style or whatever medium you choose; you are not there as the official portrait painter for the generals. Added to these caveats was the verbal directive to depict what they wanted and not be told what to do by others.

Armed with these words, cameras, sketchpads, and weapons, these artists have vividly brought to life the intimate experiences they have witnessed.

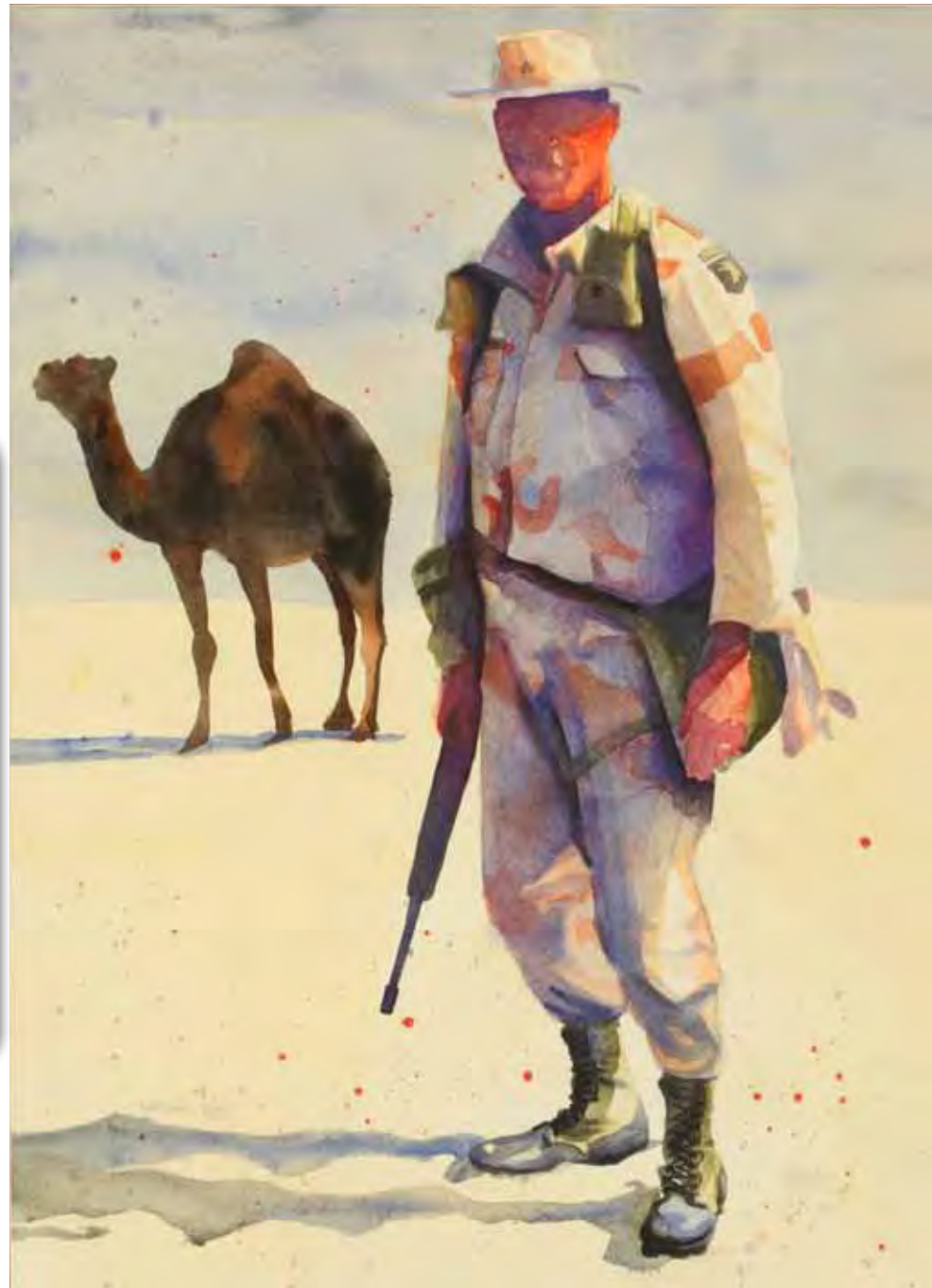
The Camel and the Eagle by Peter G. Varisano
Saudi Arabia, February 1991
Watercolor on paper

Artist's notes on reverse of painting:
**Soldier finished MOUT [military operations
in urban terrain] training in Northern Saudi
desert.**

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This title refers to the eagle patch on the shoulder of the soldier. He is in the 101st Air Assault Division better known, off the record, as the "Screaming Eagles." We were following this soldier's unit when we walked up on a herd of camels, and the idea stuck with me of camels and eagles. I also liked the very strong shadow on his face cause[d] by the intense sunlight common in the desert.

—PETER G. VARISANO





The Hazara Province by Elzie Golden
28 May 2003
Oil on canvas

Depicting Special Forces soldiers patrolling in Afghanistan in 2002, this painting is based on multiple images in the Center of Military History's archives. The technique of painting on textured canvas gives the illusion of sand permeating the soldiers' clothing and equipment.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

In 2002, I was hand picked by BG John S. Brown to become staff artist of the Army at the Center of Military History. As staff artist, part of my duties was to produce illustrations for articles, reports and lessons learned of Army field operations, past and present. In 2002, the Army had deployed expeditionary forces in Afghanistan. . . . The Pentagon's combat camera unit gave me permission to access their database for photos of current Afghanistan imagery. Using the few photos I downloaded, and drawing on considerable artistic license and my imagination, I "assembled" illustrations that later were used for this illustration.

—ELZIE GOLDEN

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Every job, no matter how large or small plays an essential role in completing every mission. One of the war's most critical behind-the-scenes players is the fueler. Without fuel, an essential logistical component, missions both in the air and on the ground stop dead in their tracks.

As the sun rises on an airfield at Camp Anaconda in Iraq, this POL [petroleum, oils, and lubricants] specialist known as "Big Country" climbs atop of an HEMTT [heavy expanded mobility tactical truck] tanker preparing to check the fuel level.

—HEATHER C. ENGLEHART



Big Country by Heather C. Englehart
Iraq, August 2004
Acrylic/watercolor on paper

Why Now?

We can now return to the question initially posited: “*Why now?*” We are living in an age of instant media. We send e-mail, use our cell telephones as cameras, and disperse images all over the world in almost no time. With this, why do we still send out artists to document Army activities?

First, think of a camera. To take a picture, the photographer looks through a viewfinder or looks directly at the image on the screen. What he or she sees is what the camera sees with that “one eye.” It is a scene viewed by a Cyclops. Next, consider the artist who has the advantage of seeing with both eyes. The artist views the same image as the camera, but he or she has peripheral vision and can witness not only the central action, but also what is going on around, behind, and on either side. The artist can gauge the perspective and the depth, can view the colors, or can note the slight nuances that might only be visible for a second. Then, the artist’s eyes relay that message to the brain, and the brain relays the message to the artist’s hand. At this point, the artist can sketch the scene and can add all of those extras that the camera might have missed. The artist has the advantage of sensory memory and can incorporate all of that into the picture. Like the camera, the artist has captured the moment but, unlike it, has imbued the picture with his or her recollections and interpretation along with that extra undefined quality, that *je ne sais quoi*. That is the primary reason for why we still have Army artists.

ARTIST’S STATEMENT

That’s what it looked like, that’s what I did, that’s where I was.

—MARTIN CERVANTEZ



A Soldier's Life

The Army travels. The Army deploys. In World War I, the Army's American Expeditionary Forces left the United States to serve in France. During the period between World War I and World War II, soldiers served in the Philippines and Panama. World War II expanded the American war effort throughout the world. Soldiers were sent not just to the South Pacific and Europe, but also to South and Central America, Africa, Asia, the Aleutian Islands off Alaska, and remote places such as Ascension Island in the south Atlantic.

Soldiers later served with occupation forces in Japan and Germany. The Korean conflict brought the military into that country. The Army established bases for soldiers and their families throughout Europe and Asia. The Vietnam War brought more soldiers to Southeast Asia. Post-Cold War actions and events such as DESERT SHIELD, DESERT STORM, and the War on Terrorism have resulted in troops deploying to Kosovo, Bosnia, Haiti, Somalia, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait.

Whether they are departing for actual battle, for peacekeeping missions, or in an advisory status, soldiers are there to serve. The artist is there to record and capture those experiences that are part of everyday life. After finally arriving in Alaska, artist Edward Laning wrote to Reeves Lowenthal, Executive Director, War Department Art Advisory Committee, on 5 May 1943 that

The prospect has a two-fold fascination here. There is the war with the enemy, and an endless war with nature to be fought at the same time. We aren't going to lack for material, God knows, and if we don't do good work it will be our own fault.



Goodbye U.S.A. by Barse Miller
San Francisco, 1942
Watercolor on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

An infantry outfit going up the gang plank to find their new quarters below decks. They have discarded their familiar tin helmets on the dock where they were issued the new combat helmet. The soldiers will like the new design once they get accustomed to wearing them. At present they are nicknamed the "Heinie helmet" and other unprintable designation[s]. In the foreground is an M.P. [Military Police] guard who was kept busy at intervals between embarking troops [and] checking the passes of persons coming off ship with last minute errands to do.

—BARSE MILLER



Paddington Station by Aaron Bohrod
United Kingdom, 1944
Gouache on paper

Paddington station, at the very eastern end of what used to be the Great Western Railway line, provides the gateway to London from southwest England and Wales.

Traveling troops kept London's railroad stations filled at nearly all hours. One shown in the Aaron Bohrod painting is Paddington.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1951³



Front Street, Hamilton, Bermuda by Floyd Davis
1942
Oil on canvas

Prior to the United States entering World War II, a “lend-lease” agreement with Great Britain allowed American forces to establish air and naval bases in Bermuda.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Wednesday, Feb. 25 . . . Front Street wonderful place to sketch. Place reminds me of the South of France or North Africa. But it is very clean and healthy.

—From his diary entry, Time Inc. archives

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Cross-section of life in Bermuda—Rear ADM Jules James, commandant U.S. Naval Operating Base, leading the procession across Front Street in Hamilton. Others in picture: Dunkirk survivors, Cameron Highlanders, native Negro troops, U.S. sailors, soldiers and airmen. Local padre on bike, typical horse and carriage in background.

—FLOYD DAVIS



Saigon by Horatio A. Hawks
1969
Watercolor on paper

This painting appears to exhibit the influence of Lyonel Feininger, a German cubist/expressionist artist.



School Children by Gladys Rockmore Davis
1944
Oil on canvas

An American soldier snaps a picture of a typical Parisian scene in the Montmartre district.

While in now-liberated Paris with her artist husband Floyd, Gladys Davis painted for *Life* magazine, concentrating on familiar and nostalgic scenes around the city. When her art was exhibited in the foyer of the Time-Life Building in 1945, a *New York World-Telegram* critic commented, "This was an uncertain, frightened city Gladys Davis was painting. Only the children seemed happy, well nourished, at ease."

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

November 10 . . . I made sketches of the old parts of Montmartre. It's unbelievably beautiful—a group of school girls, little ones, comes down this ancient street. Such a mixture—an old Frenchman pulling a cart—a couple of GI's.

—GLADYS ROCKMORE DAVIS
Time Inc. archives



Sketch of nun from Gladys Rockmore Davis' sketchbook, courtesy of her grandchildren

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Oct. 21 (in Britain awaiting transport to France) . . . I seem to cause a sensation here—a woman correspondent is a rarity. We get coffee and a young merchant seaman sits with us. He is very interesting, talks about the conditions now and then! I am struck by the unusual intelligence of so many of the men we talk to—and their interest in what we are doing. Then finally it is time for the pubs to open—we walk a few blocks and go into a very crowded bar. Every uniform. Commandos, Scots, everything. We can't get near the bar. A British seaman taps me on the shoulder, asks me what I am. I say correspondent. He says, "I'm all for them. They're doing a wonderful job and lots of guts." He buys us a drink.

—From her diary, Time Inc. archives



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Members of 3d Platoon, Charlie Company, 1/26th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, negotiate a turn on a narrow road along the cliffs of a small village while on mounted patrol on 9 November 2008. This type of road is very dangerous and leaves the patrol with nowhere to go if ambushed by the enemy. The soldiers on this patrol were stationed at FOB (Forward Operation Base) Blessing located in the north-east part of Afghanistan near the Pakistan Border.

—MARTIN CERVANTEZ

Treachorous Corner by Martin Cervantez

2009

Oil on canvas

Based on an original photograph shot by the artist in Afghanistan.



Street Scene by David M. Lavender
Vietnam, 1966
Acrylic on board

A Rest and Recreation (R&R) Center in Nha Trang



Martyrdom Denied (alternate title *Deterrent at Mosul*) by Elzie Golden
Iraq, 2005
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This is the house [in Mosul, Iraq] where Uday and Qusay Hussein [Saddam Hussein's sons] were killed, being destroyed shortly afterwards [by members of the 101st Airborne Division] to prevent the site from becoming a symbol for martyrdom.

—ELZIE GOLDEN

Camp Life

Be it in a tent, a barracks room, or a “hootch” carved out of the ground, soldiers eat, sleep, tend to their belongings, and relax. An old expression, “An army travels on its stomach,” holds true. Often, the situations are less than perfect, and soldiers have to “make do” and adjust to their environment, even if it means finding a nearby rock, sitting down on it, and eating their rations then and there.

A soldier in the field, although trained to fight, spends much of his or her day in what can be construed as downtime. This is a chance for repose, reading and writing letters, religious activities, sports, sleeping, making telephone calls, mundane tasks such as mending clothes and doing laundry, or getting involved in any of the other means of available recreation.

If the soldier is lucky and assigned to a post or camp or near a major metropolitan area, there are opportunities to sightsee and, perhaps, shop. United Service Organization (USO) shows did, and still do, provide entertainment in remote areas. Service clubs were often available as places one could visit to unwind.

An artist might unexpectedly witness these times, whether they were illustrating a hardship or something joyful and, once again, save for posterity a moment in time that has been shared by many soldiers.



Army Camp by George Harding
ca. 1917
Charcoal on paper

Mechanization was still in its infancy in World War I, so horses were used extensively to move supplies and equipment.



Fallujah by Elzie Golden
2005
Watercolor on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

3d Infantry soldier sleeps in living quarters set up on the outskirts of Fallujah, Iraq. These quarters were pretty messy, but had air-conditioning. The date was about July 20th, 2003.

—ELZIE GOLDEN



Chow Line by Ogden Pleissner
Alaska, 1943
Oil on canvasboard

Chow line forms outdoors on Adak. Men are mostly ground troops preparing for occupation of Kiska. Mountains appear in distance through a light fog.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1944⁴

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Finally when War came to our country, I was allotted the unpleasant though interesting and exciting opportunity of depicting havoc wrought by man and machines. For this I was commissioned Captain in the Army Air Forces to work as an official artist with the Historical Division, in painting a record of the Air Force activities. After completing my training at Officers Training School, Miami Beach, I was ordered to Alaska where I was attached to the 11th Air Force at Anchorage. From there I flew out to the Aleutian Islands, visiting many bases on that chain; Amchitka, Adak, Umnac, etc. Meanwhile at home in Washington, Congress passed a bill refusing appropriations to the Army for War Records in painting. . . . I was put on inactive duty to continue the work originally planned for me to do, as a War Art Correspondent for *Life* Magazine.

It was in this capacity that I completed the Aleutian pictures. In the spring of '44 I flew to Prestwick, Scotland and thence to London where I made my headquarters, as it were, for my assignment with the 8th and 9th Air Forces. Traveling about England visiting various airdromes, as the British call them, I became well acquainted with the countryside and the "buzz-bombs" that were coming over in droves. When the Normandy Invasion came about, though my orders were to stay in the British Isles, after playing various angles, I managed to get to the "far shore" where I painted the group of pictures at the time of the terrific St. Lo breakthrough.

—OGDEN PLEISSNER

From his papers, Archives of American Art



K Rations by Aaron Bohrod
Belgium, 1945
Oil on canvas

In Bastogne, African American soldiers heat up their combat rations. Introduced in 1942, the three courses in a K-ration provided a soldier's daily combat food allowance. Nonperishable, they could be opened and eaten anywhere, as in this painting by Aaron Bohrod. The ration consisted of an entrée, crackers, chewing gum, bouillon soup cube or packet, and a few other items. These soldiers could huddle around a small fire, heat water out of their canteen, and make themselves soup or hot chocolate while munching on the food.



Soldier Bathing by Edward Reep
Italy, 1944
Watercolor/gouache on paper

Soldiers showed their inventiveness by using a gas can to heat the bathtub in the middle of camp.

Artist's notes on back of painting: A soldier of the 1st Armored Division enjoys a hot bath in the Anzio area.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

A soldier of the 1st Armored Division enjoys a hot outdoor bath, largely through his ingenuity and effort, another works on the wheel of his jeep. Although aboveground activity was under constant observation by the Germans in the nearby hills, during the warm spring days it was impossible not to get out and enjoy the sunshine. If shelling commenced, everyone scurried like burrowing animals seeking their holes. Note the huge camouflage net strung amid the trees to conceal our vehicles or materiel.

—EDWARD REEP
*A Combat Artist in World War II*⁵



Soldier Doing the Laundry by Sieger Hartgers
Saudi Arabia, January 1991
Watercolor on paper

**Artist's notes on back of painting: Soldier from the 13th
Quartermaster Battalion out of Great Bend, KS. The scene took
place 150 kilometers north of Ad Dammam.**

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This is one of my favorite paintings; I made it into a large watercolor because it symbolizes for me the holding on to humanity. Living in a tent city is very different; you see soldiers adopting pets or creating furniture or having elaborate road signs to create a homey feeling. The light going thru the tent reminded me of old stain [*sic*] glass windows.

—SIEGER HARTGERS

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I was always interested in the soldier and the fact that people make the military what it is. The human element is much more important to me than all the equipment no matter how modern or sophisticated the equipment is. I believe that the military is based on cooperation between individuals, and that daily life of a soldier in combat or training is/was very interesting to document.

The mundane is so much part of a soldier's daily existence, like the chaplain playing chess with a soldier, or a soldier doing the laundry in front of his tent in tent city, soldiers assisting/helping each other over a wall, a regular medical unit in combat taking care of soldiers. All soldiers do these daily actions at one time or other.

So, my works really deal with a soldier's daily life in combat or training, and I tried showing daily life of a military man or woman.



Morning Ritual by Augustine G. Acuña
Vietnam, 1966
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The basis for this painting was that things that we take for granted in everyday civilian life are different in a combat area. The simple act of shaving needs individual actions to create a comfortable situation, things such as hot water, shaving basin, mirror, etc. . . . I cold shaved for a long time in country until we built a shower hut with a rubber bladder (painted black to be heated by the sun).

—AUGUSTINE G. ACUÑA

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

In response to a 2001 Indianapolis Art Center questionnaire, Acuña answered,

My art ability was self taught. I never took more than one class in art in college. . . . My exposure to my fellow Team members and their various art techniques was a great learning experience for me. . . . The other members were fine arts graduates or commercial artists with various art backgrounds. I was like a kid in a candy store. . . . We had advisors to help us get supplies, film developed, travel arrangements, etc. But, they never interfered with our subject matter or content of our artwork. So all the subject[s] selected were what each of us were interested in painting.

Cleaning Up by Sidney Simon
Fiji, 21 April 1943
Pencil on paper

Simon identified the soldier as
Pfc. Urbain "Brockie" Berard.

***Artist's notes on reverse of
drawing: The new helmets
have many uses besides
protection, and this is one of
the most useful.***





Laundry Day by Theodore J. Abraham
Vietnam, July 1967
Pastel on paper

A clothesline strung between trees provides a homelike contrast to the military vehicle behind it.



Beach Club by Paul Sample
1943
Watercolor on paper

Army men on Canton [Island in the South Pacific] swim from old oil barge. Ship in background is a wrecked transport. Lagoons are fine for swimming although there are sometimes treacherous undertows.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1944⁶



Laundry Day by Heather C. Englehart
November 2004
Watercolor/acrylic on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

It is not until one removes oneself from the everyday life that one realizes how much we rely on electricity and all modern day conveniences. 550-cord, the military's duct tape, is utilized here as make-shift clothesline. The cord is tied off to two concrete barriers serving as walls of a bunker. This typical simple scene speaks volumes.

—HEATHER C. ENGLEHART



Barking Dogs (alternate title *Tired Dogs*) by Robert Benney
June 1944
Pencil on paper

To hear someone say “my dogs are barking” means that his or her “feet are hurting.” Here, Benney takes a humorous look at a soldier’s common complaint from an unconventional angle.



Easter Sunrise by Michael R. Crook
Vietnam, 1967
Acrylic on canvas

The 1st Cavalry Division soldiers at LZ [Landing Zone] English near An Khe gather to pray on Easter morning.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The religious service in the middle of the week, in the middle of nowhere, was a special event. Being a Christian, it helps to keep your eyes fixed on the Lord as sovereign in the affairs of men, even in war where the fragility of life is so present. The soldier turning away symbolizes the controversial quality of the war, myself being a conscientious objector.

—PAUL RICKERT



Religious Services (alternate title *Thy Rod and Thy Staff, They Comfort Me*) by Paul Rickert
Vietnam, September 1966
Acrylic on illustration board

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Getting out into the field, living with the men, actually being one of the combat troops created the impetus for a true emotional response to the experience of Viet Nam. The grind, the battle scars of fear and courage on every face; the struggle, the human struggle of such a conflict was all around to be recorded. The freedom of choice and means of expression was a high point of the combat artist program.



The Chaplain #1 by Peter G. Varisano
July 1989
Watercolor on paper

A Unit Ministry Team of the 32d Infantry Brigade, Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, trains. Since the chaplain is unarmed, the chaplain assistant, in addition to other duties, provides the team with protection.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This watercolor was also interesting to me because of the contrasts in the faces and the cross on his helmet. What crossed my mind is how, unlike regular society, the presence of a man of faith takes on a whole new meaning in time of danger and war.

—PETER G. VARISANO



Chaplain Playing Chess with Patient, 5th Mash, Ad Dammam by Sieger Hartgers

Saudi Arabia, 1990

Watercolor on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

I painted this after I visited the Medical 5th MASH, Ad-Dammam, 18th Airborne Corps, and I saw the chaplain playing chess with a patient. The light in the tent was wonderful. It gave them something special, like an icon.

—SIEGER HARTGERS



Baseball Practice by Peter Hurd
Ascension Island, 1944
Watercolor on paper

Ascension Island is a tiny island in the middle of the South Atlantic, halfway between Brazil and Africa. In 1942, when planes had to fly to the battlefields in North Africa, this British island became a vital stop. American engineer troops cleared a runway in eighty-seven days for these planes. Along with their go-to-it attitude, the soldiers also brought over their amusements, such as playing baseball on their time off.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Everyone gripes about “this Goddam Clinker,” but all in all, in spite of its extreme loneliness, of C-Rations and no gals there are worse places. There is no disease here. The island is as healthful a place as anywhere on the globe. But this is a hard line of wares to sell to men who have been here two years.

—PETER HURD
From his journal, Time Inc. archives



Bob Hope Entertaining Troops Somewhere in England by Floyd Davis
England, 1943
Oil on canvas

Bob Hope at a U.S. bomber station in England sends the Americans and a British sergeant into peals of laughter when he appears before them wearing a Tommy's helmet many sizes too small. He had also borrowed an Army raincoat because it was drizzling. Hope spent six weeks in his native England rushing from post to post to entertain British and U.S. soldiers.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1944⁷



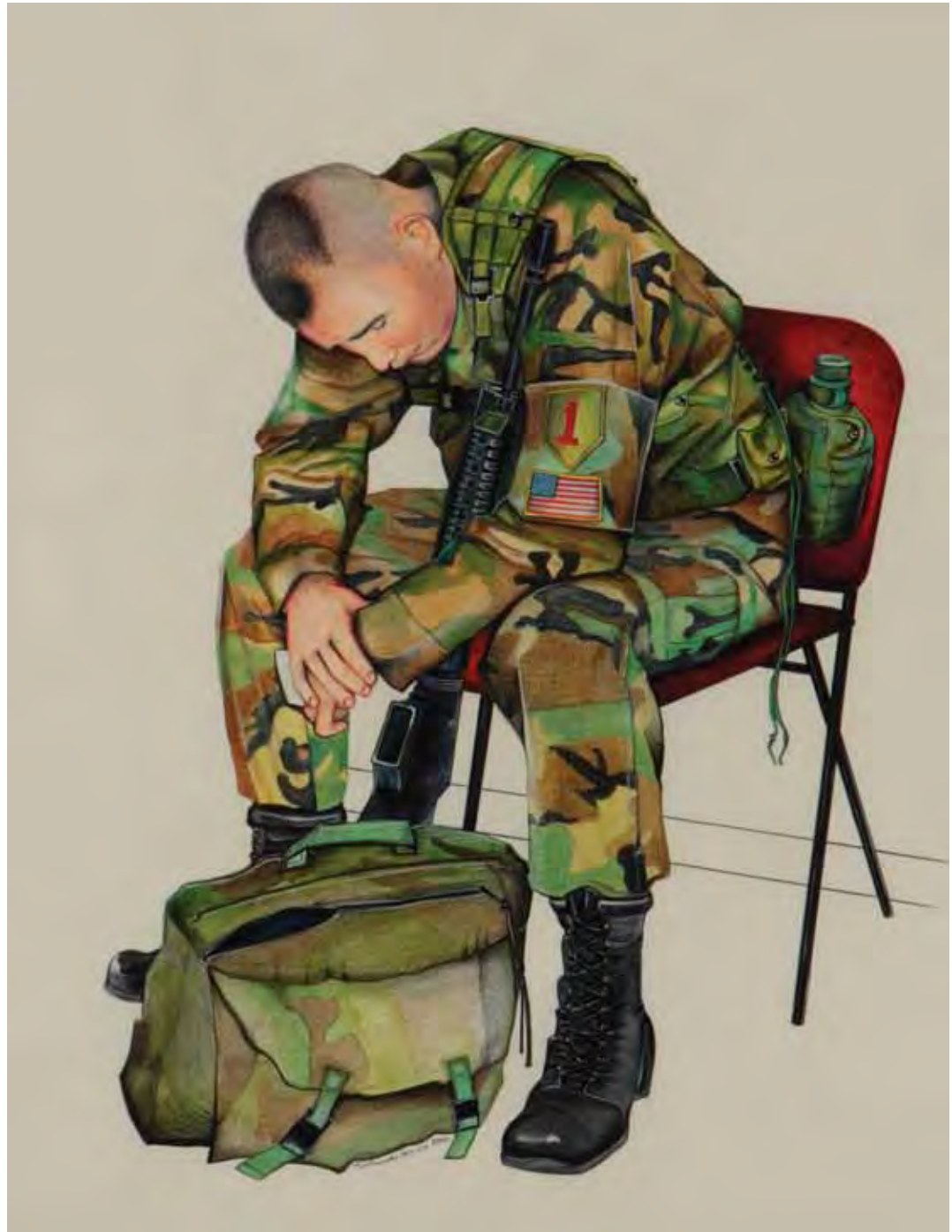
GI in Perfume Shop by Floyd Davis
France, 1944
Oil on canvas

Perfume shops were quickly sold out to GIs who stood in queues for Chanel and Guerlain, sometimes watered down, for about \$4 a bottle.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1945⁸

Waiting to Phone Home by Henrietta Snowden
12 June 2000
Watercolor/colored pencil on paper

The soldier, a member of the 1st Infantry Division out of Vilseck, Germany, waits his turn to make a phone call at Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo.





2 Minutes at Home by Brian Fairchild
South Korea, March 1992
Pastel on paper

2 Minutes at Home was a favorite of Lt. Gen. Timothy J. Maude, deputy chief of staff for personnel, who was the highest-ranking military person killed in the 11 September 2001 attack on the Pentagon. Only a week before, his aide, Lt. Col. Kip Taylor (also killed in the attack), borrowed the negative of this painting to make a copy for Maude's office.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The portrait depicts PVT Giesen, B Co, 1/506th Infantry, 2d Infantry Division reading a letter from his mother. His squad had just negotiated an obstacle course and finished a nine mile road march. A vehicle approached the squad; a soldier quickly got out and distributed a handful of mail. Those soldiers lucky enough to get a personal letter read them where they stood or plopped.

—BRIAN FAIRCHILD



Movies by Paul Sample
Canton Island, 1943
Oil on canvas

Outdoor movie theater is set up in a depression in the sand at Canton. Screen has been masked at the top to keep it from being seen from the air. At the left a lookout stands in Canton's only tree. Scene is brightly lit by reflection of moonlight on sand.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1944⁹



Service Club by Fletcher Martin
United States, 1941
Oil on canvas

From after supper until lights out at 10, the Service Club is a hangout for all non-officers. Every camp has one or more such clubs. This one, painted by Fletcher Martin, belongs to 37th Division at Camp Shelby in Hattiesburg, Miss. Here in the general racket men read, write love letters, listen to a juke box, buy soft drinks and magazines, fool with a toy anti-aircraft gun. Soldier at left introduces his mother to one of the Club's three hostesses. For 50 cents relatives and fiancées may stay here overnight on Army cots.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1941¹⁰



Base Camp by Robert Knight
Vietnam, September 1966
Pencil on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This sketch represents a particular field base, but is very typical of many army bases throughout Vietnam. All the various shaped buildings and tents of various usages represented home away from home for these soldiers. The trucks, jeeps and planes also represent some of the different types of transportation and mobility.

I used this media quite often for sketching because it allowed me to quickly vary my line thicknesses to achieve fine lines for details and broad tonal coverage.

—ROBERT KNIGHT



K.P. Spud Detail by Barse Miller
United States, 1942
Watercolor on paper

A K.P. [kitchen patrol] spud detail hard at work on a familiar Army chore. These “dog faces,” a slang term for buck privates are preparing dinner for “C” Company in their mess hall at Auburn, Calif.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1942¹¹

Housing Area by Heather C. Englehart
Iraq, August 2004
Acrylic on paper



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Sandstorms in arid regions are as common as the blizzards in much of the United States. Losing oneself is not unheard of. This piece is a bit of a play on reality. The reality of the situation is that the powdery sand often takes over, blending the horizon line where the sky reaches down to meet the ground. Everything from the concrete barriers to the sky appeared to get lost in the sand. In reality, the living quarters positioned behind the concrete T-barriers would also take on the color of the sand, blending in. With an artistic license, I chose to place emphasis on the living quarters with the intent of reminding the viewer that in the midst of it all, we were still there.

—HEATHER C. ENGLEHART



Sunday Service in the Field by Harry A. Davis

Italy, 1944

Ink on paper

The chaplain assistant plays a portable field organ that folded up for transport. The suitcase-like chaplain's kit, perched on the jeep hood, contained all the items necessary for the chaplain to conduct a service.

Typed artist's notes glued on reverse of drawing: Sunday Service in the Field [with the 85th Division]. The crudeness and bareness of the equipment of the Chaplain and the surroundings is typical in the Italian mountains.

Two Soldiers (alternate title *Buddies on a Break*) by Paul Rickert
Vietnam, 1966
Pencil on paper

The 1st Infantry Division soldiers share a light.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Faces of combat, a series of drawings of soldiers conveying strong emotions that have been suppressed by the weariness of war, seen at unguarded moments, moments of reflection. One of these drawings was presented to General [William C.] Westmoreland by the 1st Combat Artist Team.

—PAUL RICKERT





Mail Call by Edward A. Sallenbach
Okinawa, 1945
Ink lithograph on paper

While not officially part of the Army art program, Sallenbach was one of a group of artists chosen by Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces, Middle Pacific (USAFMPAC), to produce documentary paintings or drawings during World War II.



Inside Passage – En Route to Alaska by Edward Laning
28 April 1943
Ink/wash on paper

Boxing was just one of the ways soldiers amused themselves aboard troop transports. Other activities included reading, gambling, or playing musical instruments.



Roll 'em by Barse Miller
United States, 1942
Sepia watercolor on paper

Two soldiers play dice in Reno Fair Grounds barracks. Game is called, "Captain Ship and Crew": and the three dice are bounced off any convenient foot locker. Soldiers also shoot craps on payday.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1942¹¹



Mail from Home by Edward A. Sallenbach
United States, 1945
Ink lithograph on paper

A soldier on Okinawa reads his mail during a private moment.



Sleeping Mechanic by Elzie Golden
Iraq, 2005
Watercolor on paper

Golden captures a soldier resting in an improvised sidewalk “bedroom.” As he sleeps in his lawn chair, mosquito netting drapes over him on poles secured in bricks.

IN THE ARTIST’S OWN WORDS

I got the inspiration for *Sleeping Mechanic* while walking through a company of mechanics asleep at about 5 a.m. I was on my way to their mess hall for breakfast. I slept outside on a cot next to a small building and 20 feet away from the main road. I didn’t have any netting to stop insects and geckos from getting at me while I tried to sleep. Convoys of Bradleys and other heavy vehicles drove by all night, every night, while mosquitoes bit me and geckos crawled on any area not covered by my sleeping bag. I think I averaged about one hour or less of sleep each night for nearly a month. The mechanics looked like they had no trouble getting a good night sleep, though.

—ELZIE GOLDEN

On the Move

The Army transports its soldiers all over the world to accomplish their missions. They have traveled by boats, airplanes, trains, and other vehicles to their varied locations. Once the soldiers arrive at their respective destinations, they then have to make their way to the camp or to the battlefield. They may travel in a convoy or, quite often, move under their own power, marching down roads or paths; slogging through rivers; trekking through jungles; or tromping through snow, rain, or other elements; and encountering various hazards and landscapes along the way. They cross the desert in high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles (HMMWVs), or they fly over the landscape in helicopters. These are the machines of war that move the troops into the field.

Army artists have captured both the human element—the soldier—and the strength of those machines.



Saint Mihiel, September 13, 1918, by Kerr Eby
1918
Ink etching on paper

Also known as *The Great Black Cloud*, this was probably Eby's most famous work. The Saint-Mihiel drive was an American offensive against the Germans in World War I. According to a 1939 article in *Print Collectors Quarterly*, "In the Saint-Mihiel Drive, the great cloud hung for days over the advancing troops. The Germans called it the Cloud of Blood."



Where Do We Go? by Kerr Eby
ca. 1917
Ink lithograph on paper

In the years following the war, Eby used his battlefield drawings as the basis for a series of prints. In 1936, concerned about the unstable world situation that would soon lead to World War II, he published his book, *War*. This [book contained] . . . 28 of the World War I prints and drawings and included an essay outlining Eby's abhorrence of war and his opinion of its futility and barbarity. The lithograph *Where Do We Go?* was one of the images in the book, which was dedicated "To those who gave their lives for an idea, the men who never came back."

—*Peace Review*, 2006¹²



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Through the unfriendly, tightly-knit New Guinea jungle an Army Medical Corps unit threads its tortuous way inland, loaded down with the back-breaking components of a portable hospital. The black, tousled heads of the jungle-wise natives bob evenly along in striking contrast to the bended backs and bowed helmets of the corpsmen. Units like this crawled for endless, miserable days over the Owen Stanley mountains.

—FRANKLIN BOGGS
*Men Without Guns*¹³

Jungle Trail by Franklin Boggs
1944
Oil on canvas



Troop Movement by Robert C. Burns
Camp Blanding, Florida, 1942
Oil on board

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

My first ride in a convoy truck was very impressive in its discomfort, its cavernous play of light and shade, and the compression of vitality into a small space.

—ROBERT C. BURNS
Life magazine, 1942¹⁴

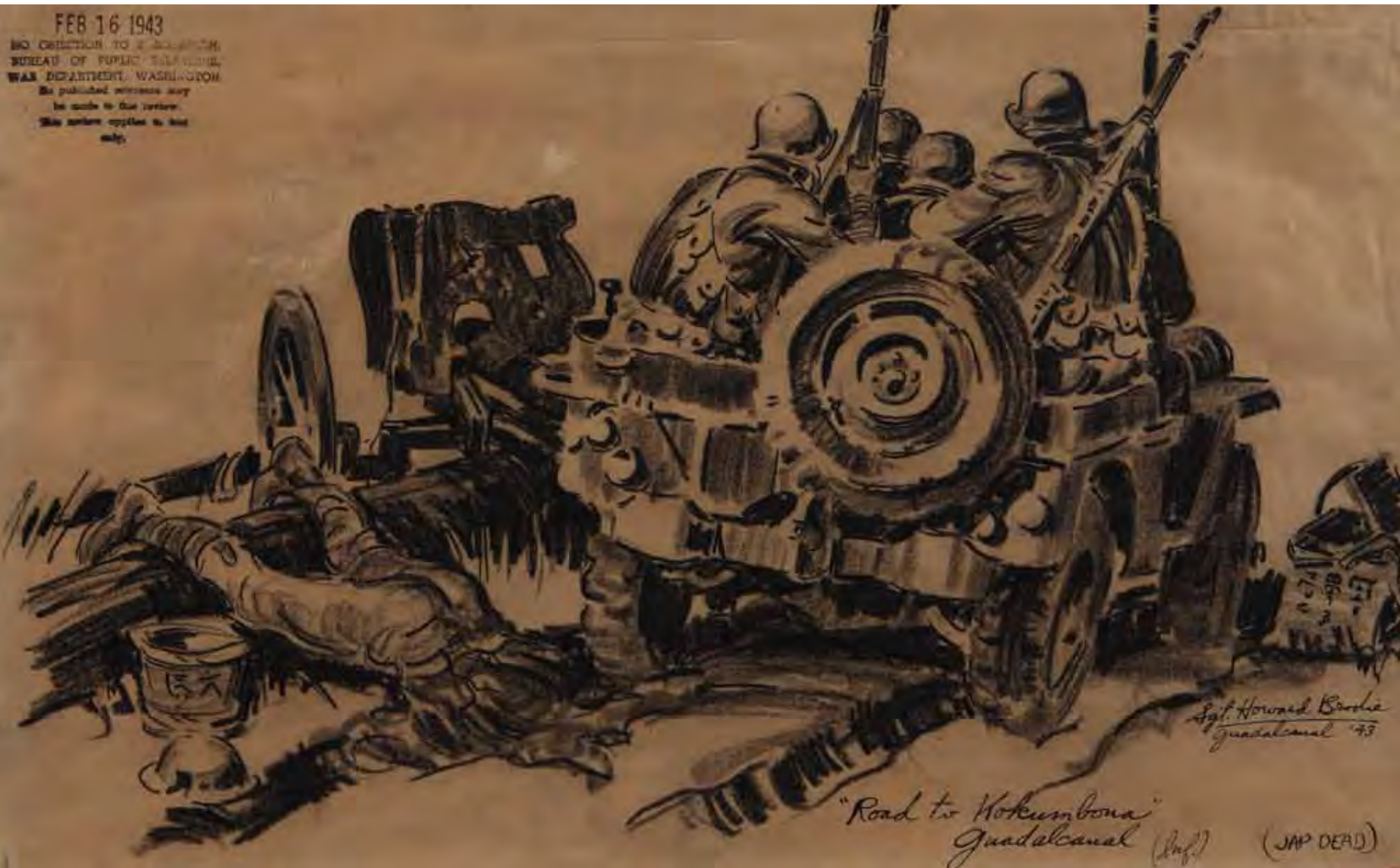
In his quote, Private Burns describes a ride from Camp Blanding, Florida, which inspired this prize canvas. The five art experts on *Life's* jury, who assessed artwork for a soldier art competition in 1942, agreed readily on the merits of Burns' work. They liked its vigor. They liked its boldly blocked pattern with its rich Rembrandt browns, glowing like old stained glass. They saw that in place of detailed realism, Burns had caught the feeling of strong men, cramped and sprawling in awkward human attitudes.



On the Range by Thomas C. O'Hara
Grafenwöhr, Germany, June 1970
Acrylic on paper

FEB 16 1943

NO CENSORSHIP TO BE APPLIED
BUREAU OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON
No published criticism may
be made in this matter.
This notice applies to this
only.



On the Road to Kokumbona, During Advance by Howard Brodie
Guadalcanal, 1943
Pencil on paper

Drawn for *Yank* magazine



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Although convoys were a fairly common sight in Vietnam, a column of armored cavalry tracks emerging like “ghost ships” from a cloud of dust and fog, was unique! Because of the diverse terrain and climate, Vietnam had very exotic and dramatic lighting effects which, quite often, were very picturesque but, at the time, could hide enemy combatants. In *11th Cav Returns*, I was bringing attention to, not just the lighting effects, but the hot/hazy humidity conditions that go along with that.

—DAVID E. GRAVES

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I felt very fortunate to have been a member of the Army artist team not only because I was doing something I enjoyed and [was] probably best adapted for, but because I gained so much as an artist as well as a person while on the team. Although the Army completely sponsored us, we were self-functioning in a very liberal atmosphere. This meant that we had only ourselves to answer to, thus reflecting in our work our most personal feelings about our experience in Viet Nam.

11th Cavalry Returns by David E. Graves
Vietnam, 1969
Acrylic on masonite



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This painting is a composite of many of my experiences while traveling in South Vietnam with various divisions. It represents most closely one in Cam Ranh Bay, South Vietnam while visiting the 1st Logistical Command. You can see that one of the trucks is bogged down in the mud.

—ROBERT KNIGHT

Night Convoy by Robert Knight
Vietnam, 1966
Oil on canvas

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

In response to a 2001 questionnaire from the Indianapolis Art Center, Knight replied,

I think that you will find many similarities and differences in the themes chosen by the various artists on our team. The similarities are due to the fact that we were soldiers and artists. I think we could see what was important as military themes because we were soldiers and we could relate to other soldiers. Also, because we are artists, we can both [portray] the beauty and the pain of the situation. I think that our painting and drawing techniques varied quite a bit from artist to artist, but our commitment to portraying our subjects in the most honest way was the same.



Convoy Live Fire by Heather C. Englehart
Kuwait, February 2004
Acrylic on tent canvas

Painted on canvas cut from an old tent and stretched by the artist while in Kuwait, this image was based on a photograph. It depicts members of the Louisiana National Guard's 1st Battalion, 244th Aviation, at Camp Udari, Kuwait.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The old adage “practice makes perfect” is applied endlessly in the military way of life. While that precise phrase is not what drives the military, the implementation of the phrase essentially assures that soldiers are able to perform without hesitation, by instinct.

Convoying, one of the most dangerous activities for troops in the Middle East, requires skills beyond those of simply driving in a parade of vehicles. Those skills are obtained through countless Rock Drills such as the one seen here where members of the 1-244th rehearse convoy operations in preparation for the convoy into Iraq from Kuwait.

—HEATHER C. ENGLEHART

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

In many ways the role of a Combat Artist mirrors that of the media; artists are tasked with telling the general population about a world that most do not dare to experience, yet one that inevitably captures their curiosity, a world where loved ones are fighting for the freedom of others, many they will never meet. While these two “documenters” of history share many similarities, they also are vastly different. Combat Artists are afforded a distinct advantage; they possess the ability to use their artistic license to expound on an image to drive a point home, while paying homage to history in the making. When it comes to art, there is not a right or wrong; it is very subjective and commissioned under the command of its creator. Combat Artists also differ in their mindset. Despite the numerous MOS [military occupation specialty] options, all members are trained as warriors foremost. A warrior's mindset allows the artist to maintain operational security necessary to protect the overall mission; a comprehensive understanding of what images may or may not jeopardize the security of our Nation.



Chopper Pick-up by Brian H. Clark
Vietnam, 1968
Acrylic on canvas

Two helicopters hover and land in a field as soldiers await pickup. This picture is in yellow, avocado, green, and burnt umber, and paint has been applied thickly with a palette knife and thumb-type dabs or quick strokes.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

How to evaluate my combat experience in Vietnam? Like any soldier, I suppose, I try to put much of the specific incidents of the experience in as inaccessible a part of my memory as possible. The time in Vietnam did, however, reinforce and intensify my awareness of the temporal nature of life, how important to live today.

—BRIAN H. CLARK



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

It seems I was interested in the helicopter as a design element and also . . . [its] abundant utility in the military. This one appears to be influenced by the work of Richard Diebenkorn.

—JOSEPH S. HINDLEY

Silent Sunday by Joseph S. Hindley
Germany, 1973
Acrylic on canvas

An 8th Infantry Division helicopter in Mainz



Cruising the Panama Canal (Chinook) by Al Sprague
Panama, 1990
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This is from a series on “Operation Just Cause.” The troops picked me up at Albrook Air Force Base on the Pacific side of the Isthmus, and we flew to Fort Gulick on the Atlantic side so that they could show me some of the battle sites. They used the Panama Canal as their route, patrolling the waters below.

—AL SPRAGUE



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

SGT Espejo II and SGT Mendez from the California National Guard sit on the tailgate of a CH-47 Chinook helicopter and watch out over a valley in Northeastern Afghanistan while on a personnel delivery mission. Smoke from evasive flares can be seen trailing the aircraft reminding everyone on board that no flight is routine and that they are still in hostile territory.

—MARTIN CERVANTEZ

Tailgating over the Valley by Martin Cervantez

May 2009

Oil on canvas

Photographs taken by the artist on his deployment to Afghanistan were used as reference material for this painting.



Long Binh by Michael R. Crook
January 1967
Ink/watercolor on cardboard

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I feel that the combat artist program is perhaps the only worthwhile outcome of the war in Vietnam if only to point up the inhumanity in the conflict. Perhaps people will look on our art, not as a glorification of war but as a chronicle to be learned from in the future. Let's hope that thru this program and the eyes of sensitive people, the ravages of war will someday end.

—MICHAEL R. CROOK



Field Operation by James Pollock
Vietnam, 1967
Ink on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

To move around, soldier artists had open travel orders which meant we could hitch a ride anywhere in South Vietnam. Much of the air travel I did was in the famous UH-1 Huey, but from time to time, I would travel in other aircraft. The one that eluded me, and the one I really wanted to ride in, was the CH-47A Chinook. These huge twin rotor helicopters transported equipment, troops and supplies, and I thought they were just plain cool looking. One day I got lucky. I showed my orders to whoever was in charge and he let me hop aboard. We flew out to some remote field location and while the troops unloaded, I made some sketches and took a few photos.

—JAMES POLLOCK



Convoy in Somalia by Peter G. Varisano
Somalia, December 1994
Ink on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

These soldiers were leaving the University compound in Mogadishu and heading out to the Airfield. They had to take a very dangerous road called 21 October Road which ran out along the Indian Ocean and was very unsafe due to ambush. I was following them in the truck. I was thinking, as I tried to sketch them that a round will go right thru the wooden slats on the back of that truck. We didn't get shot at that day, however many Somalis were throwing rocks at us, a daily occurrence, which gave someone the idea to start selling tee shirts that read "I got stoned at the University of Mogadishu." The shirts were a big hit.

—PETER G. VARISANO



Choppers by John D. Kurtz
Vietnam, March 1968
Pencil on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The ubiquitous helicopters would have been an obvious subject. They darkened the skies there. To this day, I recoil from the sight and sound of a helicopter.

—JOHN D. KURTZ



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Inspiration came from time spent with the 3d Squadron of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. Similar to the Huey Helicopter, the APC [armored personnel carrier] was a fairly standard ground mode of transportation for the soldiers.

—BRUCE N. RIGBY

Tank by Bruce N. Rigby
Vietnam, 1969
Ink on paper

Note: The vehicle pictured is an M113 APC.



Sketches of Tanks by Roderick Schenken
Panama, ca. 1975
Watercolor/pencil on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

As a child in the 50s–60s, I grew up watching black and white TV shows like *Combat*, *12 O'Clock High* and *Rat Patrol*. Just as TV of the time transitioned to color, this pencil and watercolor sketch also spanned from what was then the Sherman tank of the past to the then more current Patton tank.

—RODERICK SCHENKEN



G. Snyder

A Soldier's Duty

A soldier's enlistment oath is the essence of duty. That duty might involve fighting in battle, rendering humanitarian aid, and setting or enforcing policy. In the commission of these tasks, the soldier may be shielded by the machinery of war—tanks, armored personnel carriers, HMMWVs—or clad in just a uniform and carrying a weapon.

The U.S. Army “Warrior Ethos” has been incorporated into the “Soldier's Creed”:

**I am an American Soldier.
I am a Warrior and a member of a team.
I serve the people of the United States,
and live the Army Values.
I will always place the mission first.
I will never accept defeat.
I will never quit.
I will never leave a fallen comrade.
I am disciplined, physically and mentally
tough, trained, and proficient in my
warrior tasks and drills.**

**I always maintain my arms, my
equipment, and myself.
I am an expert, and I am a professional.
I stand ready to deploy, engage, and
destroy the enemies of the United
States of America in close combat.
I am a guardian of freedom and the
American way of life.
I am an American Soldier.**

The soldier-artist is also guided by this oath. Moreover, he or she has a duty to record personal experiences and those of comrades and render them on paper or canvas. Whereas the soldier focuses on the Army mission, the artist captures the events through interpretation.



Incoming by Heather C. Englehart
Iraq, January 2005
Watercolor/ink on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Bright cloudless skies were often filled with clouds of smoke as Camp Anaconda was one of the most frequently attacked bases in Iraq.

Two soldiers stop in their tracks on the airfield at Camp Anaconda as incoming mortar rounds create vibrations and a thundering boom is both heard and felt all across the 15.5 sq mile base.

—HEATHER C. ENGLEHART



Salvage Roses by Edward Reep
Italy, 1945
Gouache on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

30 Jan 45 . . . This is my second day wasted and still can't see tomorrow as a fruitful day, with the uncertainty of my billet staring me in the face. There are some things of interest here, namely artillery pieces painted white, and firing from inside tents, where the crew sleeps. I am tired as the devil and have a headache, and don't feel terrifically pleased about prospects. This trip has been somewhat discouraging, but it is probably my fault. You cannot paint under these conditions! Rip [Rudolph von Ripper] says even his bottle of ink froze!

2 Feb 45—Walked down into the Idice River Valley and looked for the tents covering 105 howitzers. Finally found one to my liking, and drew on stretched paper for two hours. Completely cold, and work finished, I returned by 1300 hrs, ate, worked some on a previous start, and called up the 34th C.P. [command post] for transportation back. After two weeks now, I have used up all of my paper, gotten pretty good stuff, plus a frozen big toe on my right foot. That was from two hours of sitting on it this morning. Returned to Division for supper. Tomorrow I'll return to the section.

—EDWARD REEP
From his diary, Archives of American Art



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

War; a drama of life or death that keeps no hours.

—ROGER BLUM

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

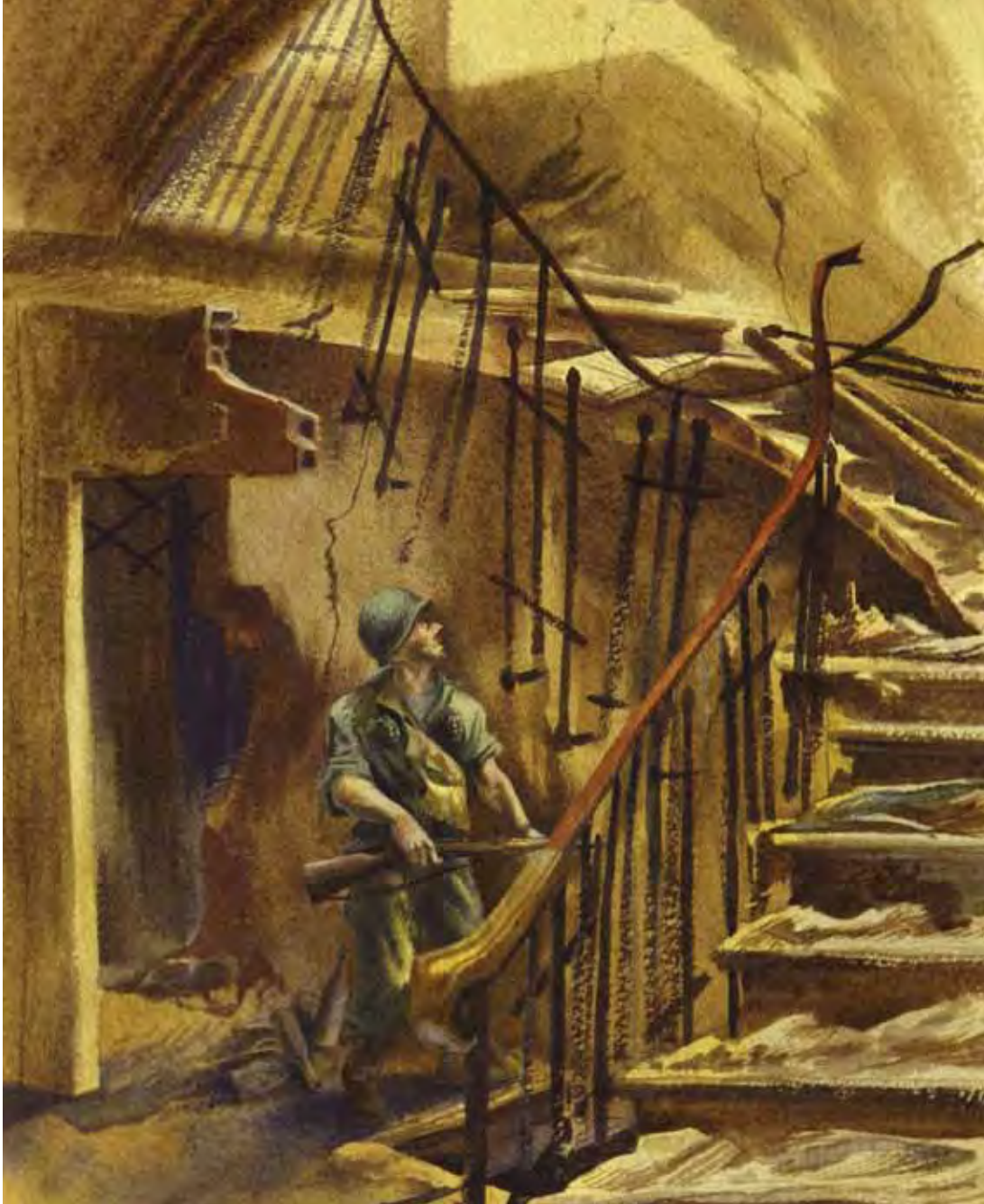
A 2001 Indianapolis Art Center questionnaire asked, "Would you consider your artistic interpretation of the war to be different from that of other combat artists, particularly those on your team?" Blum responded,

I also have always been drawn to landscapes (still am) and so I was excited to visit new locations and be a part of different weather conditions. I will say that, the "trauma" of the war overwhelmed me to the point I had to paint themes that were foreign to my personal nature. I felt compelled to paint themes that normally I wouldn't. I focused myself to push my amateur "abilities" into subject matter and themes that haunted me as I traveled afield.

Attack at Twilight by Roger Blum
August 1966
Oil on canvas



Hot Village by Horatio A. Hawks
Vietnam, 1969
Watercolor on paper



Snipers' Den by Edward Reep
Vergato, Italy, 1945
Watercolor on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

16 April 45—In the morning Savo [Radulovic] and I went up to the old jump-off point at Carbona, and about 0830 hr. we evaded the road guard and tore into Vergato. It was officially cleared of snipers just 20 minutes before and from the moment we set foot into town, until late that evening, the town was to undergo an amazing transformation. . . . It was a ghost town, there wasn't a single civilian. The buildings were all made over into fortresses, and living quarters were in the basements. Holes were torn in walls to allow defenders to go from room to room without going outside. Upper rooms were used for latrines, and all buildings smelled from 2-1/2 months of usage. . . . I began work in a former snipers den.

—EDWARD REEP
From his diary, Archives of
American Art



Independence Gate by Robert "Weldy" Baer
Korea, 24 August 1951
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

After the Inchon Landing the 1st Marines moved inland to take first, Kimpo Airport and then the city of Seoul. This picture depicts action during the mopping-up of the city. The archway is called Independence Gate, or in Romanized Korean, Toknimmun. The Japanese called it Dokuritsu Mon. The meaning is the same. It is located at the north side of the city and on the main route to the north to Kaesong, Sariwon and Pyongyang, the North Korean capital. The action depicted was one of the last in clearing the city of the enemy and occurred in the form of a roadblock engagement during which the enemy temporarily stopped the advancing 5th Marines. The tank shown is a knocked-out, Russian-built, T-34. The jeep is one of several in which the Marines were advancing when the fighting broke out. Within an hour, the last of the North Koreans were either killed or captured.

—ROBERT "WELDY" BAER



Infantry Soldier by Roger Blum
Vietnam, 1966
Watercolor on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Never knowing, always wondering, when the Lord
will call your name.

—ROGER BLUM



Satan's Sandbox by Elzie Golden
Karbala, Iraq, 15 November 2003
Oil on canvas

This painting was inspired by photographs provided by the 11th Aviation Regiment, 3d Infantry Division.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This illustration is rather more dramatic than the mundane day-to-day subject matter of my combat art. All of my other imagery is based on photos and sketches of my own experience, and what I consider to be my personal contribution to the combat art collection at CMH.

—ELZIE GOLDEN



Instant Support (alternate title *Big Support*)
by Burdell Moody
Vietnam, 28 December 1967
Oil on canvas

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I was only a young artist, and not even much of an artist, yet I knew I was witnessing something of magnificence in the human spirit against terrible adversities and losses. I feel my attempt to paint what I saw and felt was a sincere but humble effort to honor those who sacrificed so much more, too often their very lives.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The painting I titled *Big Support* depicts two CH47 Chinook Helicopters hovering over a 105-mm field artillery unit with sling loads of cased ammunition. During my time in Vietnam, I was always deeply impressed by the sacrifices and physical hardships endured by our field artillery units to support our ground troops with around-the-clock interdictive firepower, whenever and wherever it was needed. The helicopter pilots and crews flew resupply, troop insertion and combat assault missions, regardless of weather conditions and

often under enemy ground fire. The artillery units had to be ready to move their howitzers, whether 175-mm, 155-mm, or 105-mm to new positions on short notice, and under austere and dangerous conditions. To see these men struggling to move their heavy weapons into new positions and constantly preparing to deliver supportive firepower, was always a reminder of the great personal sacrifice made by our servicemen. I remember the hard lives and unsung sacrifices made by those young men of 19 and 20 years of age.

—BURDELL MOODY



War and Peace by Peter Hurd
United Kingdom, July 1942
Tempera on board

War and peace are contrasted in this English landscape of the late summer of 1942. The immemorial harvest goes on as a farmer piles his red wagon high with new-mown hay, cut from the edge of a U.S. airfield. Beyond his dappled gray horse stand the heavy B-17's, while a flight of three thunder overhead. Through a rift in the clouds, light pours down on the green fields and highlights the wind sock and control tower in the right background. In left background is a small village. Airfields like this are purposely kept so that they blend into the surrounding countryside. From an enemy reconnaissance plane this station would resemble the neighboring cultivated fields and pasture land, sleeping under the summer sun.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1943¹⁵

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I believe we were more lucky than otherwise in this war in being the most mechanized and most mechanically minded natives in the world at the time of this dawning of the era of mechanical warfare. But what of the next one? How about the near future when some brigand native sets forth really to build arms? It may well not be America next time that holds the ace cards in the form of the super industrialization, readily convertible to the needs of war.

I believe in the ultimate triumph of our human spirit—but I feel deep in my bones and for the first time in my life that there are perilous times ahead. It may take the ultimate Armageddon of truly total mechanical war to teach us all tolerance and meekness—not meekness in the sense of puerile resignation but rather a mystic humility as we face the wonder of life and the episode of human existence.

—PETER HURD

From a letter to his father-in-law, N. C. Wyeth
Archives of American Art



Death by Water by Frank Mechau

Panama, 1943

Oil on canvas

Inspired by Hokusai's woodcut, *The Great Wave*

off Kanagawa, ca. 1830,

Library of Congress



Mechau wrote about his experience in the “Flying Fortress” and its crew and the effect it had on him and his painting:

Whether forced down by the enemy or by weather, a plane will sink in a few minutes. This picture is for Captain Petersen, born in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, and his crew of grand guys who went down a few days after they took me to a base in the Pacific.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

A Flying Fortress was waiting to take our party to the most potent outlying base in the Pacific. . . . The name cannot be divulged now as activity there is a hot military secret.

A clear beautiful day for our hop to never-never land. The Fortress was tuned up and off we went zooming over the Pacific. The crew was a handsome bunch of young bucks full of fun but very businesslike about the ship. We examined everything. Maj. Huie [MAJ Nelson F. Huie, Army Public Relations Officer] and I were even permitted to steer the big job under the watchful eye of young Capt. Petersen who was born in my home town of Glenwood Springs, Colo. He grew up in Salt Lake, but I knew his relatives at home.

When I stepped off the train in Glenwood, my outfit was waiting for me and how healthy and fine they

looked—no malnutrition here. We made for a restaurant and a succulent steak. During the meal I saw Bunk Barlow, the uncle of young Capt. Petersen. I went over to tell him that young Capt. Peterson had flown me out to Galapagos a few weeks before. Barlow said word had been received that the boy had been killed.

The news depressed me terribly as I recalled the splendid boys of that crew. They were no doubt victims of a tropical storm. The horror and desperation of a plane going down in a merciless ocean was terrifyingly near to me.

I am painting now. Have seven compositions moving along, but the one that fascinates me most is a sea piece—the tail of a flying fortress is slipping out of sight being consumed by monstrous waves.

—FRANK MECHAU
Time Inc. archives¹⁶

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

An uneventful flight put us down in Lima where we met the Ambassador. He called in his cultural relations man who turned out to be George Valliant whom I had met in New York. Major Huie and I were invited to his home for lunch where we met Mrs. Valliant and the three children. We had much spirited conversation. Mrs. Valliant challenged the War Art Unit as a lost movement; she thinks artists can't possibly produce good art on the short order plan. I contend that an artist, for example, need not live a lifetime in a particular army outpost to sense its desolation and bleakness—that often the first impact is the most pregnant; that an artist should be able to penetrate situations by sheer weight of creative imagination—and other such fine phrases flowed back and forth with ease. Jesus! Somebody better do something soon after all this talk.

—Typed notes on his travels in Latin America
Time Inc. archives



Point Man by Burdell Moody
Vietnam, 22 December 1967
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Point Man was inspired by personal experiences with ground infantry long-range reconnaissance patrols (LRRP). The point man was, in my view, always the most critical member of a LRRP patrol, cautiously leading, up front, a seven or eight man patrol, typically, through dense jungle. He was an experienced and exceptionally well trained expert in detecting a variety of booby traps and other explosive devices, many rigged with “trip wires” set to explode when stepped upon. In my painting of the LRRP patrol point man, I attempted

to show the tension and danger to which he was exposed. I felt I could better convey his deadly detail in the context of a delta operation rather than in a triple canopy jungle. In fact, the point man was truly alone in this dangerous assignment. For this reason, I depicted him in solitude, against a larger landscape and the expansive elements of a foreboding tropical sky. The ground infantry soldier in Vietnam lived and died in these natural and unnatural settings, always aware of the tentative nature of his own life.

—BURDELL MOODY

Probing for Land Mines in Bosnia
by Carl E. "Gene" Snyder
1996
Oil on canvas

U.S. soldiers entered Bosnia in 1995 as part of an international peacekeeping force. A Joint Combat Camera photograph captured the dangerous duty of detecting and clearing away underground land mines and inspired this painting.



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Probing for Land Mines is another one of those "milestone" paintings. I was looking at a lot of Edgar Degas work and had just attended an exhibition of Adolph Menzel's work at the National Gallery of Art. One thing about both artists that I admire is that they were accomplished sketchers. The sense of an underlying drawing was something that I wanted to bring into my paintings and Degas seemed to be a master at that. Rather than render something to death, I wanted

to suggest it and let the viewer fill in the details as opposed to me telling the whole story. The red underpainting, which many have mentioned to me means to them the "blood or danger in the soil," is from me painting two canvases entirely red first and then trying to work on that explosively colored ground and see what came out of it. In *Probing for Land Mines*, the result is a dramatic colorful response to what I would think [is] a nerve-wracking job.

—CARL E. "GENE" SNYDER



On Watch by Jeffrey T. Manuszak
Somalia, 1993
Watercolor on paper

During Operation RESTORE HOPE, Army representatives held a meeting with local elders at a school in Bali Doogle, Somalia. This photograph-based painting depicts S. Sgt. Dale A. Brown, 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry, providing security.



Original photograph of Sergeant Brown in Somalia

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

The way a historian writes about history—we paint. We can make places look hotter, rucksacks bigger, men more tired. We still have to remain historically correct, but we can exaggerate using the elements of art. That's what makes it so different from a photograph. We can tell a story through a painting.

—JEFFREY T. MANUSZAK
Soldiers magazine, 1996¹⁷



A Huge Responsibility by Martin Cervantez
Afghanistan, 2009
Oil on canvas

This painting is based on a photograph shot by the artist while deployed.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

11 November, 2008, 2d Lieutenant Patrick Farrell of the American Provincial Police Mentor Team (PMT-PO), 1st BN/203d Corps, Regional Police Advisor Command – East (RPAC-E) and his interpreter are meeting with the ANP (Afghan National Police) Chief in the town of Khost in Northeastern Afghanistan to review local situations and provide mentorship on several issues. The two work out logistical and tactical problems and ensure that they are working with coordinated efforts toward common strategic goals. The interpreter is covering his face so that he can't be identified by anyone that may have ties with the Taliban or Al-Qaida. PMTs are training the ANP for combat (infantry and basic training) as well as police missions.

—MARTIN CERVANTEZ

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This was a loose study that represents for me the contrasts that I saw while in Vietnam. I saw a beautiful country, culture and people caught up and entangled in a complicated war. I saw in the people a great strength and resilience.

From an artistic point of view, I was fascinated by the repetitious patterns of the barbed wire and the clothes hanging on the line. I used these elements to help me establish movement in my composition. I felt that a more abstracted style, rather than literal interpretation would be more appropriate.

—ROBERT KNIGHT



Scene near Chu Chi by Robert Knight
Vietnam, 1966
Marker/acrylic wash on paper

The 25th Infantry Division soldiers in action



Flares over Saigon River by H. Lester Cooke
Vietnam, August 1967
Watercolor on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

In a 6 August 1967 letter to then–Army Art Curator Marian McNaughton, Cooke wrote the following about his experience in Saigon:

This place is absolutely fascinating and nothing at all like any pre-conceived images I had. The country is lush and beautiful from the air, and less so when you get down into it. It's hot, torrid and dangerous at close quarters. Everybody's nerves tend to get an edge because of the booby traps and grenades and its infections. . . . There's more right in Saigon for a painter to do than a life time of hard work could get finished.

—H. LESTER COOKE

EULOGY FOR LESTER COOKE

By setting up similar programs for the Pentagon and NASA, Lester got dozens of American artists involved in painting and drawing the record of the American venture in the Indochina wars and the more successful American venture into space. . . .

In the nature of things, the Indochina war artist program has been less popular, less well known. The program itself yields a couple of important points about its director, Lester Cooke. The first is simply that he was in it all. He came no later than most people to detest the American phase of the Indochinese War; yet he lent his talents to the program on the simple proposition that his government had asked for his help and as a citizen he should respond if the help request was in itself harmless to the victims of the war.

The second thing about the war program is that Lester insisted on and succeeded in obtaining absolute freedom of expression for his artists over there. Here in Washington, for instance, we are familiar with the several long series of works Mitchell Jamieson made as a member of Lester's program, a searing indictment of the war and its devastating effects on Indochinese land and people.

Obviously, in Lester's view, he had signed on to run an art program of record and Impression, not a propaganda program.

—FRANK GETLEIN

Art critic for the *Washington Star News*¹⁸



Coning Searchlights by John Lavallo
Italy, 1944
Watercolor on paper

This piece is very similar to a sketch in Charles Baskerville's World War I sketchbook. Both show the impact of aircraft in battle and the development of night equipment such as searchlights.



Sketch by Charles Baskerville
ca. 1919
Pencil on paper



Jungle Training by Reginald Marsh
1943
Watercolor on paper

Jungle training for Pacific warfare is given in Caribbean area, primarily in Panama and Trinidad. Here men with full equipment jump off a ramp into a morass, then hack their way with machetes.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1945¹⁹



Helicopter Assault by Roger Blum
September 1966
Watercolor on paper

**IN THE ARTIST'S
OWN WORDS**

"Birds of Prey"—
choppers; predator
and prey all at the
same time in times
of war.

—ROGER BLUM

Chopper Pickup by Paul Rickert
Vietnam, 1966
Acrylic on illustration board

**IN THE ARTIST'S
OWN WORDS**

Troops on the move try to capture the constant uncertainty of life at its rawest, never sure of what chaos and the necessary response might be next. And always, the omnipresent chopper.

—PAUL RICKERT





Guard by Elzie Golden
Iraq, 2005
Pastel on paper

A 502d Infantry soldier

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

I was struck by the shelled buildings behind and next to the subject. I also used a style I had developed over the years at CMH where I layered colors rather than blend them.

—ELZIE GOLDEN

Rwanda Patrol by Carl E. “Gene” Snyder
January 1995
Oil on canvas

ARTIST’S STATEMENT

This is for me to be able to document the unsung heroes in the mud, grease and sweat—it’s poetry. A hundred years from now our work will reflect the Army at the beginning of the 21st century.

—*Training Times*, 1995²⁰



IN THE ARTIST’S OWN WORDS

Today I began a painting of a relief convoy entering the refugee camps in Rwanda. What is special about this painting is that I intended it to be completed by the end of work today. I did not use imprimatura before using color. I painted directly for an hour, taking a break for ten to fifteen minutes, and then beginning again. The results were fantastic! I thought before each brushstroke so as not to make further corrections

later. A bulk of the work was finished today, but I must continue on it Monday. I may have come up with a solution to my problem of painting. Just do it! If I paint with the attitude that it can be destroyed or reworked and that no one’s opinion matters but my own, I will do great things. The only person that needs to be pleased by my work is myself.²⁵

—CARL E. “GENE” SNYDER
Journal entry, 6 January 1995



Providing Necessities by Peter G. Varisano
United States, 1992
Watercolor on paper

Soldiers providing Hurricane Andrew relief in
Florida

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

These soldiers from the 82d Airborne Division were down in Dade County, Florida, handing out food and other supplies to the thousands of people, now homeless, because the storm had destroyed all their homes. This area was at a high school that was turned into a medical and food distribution center. These soldiers were greatly appreciated by the thousands of homeless civilians.

—PETER G. VARISANO

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

At the time we were in Nam, the operative phrase was winning hearts and minds. As part of that concept the Army would set up portable health clinics and treat the civilian population. This painting along with *Di Bau* (go vote), was the closest I came to propaganda painting. Our team left before the Tet offensive, which I believe changed the tenor of the war and accompanying policies. On another occasion we flew with a Med Strac Unit into a Montagnard village to bring clothing and supplies. This was one of the few times we were shot at. As the sergeant sitting next to me explained, “when you hear the pop pop, the bullets are pretty far away—you don’t hear the ones that get you anyway.”

—JOHN O. WEHRLE



Sick Call at Tien Thuoc by John O. Wehrle
Vietnam, 1966
Oil on masonite



Running Blues by Joseph S. Hindley
Fulda, Germany, November 1972
Watercolor on paper

This painting and the following one, *Field Training Exercises* (alternate title *Orange from the Top*), depict REFORGER (Return of Forces to Germany) exercises. During 8th Infantry Division training, troops divided into orange and blue teams.



Field Training Exercises (alternate title *Orange from the Top*) by Joseph S. Hindley
Fulda, Germany, November 1972
Watercolor on paper



Going thru Gas by George Harding
ca. 1918
Charcoal on paper

Chemical warfare in the form of poison gasses such as chlorine or mustard gas was one of the major innovations in World War I. Gas masks became standard issue for the troops sent to France.



Training Together (Scaling a Wall) by Sieger Hartgers
Saudi Arabia, 1991
Watercolor on paper

Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division train 150 kilometers north of Ad Dammam.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

I did a series with soldiers helping each other scaling a wall. When I saw them doing this, I found this a perfect synonym for the Army, as I know it. The hands creating a perfect knot and triangle of the arms, I really liked the symbolism this created.

—SIEGER HARTGERS



Bringing in the Ammo by Aaron Bohrod
Rendova Island, South Pacific, 1943
Oil on masonite

All day long soldiers unload ammunition, rations and other supplies onto the beach. In the last greenish moments of the day these soldiers struggle ashore with a last batch of mortar shells. There is one 60-mm shell in each compartment of the cloverleaf case. The shells are heavy, and there is jagged, treacherous coral under the men's feet.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1943²¹

ARTIST'S STATEMENTS

The War brought many opportunities to me as an artist. At the age of thirty-five when my war-art period began, it would not have expected that I'd be drafted for active military service. Mostly likely, instead of a gun I would have been handed a broom to sweep up some domestic army barracks. I preferred a paint brush to a scrub brush. That I was allowed to paint at all during those hectic times proved to be the greatest gift of all. The opportunity to share in part at least, the life of the fighting soldier and to gain close insight into the miseries and occasional glories of combat made possible the basic understanding essential to pictorial interpretation.

—AARON BOHROD
*A Decade of Still Life*²²

Being a war artist is very much like being any other kind of artist. There are elements of discomfort and danger, depending upon what is called the military situation and the willingness or eagerness of the artist to project himself into it. Otherwise the artist at the front or behind the front does what every painter since Giotto has done. He paints what he sees, or what he knows, or what he imagines to be, or what someone has told him was, or what he would like things to be, or he combines several of those categories whenever he so desires.

I think I am an example of the simple painter who paints what he sees. In war as in ordinary life, the glints one looks at are usually beautiful enough, or ugly enough, or even enough to be worth recording in pictorial terms. To me the visual aspect of things is generally pretty wonderful. But since every artist claims that he paints what he sees, before I go too far and find myself prey to some semantic purist, let me say that when I state I paint what I see, I mean I consider it necessary to have a given situation take place before my eyes in order that it may later achieve existence as a possible work of art. I have the feeling that in painting the war it is incumbent upon the artist to be to a great extent documentary.

—Time Inc. archives



Combat Engineers by Robert DeCoste
Vietnam, February 1967
Acrylic on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The activity in the painting took place in February 1967. I was participating in the U.S. Army's Civilian Combat Artist Program. A new military base called Dong Tam, near the City of My Tho, in the Mekong Delta was under construction when I got to the Republic of Vietnam. They were building it with mud and sand pumped from the Song River into old rice paddies near the city (of My Tho . . .).

The engineers in my painting were building roadways inside this new base, and huge billows of dust swirled up as their equipment passed back and forth, and sometimes the cloud was so thick the sky glowed brown-orange against the sun. I stood and watched this guy come out of the dust riding his clanking mechanical behemoth, and I thought, "There's my first painting." I took several photos of the action, and, later that afternoon, sketched out a couple of quick compositional ideas. The painting was executed a few months later in Boston, from that source material.

The heat and humidity there were as oppressive as I've ever known. The dust raised by all the construction work stuck to sweaty skin, and mucous membranes. It got in your nose, your eyes and ears, the corners of your mouth, down your neck—everywhere. I have never been more uncomfortable. Rivulets of sweat cleaned paths through the dirt clinging to faces and necks that refused to dry in the humid air. I was able to get away from it, but those guys worked, and breathed, in a swirling dust cloud all day long. I thought their efforts deserved some kind of recognition, so I tried to convey something of the very trying and unglamorous conditions under which they had to work.

—ROBERT DECOSTE



Always the Rice Paddies by David M. Lavender
Vietnam, 1966
Acrylic on illustration board

The artist accompanied a 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry, convoy to Black Virgin Mountain, outside Tay Ninh, Vietnam, 17–18 November 1966.



Hill 609 by Fletcher Martin
Tunisia, 1943
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

We spent two days making drawings on bloody Hill 609. It is a beautiful high butte, a natural fortress. The Germans had dug positions out of solid rock in places which commanded a clear view of the countryside for miles. The slope up to the cliff is gentle and open on all sides. There is an olive grove and an Arab village just at the foot of the big rock wall. Some officers whose platoons had thrown back the last counter attack took us over the whole area and explained the action. The flat top of the hill is literally covered with the shrapnel which drove the Jerries away. There were no shell holes of the usual kind because only about six inches of earth covers the top of the rock. The shell burst made an ugly wound in the thin, dark skin of earth and left the white rock showing obscenely through. We didn't step on any mines, although I can remember when my nerves were calmer, but we did see some booby traps fixed ingeniously in the rocks.

—FLETCHER MARTIN

Letter to Daniel Longwell, *Life* Executive Editor, 1943²³

Skirmish of the stone walls high up on Hill 609 took place early in the morning, just after the cloud blew away. Americans on the right can be identified by round helmets and green uniforms. At one point in the battle three Germans tried to confuse the Americans by getting around behind, but they were shot by Hawaiian Lieut. Crockett. The Germans had insufficient cover and began to pull back. A Stuka flew around the cliff and went back and forth strafing. The Americans lifted up their machine guns and fired at it until it began to smoke and went away. Two Germans came out with their hands up. One of our men jumped out to get them. He was instantly killed. Then other men had to go out and kill both the Germans. A sergeant stuck his head up to look for more Germans, was shot between the eyes. Finally, when the Germans had lost about 40 men, the rest gave up.

—*Life* magazine, 1943²⁴

ABOUT FLETCHER MARTIN

This is the artist correspondent. He is the man who shows us the war in its tragedy, in its humor, in its ridicule—when words to describe it are inadequate. He differs from the photographer correspondent in that he can make his picture of the battle area after the fighting has stopped, which is very often more satisfactory. He can take his time and draw the terrain from all angles. The photographer must shoot when and what he can shoot. The artist can dramatize the scene for the men who are too busy fighting to notice anything. Here it is necessary that the artist get the spirit of the thing.

Arrangements are usually made through the commanding officer of the area. Unless the officer in charge knows a little something about painters he is, of course, surprised to find one in the midst of all the fighting and many of them think the man is “just plain nuts.” But everyone is curious about and interested in his paintings.

Time Inc. archives²⁵



Street Fight by Elzie Golden
An Najaf, Iraq, 2003
Oil on canvas

Depicting soldiers of the 3d Infantry Division engaging Iraqi forces in the spring of 2003, this painting is based on images provided by the division.



Cheeta Gets a Bath by David M. Lavender
Vietnam, 1966
Acrylic/pencil on board

Artist's notes on reverse of painting: "Cheeta," the 175-mm gun at the 32d Artillery at Cu Chi, gets her care and cleaning during a lull in fire missions.

David Lavender paints Cheeta Gets a Bath in Hawaii, 1966.



Refueling by Warren W. Buchanan
Cu Chi, Vietnam, 1967
Oil on canvas

Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division training in vehicle maintenance and refueling

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

In a 1969 letter, Buchanan wrote, Being on Team 5 was the best thing that happened to me in the Army and certainly made the 2 years worthwhile. I especially appreciated the freedom given us in Vietnam and Hawaii to choose our subject matter and interpret it in our own way. . . . Looking at the paintings and sketches from our team and others, you can find different degrees of competence and experience; the man with little schooling or understanding of art, but with a desire to visually describe what he felt or saw on the battlefield, was able to produce an image I could understand and share with him.

Many words have been used to describe this war. I think these combat artist teams serve a useful purpose in visualizing the soldiers' experiences.

—WARREN W. BUCHANAN

On Patrol by Ronald E. Pepin
Vietnam, August 1966
Ink/marker on paper

A 1st Infantry Division soldier





Military Necessity by Aaron Bohrod
1944
Oil on canvasboard



In a letter to the editor, John Morris of Chicago, Illinois, provided the photograph at left and wrote,

Sir: Aaron Bohrod's painting of the wire-strung cross had a very real model. While I was in Pont-L' Abbe a few months ago I took this snapshot of the same cross, with the same Signal Corps wires strung over it.

—*Life* magazine, 1945²⁶

Military Necessity hung these Signal Corps wires on cross outside Pont-L'Abbé, a Breton village that is famous for the high lace cones that the women of the town wear on their heads. An M.P. directs traffic from the steps as a Sherman tank races up the road at the left. The Americans got this area on the south coast of Brittany cheap, with the help of the Maquis. The damage done here in the fighting was far less than these towns suffered in the ruthless religious wars of the 17th century.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1945²⁷

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

In a June 1979 letter to Marylou Gjernes, former Army Art curator at the Center of Military History, Bohrod wrote,

I want to thank you for cooperating in the exhibition of my war paintings. . . . One thing troubles me about the selection of the work Of the ten or so paintings I consider as being memorable and which made the whole project for me one that I have been proud to have participated in, only one: *Military Necessity* appears to be available for the show.

Not only for the good . . . [the exhibition] will do me personally in the presentation of the *best* things I did during the war years, but for the sake of the Historical Project as a whole—to demonstrate the worthiness of the program publicly.

—AARON BOHROD



Desert Storm 101st Style by Peter G. Varisano
Saudi Arabia, January 1991
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This oil was an attempt to show some sort of geographical reference to where this was taking place. The small Mosque in the background places these attack helicopters in the Middle East. Actually, it was in northern Saudi Arabia. The machines were handled in a technical sense and the rest is very painterly.

—PETER G. VARISANO



Attacking Pillbox on Maneuvers in England by Olin Dows
United Kingdom, 15 September 1943
Watercolor on paper

At the ATC (Assault Training Center) in Woolacombe, Devonshire, in southwest England, soldiers who were to be part of the D-Day invasion received training. The sands in this part of England approximated what the soldiers would find when they landed on the French coastline.



Moment of Truth by Al Sprague
Panama, 1988
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This is part of a series I did documenting the American soldier in Panama. General Fred Woerner arranged for me to go with the troops on various practice missions, including flying with them on C-130's and watching them jump. As I watched each soldier approach the open door, I could feel the tension and fear—but that did not stop him from launching himself into the air. The excitement and determination was so palpable that I wished I had on gear so that I could jump, too.

—AL SPRAGUE

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

This is not a series of paintings of battle scenes. Rather, it is a portrait of the soldier, in whose face and figure the struggle of combat is reflected. No embellished picture of war can truly portray the intense feelings of the trooper as he or she goes into combat, especially for the first time. That flight into the night, that leap into darkness, the world of the unknown can only be felt by each individual in his or her own personal way. It is the facing of that danger, no matter what the consequences, that is the truly heroic thing, where terror does not blind, nor fear incapacitate.



Study for Airborne Grounded I by Steven M. Hyatt
Panama, 1974
Watercolor on paper

This scene took place 12 June 1974 at the Panamanian LaGuardia National Jump School, Fort Sherman. Participating in the exercise was Company A, 3d Battalion, 5th Infantry, out of Fort Kobbe, Panama Canal Zone. Fort Sherman was the home of the Jungle Operations Training Center.

In this watercolor, Hyatt has captured the flavor of a jungle environment with his use of color and shading. In the foreground, the vehicle tracks provide a contrast to the wild landscape.



Dropping Supplies by Gary Sheahan
New Britain, 1943
Watercolor on paper

Men at war in the Southwest Pacific are dwarfed by the immensity of the jungle and also by the tools of their trade. Here, Gary Sheahan, *Chicago Tribune* war artist, shows mud-soaked marines in a forward area on New Britain watching the arrival of supplies dropped from the bomb bays of B-17 Flying Fortresses. Unloading at almost treetop level, these big delivery wagons of the sky drop food and ammunition with complete precision.

—*Chicago Daily Tribune*, 1944²⁸

The Observer by Lester G. Hornby
France, 1918
Ink lithograph on paper

World War I soldier surveys the
landscape during the Meuse-
Argonne offensive.



Checking It Out by Theodore J. Abraham
Vietnam, 1967
Ink on paper

Soldiers of the 4th Infantry Division patrol
in the Central Highlands.



So What by Joseph Hirsch
Italy, 1944
Crayon on paper

The armband with cross identifies the soldier as a medical corpsman.



Infantry Soldier by Roger Blum
Vietnam, 1966
Ink on paper



Grenade Thrower by Roger Blum
Vietnam, 1966
Ink on paper

Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division in action

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Shapes, silhouettes and gestures are powerful images that could determine life or death, if taken for granted, in the combat zone.

—ROGER BLUM

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Because of a conviction of my faith, I was drafted into the Army in 1965 as a conscientious objector, one who desired to serve, however not to bear arms. After basic training at Ft. Sam Houston, in San Antonio, Texas, I was assigned to the Medical Instructor staff, where I taught basic medical procedures and care for war zone situations. While teaching, I was introduced to another artist on base by the name of Paul Rickert. Paul introduced me to the newly formed U.S. Army Combat Art Program to which we both applied and both were accepted. . . .

Because this was the first time the U.S. Army used enlisted men to document war, we all were pioneering as we went along. We were free to record whatever we wanted, which allowed each artist total freedom of expression. My primary mediums in the field were my camera, sketch book and a 5 color Prang watercolor kit, just like the one I had in elementary school. These all allowed me to gather subject material quickly and yet travel light. I did many sketches in the field, with little thought to technique or formality, just a desire to capture the essence of what I saw or felt.

I was not a soldier, as one normally thinks, but an innocent young artist caught in a political debate. I loved my country and found a way to best serve her. I approached each day not in fear, but as an artistic challenge which veiled my fear.



Machine Gunner in Late Afternoon by Roger Blum
Vietnam, 1966
Watercolor on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

As a conscientious objector, I carried no weapons but my sketchbook and my faith. Some added other means of communication to their faith.

—ROGER BLUM

Looking Down in the Trail by James Pollock
Vietnam, August 1967
Watercolor on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

It was early in my experience as a soldier artist that I came to understand the hardship ordinary soldiers in Vietnam experienced on a day-to-day basis. Part of my first foray on a patrol was wading through a dirty leech-infested jungle stream. It was blistering hot and bugs were swarming. From my head down to my waist, I was soaked with sweat; from my waist to my feet, I was soaked with mucky water. When we finally reached dry ground, everyone but me sat down and took off their jungle boots and socks and then rolled up their jungle fatigues. One of the soldiers looked at me and said, "You better take your boots off and check yourself over." I took my boots and socks off and my legs were covered with leeches. The soldiers were good to me, but they did get a good laugh when they saw my startled look as I saw the leeches on my legs.

—JAMES POLLOCK





Vietnamese Soldiers Board Helicopters by Robert Knight
Vietnam, 1966
Pencil/conté crayon on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This sketch depicts groups of soldiers getting on helicopters to go out on various missions in the field. I am a little vague about the exact place because of seeing this scene constantly while in Vietnam. Compositionally, I found the angles and shapes of the helicopters to be very interesting and useful for organizing the page.

—ROBERT KNIGHT



Helicopter Pickup by Paul Rickert
Vietnam, 1966
Pencil on paper

The 101st Airborne Division soldiers
await takeoff.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Guarding the chopper during pickup shows the medics helping a wounded soldier to the chopper (the war of the chopper, always on the attack or to the rescue). Also, in different paintings as well, I tried to depict the role of the Black soldier which was a prominent figure in the Vietnam War.

—PAUL RICKERT



Under Fire by Howard Brodie
Germany, 1945
Pencil on paper

The 102d Infantry Division soldiers huddle together in Hottdorf while shells explode.

Artist's notes on drawing: Two doughs had their arms around each other. One was sobbing. Inside grain shed with 88's and tank fire (MG tracers and shells) coming through the walls.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

I went to the cowshed to take a nervous leak. A shell hit, shaking the roof; I ducked down and found I was seeking shelter with two calves. I crossed the courtyard to the grain-shed, where about 60 doughs were huddled. Tank fire came in now. I looked up and saw MG tracers rip through the brick walls. A tank shell hit the wall and the roof. A brick landed on the head of the boy next to me. We couldn't see for the cloud of choking dust. Two doughs had their arms around each other; one was sobbing. More MG tracers ripped through the wall, and another shell. I squeezed between several bags of grain. Doughs completely disappeared in a hay pile.

—HOWARD BRODIE
*Yank: The GI Story of the War*²⁹

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Betty Ann Bowser interviewed Brodie in 1996 for PBS:

BOWSER: "It was World War II. Brodie was 27 years old. He enlisted, and because he had drawn sports figures as a civilian, the army assigned him to *Yank*, the brand new magazine created for the average GI. With thousands of other American soldiers, Brodie boarded a ship for Guadal Canal. The other soldiers carried guns. He was armed with a black pencil and a sketch pad."

BRODIE: "I was just trying to record what was going on before my eyes as best I could. I was really afraid over there, and one time I froze with fear when I heard firing ahead of me, and I had that feeling, and after the firing, I moved back, and I could hardly live with myself. I don't know if it's typical of the average person in war, but I froze."

BOWSER: "But he was still able to draw. . . . They were men who'd seen terrible things and knew they would see more. That is what Sgt Howard Brodie tried to capture, first in the South Pacific and later in Europe. He drew the surprise and sheer terror of American GIs cornered by German soldiers about to be machine-gunned to death. He captured this moment, when two men desperately embraced each other during an enemy attack. He drew the souls of men who hated what they had to face but did it day after day because it was their job."³⁰



On Patrol—Full Pack by William Linzee Prescott
South Vietnam, 1967
Watercolor on paper



Original sketch for watercolor



Voodoo Shack Erection by Heather C. Englehart
Iraq, June 2004
Ink/watercolor on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Much of today's war is fought by a new brand of soldier. The military's National Guard and Reserve branches are now in the mix working side by side with the active duty components. The Guard and Reserve soldiers shed a new light on getting things done. Many of these "part-time" soldiers are often more diversified, as their civilian occupations frequently differ from those they hold in the military. This enhancement nearly doubles the military's assets.

Loosely drawn in ink and accented with the surrounding natural-tones in watercolor, a story unfolds on this piece of ordinary watercolor paper. It is a story of teambuilding, camaraderie, and personal knowledge pooling together to construct a desperately needed building in a short amount of time, with limited supplies.

Several members of the aviation community, none of which hold a military occupation specializing in construction, are portrayed here working as one to erect the Voodoo Shack, a Battalion Headquarters building, in Iraq, one piece at a time. This building, along with many other structures, was built upon knowledge that each of the individuals brought to the team, gained from their civilian lives, to get the job done.

—HEATHER C. ENGLEHART



57+

Cartoons

“Laughter is the best medicine.”

Cartoons drawn by soldiers provide satirical comment into the trials and tribulations encountered. Cartoons poke fun at the situations in which soldiers find themselves, at the officers and noncommissioned officers who torment them, and at the mundane jobs often required. In cartoons, the average soldier could take a swipe at the military establishment without fear of retribution. Cartoonists lifted the spirits of their fellow soldiers who knew, all too well, exactly what was being said while providing momentary relief from the burden of warfare.

In World War II, the prime beneficiary of cartoons submitted by enlisted men, whether staff artists or amateur cartoonists, was *Yank* magazine. *Yank* gave the soldiers their first glimpses of Dave Breger’s *G.I. Joe* and Sgt. George Baker’s *The Sad Sack*. The hapless hero of these comics was “every soldier.” In addition, Bill Mauldin of the 45th Infantry Division created the characters of Willie and Joe, who were eventually featured in *Stars and Stripes*.

In subsequent conflicts, cartoons continued to lampoon the foibles of the military, helping soldiers get through the rigors of war by providing comic relief and boosting morale.

George Baker, World War II

Time Out for Yank
ca. 1945
Ink on paper

The Sad Sack debuted in the first issue of *Yank* magazine. These cartoons highlighted the misadventures of a hapless private as he responded to absurd situations.



ARTIST'S STATEMENT

To occupy my evenings with something constructive for a change, I decided to do some cartoons that would explain pictorially what Army life was like.

To begin with, I had to devise an average soldier. In order to refute the ads that were then beginning to make their appearance, in which soldiers always looked bright and cheerful, bedecked in tailored uniforms immaculately pressed and shined, I reached into psychological, if not actual, reality and pulled out my crushed ping-pong ball. The state of mind of a soldier was more authentic and real to me than his outer appearance, so therefore my character looked resigned, tired, helpless and beaten. Going the whole hog, he looked clumsy and even a little stupid, but these last two elements were actually unintentional and only slipped in because I was still a bit rusty in my drawing.

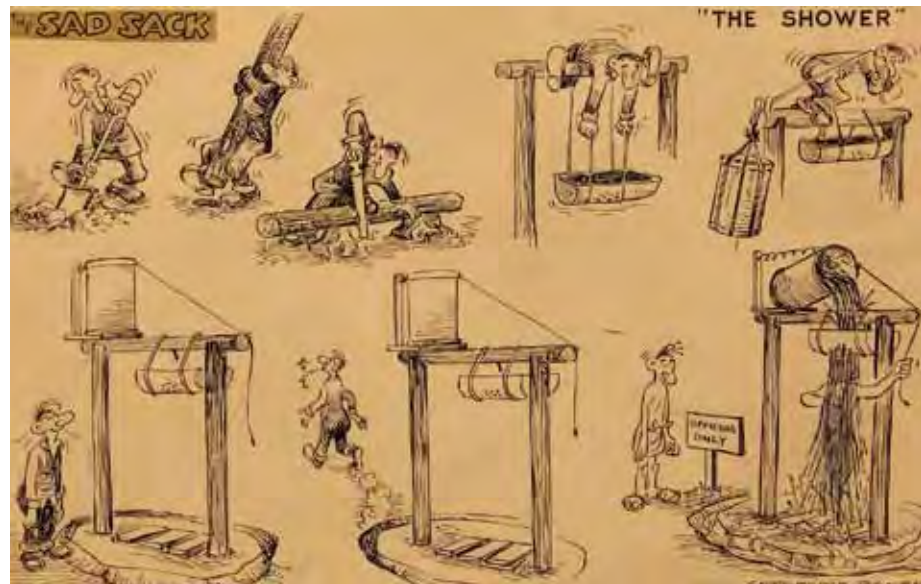
—GEORGE BAKER
Biography, 1946³¹

George Baker, World War II



Planning
8 September 1944
Ink on paper

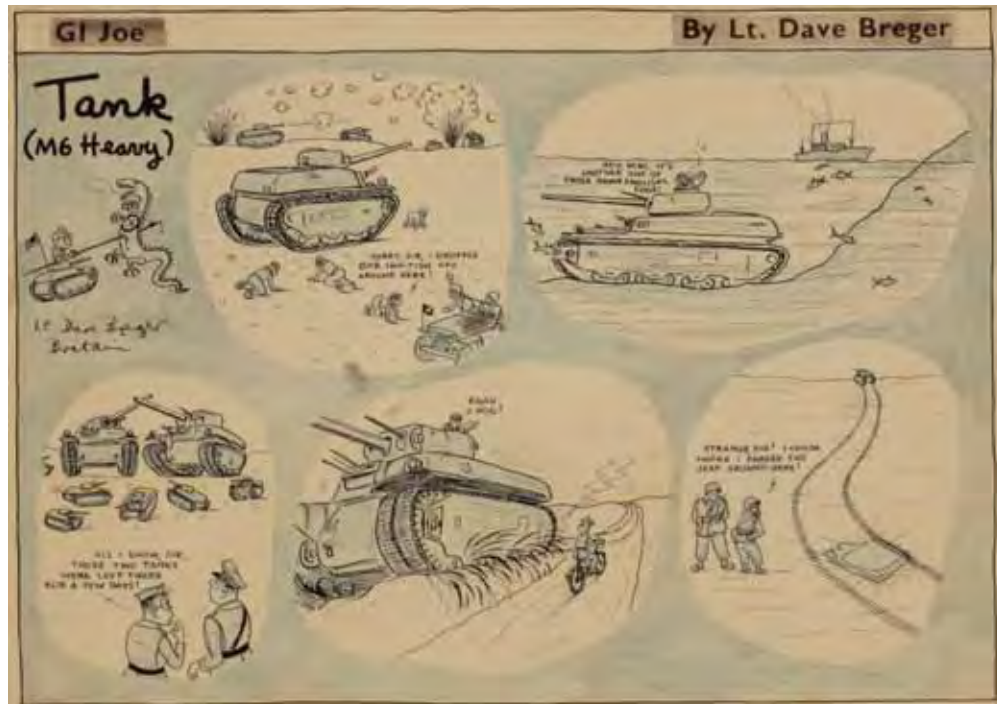
The Shower
15 October 1943
Ink on paper



Dave Breger, World War II

G.I. Joe, Tank (M6 Heavy)
United Kingdom
Ink/wash on paper

The title *G.I. Joe* came from the military term *Government Issue*, which was stamped on all items carried by soldiers. The *G.I. Joe* cartoon series began 17 June 1942 in *Yank*, and “G.I. Joe” was eventually adopted as the popular term for an American soldier.



I wish you wouldn't insist on a lightning rod for extra protection!
United Kingdom, 1942
Ink/wash on illustration board

“Private Breger” is a wide-eyed, overspectacled, freckled little soldier, clumsy, meek, confused but undismayed. Cartoonist Breger likes to think of ‘Private Breger’ as typical of all the nation’s millions of little men, to whom soldiering is alien, but who cheerfully acquiesced when war came. Through Private Breger, Cartoonist Breger translates Army life into civilian terms.

—*Time* magazine, 1943³²

Bill Keane, World War II



Rank Latrine
ca. 1942
Ink/wash on paper



Psst . . . Medalist? . . . Citations?
ca. 1942
Ink/wash on paper



K9 Corps Classification
ca. 1942
Ink/wash on paper

Irwin Caplan, World War II



M'gawd, Sarge, I thought I was cutting In on A WAAC!

1943

Ink/wash on illustration board



It started out as his foxhole, Sir!

28 July 1944

Ink/wash on illustration board

Wayne Thiebaud, World War II



You'll have to rewrite this regulation. Why, even a child can understand it!
1945
Ink/wash on paper



To Whom It May Concern
ca. 1945
Ink/wash/gouache on paper



Wayne Thiebaud at Mather Field, California,
Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

Ralph Stein, World War II



One-Man Band

ca. 1942

Ink/wash on illustration board

The barracks musician is not necessarily a guitarist.



Souvenir Hunter

ca. 1942

Ink/wash on illustration board

The 79th Article of War reads as follows: "All property taken from the enemy is the property of the United States and shall be secured for the service of the United States, and any person who neglects to secure such property . . . shall be punished as a court martial may direct."



G.I. in a Bottle

ca. 1942

Ink on illustration board

Here is our secret bottle weapon which is used to float troops in battle equipment to Germany by the Gulf Stream.

All captions from Ralph Stein, *What Am I Laughing At?*³³

Ralph Stein, World War II

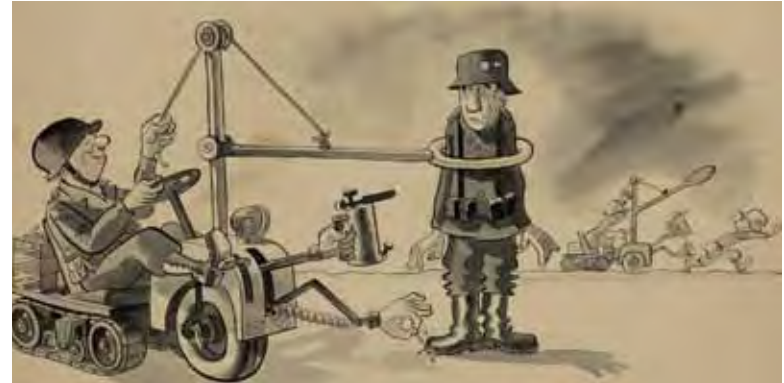


Tank Repair

ca. 1942

Ink/wash on paper

The thoughtful goldbrick will remember the importance of keeping machines well oiled.



German Capturing Device

ca. 1942

Ink/wash on illustration board

Incendiary, Pedal M1922 or Hot Foot: This is a light mobile, single-seat infantry cooperation weapon, which can also be used to illuminate GI crap games at night when the invasion is over. Method of operation: The bewildered Nazi is chased until exhaustion. Then the embracing ring, or hugger, clamps over his head, pinning his arms to his side while the automatic hand appears with a lighted match, applying a hot foot in the customary manner. When a storm trooper or oberfeldwebel is bagged, the weapon applies the blowtorch with satisfactory results. How do the matches get stuck in the boots of the Nazi? They are placed there weeks before the invasion by fifth-columnists disguised as poor but honest shoe-shine boys.

Bill Mauldin, World War II



No, Thanks Willie. I'll Go Look Fer Some Mud Wot Ain't Been Used.

ca. 1943

Ink on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The infantryman bathes whenever he has an opportunity, which is about twice during the summer and not quite as often in the winter. He bathes in rivers, seas, and old shell holes which have collected water. The only consistent thing about his bath is that it is always cold.

—BILL MAULDIN
*Up Front*³⁴

Bill Mauldin, World War II



Sir, Do Ya Hafta Draw Fire While Yer Inspirin' Us?
ca. 1943
Ink on paper

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I haven't tried to picture this war in a big, broad-minded way. I'm not old enough to understand what it's all about, and I'm not experienced enough to judge its failures and successes. My reactions are those of a young guy who has been exposed to some of it, and I try to put these reactions in my drawings. Since I'm a cartoonist, maybe I can be funny after the war, but nobody who has seen this war can be cute about it while it's going on. The only way I can try to be a little funny is to make something out of the humorous situations which come up even when you don't think life could be any more miserable. It's pretty heavy humor, and it doesn't seem funny at all sometimes when you stop and think it over.

—BILL MAULDIN
*Up Front*³⁴

Ludwig Bemelmans, World War II

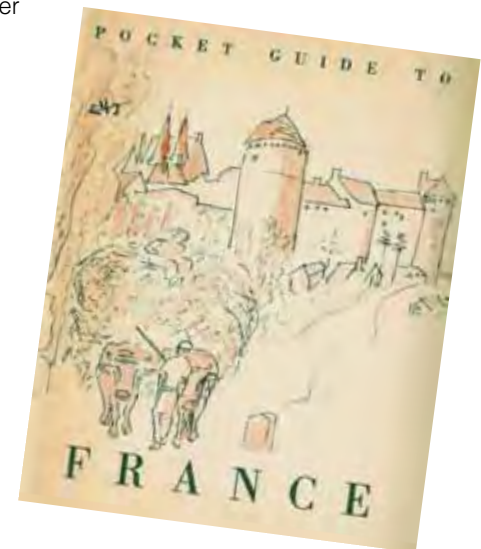


You Will Probably Get a Rousing Welcome from the French
1944
Ink/watercolor on paper



Paris Street Scene
1944
Ink/watercolor on paper

These two illustrations were created for the booklet, *A Pocket Guide to France*, published in 1944 by the U.S. Government Printing Office. It was provided to soldiers deployed overseas to give them a basic understanding of where they were going and how to interact with civilians and to supply basic conversational terms. Produced by the Graphics Section, Programs Branch, Industrial Services Division, Bureau of Public Relations, more than a million copies of the guidebook were published. In addition, the Graphics Section prepared posters, leaflets, pamphlets, cartoon posters, cartoon strips for periodical publication, windshield stickers, streamers, billboards, and other graphic material, which was distributed nationwide to industrial facilities engaged in important war production. Sketches for color posters were drawn while nationally known artists painted the final products.



Frank Miller, Korean War



I Know I'll Hate Myself in the Morning
South Korea, 1952
Ink on paper

Troops of the 7th Infantry Division are featured in this cartoon.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The men were relieved for four days when some GI found a baseball and bat, which meant a game between the officers and men. The officers lost big time!

—FRANK MILLER

TRIBUTE TO FRANK MILLER

In 1983, retired Lt. Col. William O. Tainter, who had served with Miller in Korea, wrote,

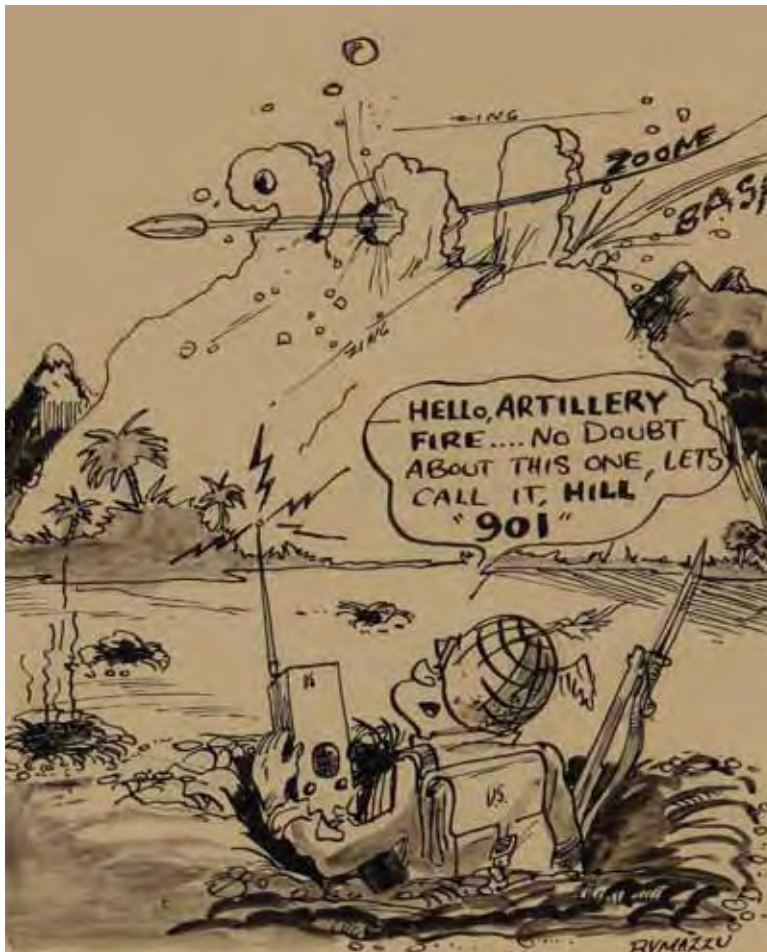
Three units of reserves were called into duty from the 5th Army District in April of 1951. The 758th Artillery Battalion was one of those units from Eastern Kansas sent to Fort Bragg to prepare the Battalion for service in the Korean War. . . .

While at Fort Bragg, Frank Miller was assigned to Communications, when he was a Corporal, and became known as an excellent cartoonist who portrayed the happenings of the Unit in pencil drawings on whatever scrap of paper he could find to raise the morale of the Army Unit. . . .

I received a call from Frank saying he was in Tague. . . . It was so great when I saw Frank Miller, who was then contacted by *Stars & Stripes*, and it did not take long before he was called “The Mauldin of the Korean War.” Miller also proved he was capable to lead soldiers in their regular duties by being selected as Master Sergeant of the Battalion Headquarters Battery. Within a few months, it was phenomenal the way he combined his artistic efforts with his ability to serve as a military leader during a daily active war.

Through his tremendous ability to portray wartime through artistic humor, Miller was one of the few servicemen who was able to raise the spirits of soldiers serving our country. During active military action, Miller managed to keep most of our men laughing from drawings he had scratched out on scraps of paper, in his continued efforts to raise morale.

James W. Mazzu, Korean War



Hello, Artillery Fire. . . . No Doubt About This One, Let's Call It, Hill "901"
South Korea, 1950
Ink/wash on paper

Cpl. James W. Mazzu was killed in action in Korea. He served with Headquarters Company, 38th Regiment, 2d Infantry Division, and many of his original works were destroyed at Kunu-ri.



Clipping from Stars and Stripes, 27 Apr 1952

Army Arts and Crafts DESERT STORM Cartoon Contest



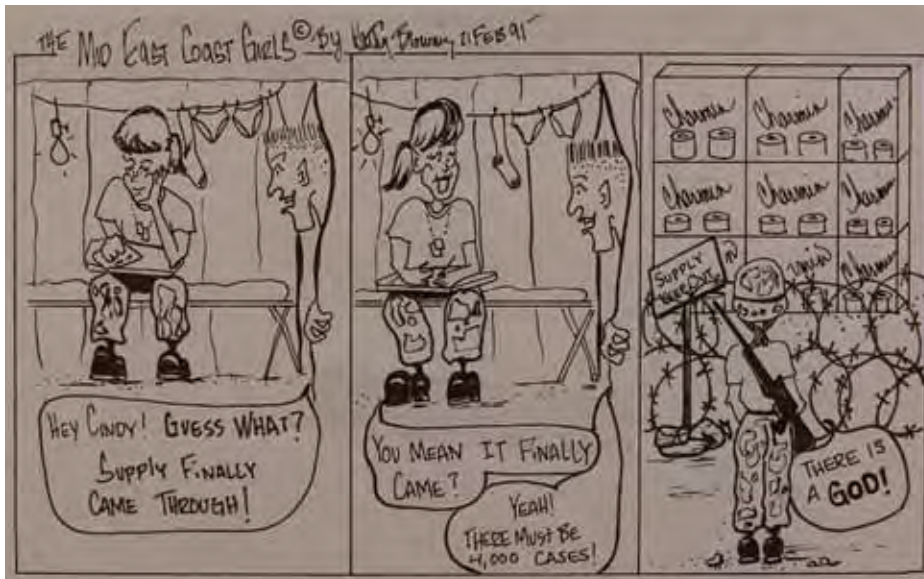
Cease Fire by Jerry D. Burchfield
1991
Ink on paper

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

As far as the cartoons go, painting and drawing was always just a hobby for me. Then I found myself in this strange foreign country in a war. I just drew cartoons to pass “down” time and relieve stress. We had to look at the situation with a sense humor or just go crazy. Most of the cartoons I drew dealt with everyday situations and were related to the things that the soldiers needed, wanted or felt.

—JERRY D. BURCHFIELD

Army Arts and Crafts DESERT STORM Cartoon Contest



Mid East Coast Girls, Supply Finally Came Through!
by Kathleen A. Browning
21 February 1991
Ink on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This drawing was inspired during a SCUD attack. We were in MOPP [Mission Oriented Protective Posture] 4 [all protection worn] and full combat load (Kevlar, body armor, LBE [load-bearing equipment]) waiting for the all clear. It was while I was encapsulated in all of this equipment that the scene from "The Wizard of Oz" of when Dorothy and the Scarecrow met the Tin Man, came to mind. I thought that this might have been how Jack Haley felt in his costume. I drew the cartoon shortly after the attack.

—STEPHEN E. MOSS



The 'Tin' Man by Stephen E. Moss
1991
Ink on paper

Army Arts and Crafts DESERT STORM Cartoon Contest



Saudi Smorgasbord by Daniel E. Brown Jr.
1991
Ink on paper

What Do You Mean...It's Been Over for Three Days!!! by Edward R. Quay
1991
Ink on paper





AT CUNEL

A DDG FIGHT IN THE AIR

H. H. King

After Battle

When combat is over, it is time to regroup, reflect, and assess the results and the damage, not only to soldiers but to civilians and the environs. The realities of battle often involve death and destruction, but there are also psychological scars—those that often are painted over by time and subjective memory. Sometimes events are revealed as *pentimenti*—ghostly remembrances of things past.

It is the artist's duty to record the aftermath, be it a grisly scene or a calm moment that reveals itself briefly and all too uncommonly. The artist sees the destruction that is sometimes hidden from others. If one looks into the faces of Gary Sheahan's inmates at Buchenwald or Lester Hornby's views of ruined towns, one can sense the pain of war's inhumanity. The artist records history and preserves it so that we can remember, reflect, and appreciate. Their art shows a microcosm of the overall picture—a memory that hopefully will not be repeated.



Bound for the St. Lo Front by Ogden Pleissner
France, 1944
Oil on canvas

The Normandy campaign devastated the countryside and towns in that region, which sustained almost more damage than the rest of France combined.

Breakthrough at St. Lo: On the morning of the breakthrough, July 25, the people of the desolate coast towns stand in the rubble and wave to the 3,000-plane armada roaring through the St. Lo front to deliver a shattering bombing that preceded the infantry's advance.

—*Life* magazine caption, 1945³⁵



MacArthur Reviewing Battle by Gary Sheahan
Philippine Islands, 1944
Oil on illustration board

General Douglas MacArthur left the Philippine Islands in 1942 after the invasion by Japanese forces but fulfilled his promise, "I shall return," in 1944.



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

On a search and destroy mission, this scene compelled me to use symbolism that went beyond reality in order to invade the heart of emotion of war's inevitable loss.

—ROGER BLUM

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Blum related the story of this painting to the author:

I was traveling by helicopter with a group of fifteen to twenty soldiers into a remote area of Vietnam. We came across the burning hootch. I asked an officer why it was burning. The officer replied that Papasan (the male in the family) was gone and just the wife and the two children remained. The wife said the husband was in Saigon to get food. The officer said that because Saigon was so far away, he was probably in a tunnel fighting Americans. The reason they burned the hootches was to corral all the families in one area so they could have better control over the area.

The Cost of War by Roger Blum
Vietnam, 1966
Oil on canvas



Buchenwald by Gary Sheahan
Germany, 1945
Watercolor on paper

The horror of the Holocaust was witnessed by American soldiers and the Buchenwald concentration camp was liberated on 8 April 1945.

Artist's notes on drawing: Buchenwald, thousands of walking, stinking skeletons, crowding around me as I worked at a simple pencil sketch, others standing, vacantly staring. Many lying sprawled on the ground, dead or alive, I was unable to tell. Hundreds in their bunks, naked, too weak to move, crowded, six to a bunk: living skeletons require little room. Bodies piled at the door of the hut, naked, their clothes now on some other body, possibly the next to die.

Bodies stacked head to foot, rotting in the sun, with trickles of slime draining from their mouths into the gutter. . . a cloud of fecal laden dust blowing across the camp. . . . The insane staring eyes of these living bodies that once were men. The typhus hut where even the other prisoners would not enter.

This was Buchenwald as I saw it. As my German prisoner guide said time and time again as he would point out something particularly gruesome, "There is your German Kultur, the swine."



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

St. Juvin. After the men of the Seventy-seventh Division, citified New Yorkers whose previous knowledge of forests had not extended much beyond the orderly boundaries of Bronx Park, had made a clean sweep of the Argonne wilderness (the nastiest battleground in France), it added as a full measure of its accomplishment the capture of the village of St. Juvin. It was no easy job. St. Juvin was on the second line of the Kriemhilde defenses and had the advantage of position on high ground with the precipitous walls of the citadel of Grand Pré as a vantage point for any attempted advance from the forest in that direction. And although the town had resisted three previous efforts on our part to take it, it finally fell to these city-bred men, who, after pushing through the Argonne's natural tangle of thickets and the German artificial tangle of barbed wire, rejoiced in an "open-air" fight, with a clean-cut goal in sight, and with only a few shells and machine-guns to keep them from it. In less than an hour after they had started the job, it was finished and paid for with a neat bag of prisoners as souvenirs.

—J. ANDRÉ SMITH
*In France with the American Expeditionary
Forces*³⁶

Marching Through a Ruined Town by J. André Smith
ca. 1918
Ink etching on paper

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

During the first few months of this mad conflict the war had not had time to grow self-conscious. It was not until it had settled into trenches, recovered its breath, put on new uniforms and steel helmets, used gas, dropped bombs, and felt reasonably sure of being something greater and more destructive and more expensive than anything in the world's history, did it become fully conscious of its importance and call upon an astounded and shocked world to come and regard it. And so it happened that the journalists or war correspondents, who at one time were the only "outsiders" to enjoy orchestra seats in the theater of war, were now being crowded by the arrival of novelists, poets, historians, propagandists, artists, sculptors, photographers, and moving-picture men. . . . All these spectators were allowed to view this "Big Show," record it, picture it, criticize it, and glorify it under the sanction of governments that made them their official, semi-official, or unofficial representatives. . . .

My contribution to this vast storage of war records is slight. War posed for me in the attitude of a very deliberate worker who goes about his task of fighting in a methodical and thorough manner. If the picture of war which the sum total of my drawings shows has any virtue of truth or novelty, it is in this respect: It shows War, the business man, instead of War, the warrior. It is an unsensational record of things actually seen, and in almost every instance drawn, as the saying is, "on the spot."³⁶



A Dogfight in the Air at Cunel by Lester G. Hornby
France, 1918
Ink lithograph on paper



The M.P. by Lester G. Hornby
France, 1918
Ink lithograph on paper

French towns were heavily bombed during the Meuse-Argonne offensive. Little was left except the layers of detritus of former structures.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

We donned helmets, made ready our gas masks and crept along between our guns and the high fagot camouflage on the enemy's side of the road. We saw the silhouettes of two avions almost directly over us fighting it out to a finish. The enemy plane had come over. . . . Another avion shot down from out of no-where, banked abruptly, slid into a nose dive and rolled up under the enemy's tail, opening fire at him with deadly accuracy. It all happened so quickly that the falling machine had hardly struck the earth before the victor had shut off his engine and was sweeping down to within a hundred feet of our heads, leaning over the side of his machine, and revealing the American colors on his plane.

—LESTER G. HORNBY
*Hornby's Etchings of the Great War*³⁷



Artist's notes on drawing:
The whole city is in ruins—I was not able to find a single house that could be called whole. The streets are clogged with the fallen buildings. There is a stench over the whole city—A stench of dead and phosphorus from the bombs. A few cats roam the ruins—there are dead men and horses covered by rubble. The walk or rather climb from here to the river took one half an hour. 4:30 R __ Sept. 17 -44

Brest, France by Gary Sheahan
France, 17 September 1944
Ink/wash on paper



A Soldier's Sacrifice

Sacrifice for a soldier comes in many forms. It starts out with the soldier leaving family behind when deployed. It shows itself in the long hours devoted to the job. On the battlefield, it comes with the loss of a comrade or with an injury. Whatever form it takes, an artist may capture it on paper or canvas. The artwork may not help *that* soldier, but it does provide insight into what a soldier experiences and sacrifices.



Death in the Snow by Edward Laning
Alaska, 1943
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

I went to Alaska with Henry Poor, Joe Jones and Willard Cummings. At Fort Richardson, near Anchorage, we prepared to go our various ways. Henry put in for home and Point Barrow, Joe for the Alcan Highway, I for the Aleutians. I finally made it to Attu just at the end of the campaign to win that island from the Japs. I sketched everything in sight, the wretched Japanese soldiers who were brought in from the hills in mopping up operations, the piles of rotting Japanese corpses. I made sketches of battle incidents, going over the mountainous terrain with the men who had fought these and reconstructing as best I could the exact situation. I was impressed, for example, by the account of the taking of a peak where a Japanese machine gun unit held out. The Americans had inched up the height crawling from rock to rock for cover. Finally there was nothing for it but to cross over a broad expanse of snow, a minor glacier that fell from the peak almost to the base of the mountain. One boy decided to dash for it. Alone on the snow bank the Japanese above picked him off. He fell and slid down, down the mountain leaving a red stain of blood against the side of the mountain which was seen by waiting soldiers miles away.

—EDWARD LANING
Archives of American Art

Casualties of War

Words often are inadequate to describe scenes of war. Images of war are, in themselves, powerful, but for the following pieces, we have not only visual imagery but the added descriptions by the artists as well. Combining the words and art of the soldiers evokes the feeling and impact of war and its toll far more forcefully than either could do alone.



The Beach by Tom Lea
Peleliu, 15 September 1944
Oil on canvas

This and the next two paintings depict U.S. Marine Corps combat in the Pacific theater.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Then I ran—to the right—slanting up the beach for cover, half bent over. Off balance, I fell flat on my face just as I heard the whishhh of a mortar I knew was too close. A red flash stabbed at my eyeballs. About fifteen yards away, on the upper edge of the beach, it smashed down four men from our boat. One figure seemed to fly to pieces. With terrible clarity I saw the head and one leg sail into the air. Captain Farrell, near the burst, never dodged or hesitated but kept running, screaming at his men to follow him to their objective down the beach.

—TOM LEA
*Battle Stations*³⁸

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

As we passed sick bay, still in the shell hole, it was crowded with wounded, and somehow hushed in the evening light. I noticed a tattered marine standing quietly by a corpsman, staring stiffly at nothing. His mind had crumbled in battle, his jaw hung, and his eyes were like two black empty holes in his head.

—TOM LEA
*Battle Stations*³⁸



Marines Call It That 2,000 Yard Stare by Tom Lea
Peleliu, 16 September 1944
Oil on canvas



Sundown on Peleliu by Tom Lea
Peleliu, 15 September 1944
Oil on canvasboard

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

About thirty paces back of the Jap trench, a sick bay had been established in a big shell crater made by one of our battleship guns. Lying around it were pieces of shrapnel over a foot long. In the center of the crater at the bottom a doctor was working on the worst of the stretcher cases. Corpsmen, four to a stretcher, came in continually with their bloody loads. The doctor had attached plasma bottles to the top of a broken tree stump and was giving transfusions as fast as he could after rough surgery. Corpsmen plied tourniquets, sulpha, morphine, and handled the walking wounded and lighter cases with first aid.

The padre stood by with two canteens and a Bible, helping. He was deeply and visibly moved by the patient suffering and death. He looked very lonely, very close to God, as he bent over the shattered men so far from home. Corpsmen put a poncho, a shirt, a rag, anything handy, over the gray faces of the dead and carried them to a line on the beach, under a tarpaulin, to await the digging of graves.

—TOM LEA
*Battle Stations*³⁸

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

D-morning, 15 September 1944, I landed on Peleliu Island, about fifteen minutes after the first troops hit the beach, with Marines under command of Captain Frank Farrell, Headquarters Company, Seventh Regiment. I remained with Farrell and his men under fire for the first thirty-two hours of the assault. As a "*Life* [magazine]" War Artist my purpose in going ashore was to record the United States Marines in combat. On the beach I found it impossible to do any sketching or writing; my work there consisted of trying to keep from getting killed and trying to memorize what I saw and felt under fire. On the evening of D-plus-one I returned to a naval vessel offshore where I could record in my sketchbook the burden of this memory. Before my hand steadied I put down the words and pictures that compose this book.

—TOM LEA
*Battle Stations*³⁸



Original sketches of Tom Lea's paintings from Battle Stations, courtesy of Adair Margo Gallery, El Paso, Texas



The Battle of the Caves by Robert Benney
1944
Oil on canvas

In Anzio, Italy, soldiers of VI Corps fire while medics tend to the wounded. German counterattacks at the Anzio beachhead forced the 2d Battalion, 157th Infantry, to take cover in caves.



Company in the Parlor by Joseph Hirsch
Cassino, Italy, March 1944
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The gaunt stone walls of an Italian farmhouse provide scant shelter for a front-line Battalion Aid Station, but they do screen the activities of the missing farmer's uninvited guests from the sharp eyes of enemy artillery spotters. Still under fire, the medics perform their duties with complete disregard for their own safety. Their only precaution seems to be to have the man at the left keep his binoculars trained on enemy guns and their targets of the moment. The parlor wall shrine makes an excellent medicine cabinet for drugs and antiseptics.

—JOSEPH HIRSCH
*Men Without Guns*³⁹



Evacuating Wounded Soldier by Harrison Standley

June 1944

Watercolor on paper

The aftermath of the D-Day invasion in Normandy, France

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

In a 1944 letter Standley wrote to his mother, he made the following comments:

I know that you will be interested to learn that I celebrated my arrival in the land of Cezanne, Renoir, Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Roualt . . . and many others by painting a small watercolor on the wet, golden-grey sands under a rich grey and ochre sky by the edge of the surly green sea at 7 a.m., invasion day plus 16.

You see, for days in England I had watched the parade, the circus parade, from a seat on a huge packing box housing a motor which had been left on the wayside. The circus procession was both magnificent and dreadful. As I watched, the great armored hippopotami waddled by. Then came the long-necked giraffes, the swaying elephants, the slow moving turtles, the web-footed ducks, the chained crocodiles, the prancing horses, the fire-snorting dragons, the burrowing moles, the snapping wolves, the long-clawed bears, the olive and brown zebras, the howling, roaring lions, the thousand-footed caterpillars, the long-legged storks, the darting hares, and the electric eels. Riding, pushing and climbing over this vast assemblage of strange beasts were the clowns, acrobats, trainers and bare-back riders. I had come to watch the parade long after it had begun, and as I watched day after day, I decided that it would, stretched end to end, encompass the globe three times. It rolled on and on, and where I watched, the animals in the parade crawled in through the gazing jaws of a multitude of arks, and sailed away to continue their journey elsewhere. . . .

Eventually, I was so fascinated by the parade that I joined in, and walked aboard one of the arks which weathered

stormy nights and days, and then disgorged me in the smooth, slick beach with a vast number of armored hippopotami. Here I noticed no end to the parade which just went rolling, rumbling, roaring onward up through the sands, over the cliffs, and away across the plains. I left the parade here to draw some pictures. You see, it was dawn and the beach was slick from the washing of the outgoing tide. The sky was grayish-blue with tinges of pale ochre light behind a screen of fog. The great grey arks, high and dry on the golden-gray beach, had rich red-orange bottoms and spots of rust showing.

I painted arks and watched the armored beasts from the parade charge up and down on dry land while the performers wound in streams down the beach and over the cliffs. A thousand balloons floated lazily overhead and while I sketched and took photographs, great eagles roared down to land on the cliff tops, picked up their burdens, and roared away.

My day at the beach was highly exciting and interesting. There were also several days off the beach. Then, late on one day, I walked up to one of the Noahs of one of the arks who was stretching his legs on the sand, and said, "Sir, may I ride back to England on your fine ship?" He regarded me with incredulous amazement, and said dubiously, "Sure, there's plenty of room if you're supposed to leave." I showed my orders, and later sailed away over a smooth, brilliant blue channel under a burning sun.

I am in England now drawing pictures, and waiting to go to the main tent later to see the gigantic and dreadful circus.

—HARRISON STANDLEY



Night Shift by Joseph Hirsch
Italy, 1944
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Hidden from snipers' bullets by the darkness of an Italian night, the medics bring in wounded infantryman. Although they are carrying their burden down a rocky, slippery slope, the corpsmen keep the litter level at all times to make the journey easier for the wounded man. The rifle makes an excellent emergency splint for a shot-up leg—an old battlefield trick of the litter bearers. Carrying a loaded litter over terrain too rugged even for pack mules, taxes to the utmost the skill and endurance of the corpsmen.

—JOSEPH HIRSCH
*Men Without Guns*³⁹



Normandy Wash by Lawrence Beall Smith
France, 1944
Oil on masonite

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The field hospitals, usually four to eight miles behind the lines, were often the scenes of contrast. Families moved back into their shattered towns after the battle passed to live amid Army installations of all kinds. French children loitered around field hospitals asking for chewing gum for themselves or cigarettes “pour papa.” They carried flowers—either as a friendly gesture or as a medium of exchange.

—LAWRENCE BEALL SMITH
*Men Without Guns*³⁹



End of a Busy Day by Franklin Boggs
1944
Oil on masonite

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Bloodstained litters give mute and shocking testimony of the fierceness of the struggle—gruesome evidence of a busy day for the bearers of wounded and dying men. Washing these litters in the salty water of the South Pacific—salt water does the best cleansing job—is one of the many unpleasant chores assigned to enlisted men of the Medical Corps. But litters must be clean for tomorrow—and more men.

—FRANKLIN BOGGS
*Men Without Guns*³⁹

The Man Without a Gun (alternate title *Hedgerow Hero, Normandy*)

by Lawrence Beall Smith

1944

Oil on masonite

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Medical aid men, like their brothers in the infantry, bear the unforgettable look which battle and nearness to death stamps on a man. But unlike the infantrymen, the Medical Corpsmen have no guns. They are constantly in contact with the enemy without the release which comes to the men who can shoot back. In Normandy, they took on the color of the red earth. Seen at Battalion Aid and Collecting Stations, they looked haggard, dirty, and weary. This man stands beside the ever-present "Salvage Pile"—the shoes and gear of dead men no longer in the line.

—LAWRENCE BEALL SMITH



Study for *The Man Without a Gun*
September 1944
Watercolor on paper





Casualties by Ogden Pleissner
France, 1944
Oil on canvas

Soldiers assigned to graves registration teams identify the bodies of soldiers for burial. Developed during the Spanish-American War, the process ensures proper identification through the use of tags and the review of pertinent records.

On the battlefield of St. Lo after the fighting, Artist Pleissner sketched a GI checking the dog tags of dead Americans at Isigny Army cemetery. He is fastening one dog tag to a stick which will serve as a temporary cross. Cemeteries were often established on battlefields where men fell.

—*Life* magazine, 1946⁴⁰

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

*From a November 1970
interview:*

I went on three assignments . . . underwritten by Abbott Laboratories who gave the pictures. It was a series of documentary pictures. The theory was that the camera could not censor itself, that artists could get the kind of visual information. . . .

*How did you like that
experience of being a war
correspondent artist?*

It was hard and unforgettable and lonely and sometimes frustrating running into the real McCoy. . . . And the drawings that I did—I did about twenty-five pictures on each assignment, most of them done from sketches on the spot. I didn't have any camera with me. Not having a camera simplified everything because there was no censorship.

—JOSEPH HIRSCH
Archives of American Art



High Visibility Wrap by Joseph Hirsch
Italy, 1944
Watercolor on paper

Artist's notes on painting: *The Army doctor left two very important openings on this head bandage. The neat triangular window gives the soldier good vision, and there is plenty of room for the all-important cigarette.*



Wounded Men (alternate title *Short Days Ago*) by John Potter Wheat
Vietnam, 1968
Acrylic on masonite

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Landing in Quin Nhon for fuel and repairs, I had occasion to witness the reception of a large number of serious battle casualties at the medical center. I assumed they were from the battle in the Vinh Than mountains. The men I have painted were casualties due to mines. Those in the background were those who died of wounds in transit. There were both ARVN and American casualties. No words can describe it.

—JOHN POTTER WHEAT



Paintings hanging in Wheat's studio in Mexico, 1968



Wheat's studio



Just off the Line by Robert Benney
1944
Oil on canvasboard

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This man has just been brought from the front line to a Collecting Station. Although wounded less than an hour before, he has received medical attention three times. He was given emergency treatment on the battlefield, had a splint put on his arm at a Battalion Aid Station, and received a special dressing on his thigh at the Collecting Station. Next stop to the rear is the Clearing Station, and more treatment.

—ROBERT BENNEY
*Men Without Guns*⁴¹

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

In a 10 July 1944 letter to Reeves Lowenthal, Executive Director, War Department Art Advisory Committee, Benney wrote the following from Saipan:

One starts to write and finds that there's nothing to say, that is, nothing which can remotely express in words the impact of the experiences constantly taking place. The smells, the snipers, the foxholes, and numerous other exciting incidents, which, if one is fortunate, one can tell his friends and grandchildren about later on.

Amidst the foxholes, snipers and odors, I have managed to keep alive and store up an abundant knowledge of the material I was sent to obtain. I firmly believe that I have the most complete record of combat medicine ever gathered—and have truly hit the jackpot here. . . .

I am in the midst of working on what I believe will be a complete record of what happens to a man on his way to combat. His background, attitude toward impending events, his experiences in battle and reactions to same. Am also covering the major phases of treatment, shock, minor surgery, surgery, X-ray, and evacuation by plane and ducks [DUKWs] and ship. Also got a continuity on evacuation to hospital ship, types of cases thus evacuated, and reasons for same.



Match Sellers—Class of '17 by Kerr Eby
1919
Charcoal on paper

Evoking the imagery of John Singer Sargent's painting *Gassed*, the marching soldiers have their eyes bandaged from exposure to poisonous mustard gas. Eby emphasized the horror of war in both the imagery and the drawing's title, which refers to a future job that will probably not require the use of sight.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The work, *A Soldier*, was created using a photograph I took of a soldier/radio operator on patrol. As the picture was snapped, the soldier could have been wiping the sweat from his eyes, but the gesture suggested much more. To me, the painting shows someone who has lost his best friend or an expression of the sorrows of the war.

—VICTORY VON REYNOLDS

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

We were on our own in ways that were unusual for the Army. Our only directive was to produce art that gave our own “impressions” of the war. Any subject or any medium was permitted. The Army provided the transportation, the art materials, and the time to explore what we thought was significant in our art. I appreciated that kind of freedom. I really enjoyed the comradeship of the other members of the team: Ed Bowen, Roman Rokowsky, Jim Drake, and Tom Schubert. The civilian leader of our team, Fred Engel was also a joy to work with.



A Soldier by Victory Von Reynolds
Vietnam, 1969
Watercolor on paper



Casualty by Howard Brodie
Germany, 1945
Pencil on paper

Brodie joined the assault across the Roer River with Company K, 406th Regiment, 102d Division.

Artist's notes on drawing: I looked to the right flank and saw a man floating in air amidst the black smoke of an exploding mine.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

We moved on. Some prisoners and a couple of old women ran out onto the field from a house, Objective One. There was the zoom and crack of 88s again. A rabbit raced wildly away to the left. We went down. I saw a burst land on the running Jerries. One old woman went down on her knees in death, as though she was picking flowers.

— — — — —
A dud landed three feet in front of T/Sgt. Jim McCauley, the platoon sergeant, spraying him with dirt. Another ricocheted over Pfc. Wes Maulden, the 300 radio operator. I looked to the right flank and saw a man floating in the air amidst the black smoke of an exploding mine. He disappeared just in front of the squad leader, S/Sgt Elwin Miller. A piece of flesh slobbered by Sgt. Fred Wilson's face. Some men didn't get up.

—HOWARD BRODIE
*Yank: The GI Story of the War*⁴²



Moving Up by Howard Brodie
Germany, 1945
Pencil on paper

Artist's notes on drawing: *The whistle or whoosh of shells overhead (regardless of whether they are our own or at a great distance) makes Doughs jittery and many start going down as in this pix. (In this pix the shells were our own.)*

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

We passed a still doughboy with no hands on the side of the road; his misshapen, ooze-filled mittens lay a few feet from him. Knots of prisoners walked by us with their hands behind their heads.

—HOWARD BRODIE
*Yank: The GI Story of the War*⁴²



Fatigue Casualty by Edward Reep
Italy, 1944
Ink on paper

Artist's notes on the reverse of drawing: Pfc. Anthony J. Kohlrus of the 133d Regiment, 34th Infantry Division, a fatigue casualty, waits patiently at the 34 Battalion aid station for further treatment.

Kohlrus' son, Anthony J. Kohlrus Jr., discovered this drawing in a book and, in December 2001, viewed it in person. He provided additional information about his father:

My father graduated high school in 1942 and then served in Italy in the 34th Division (Red Bull Division). He had been in an assault. He had fallen and hurt his shoulder and was sent to the Aid Station for treatment. When he saw a pile of severed limbs, he "freaked out" and sat down to compose himself. That is when the artist sketched the picture. After seeing the limbs, he left the Aid Station and returned to his unit. In the picture, he wears an identification bracelet. This bracelet, which may have been sent to him by his godmother, is in the possession of my brother, Tom Kohlrus, in Springfield, IL. In the picture, my father has a pack of Lucky Strikes in his pocket. He did not smoke until going into the Army. He was a Staff Sergeant when he got out of the Army in 1945.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Dec. 14—Last night was quiet, nothing but the rats disturbed us. What I like about this place is that there is so much noise you can't hear the whine of the shells, and small arms fire. Sort of an escapism. Started a painting in this aid-station today. Drew people all day, and finally have the composition on paper. Tomorrow will paint.

—EDWARD REEP
Archives of American Art

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

In a letter to Marian McNaughton, former Army Art curator, Reep wrote,

I drew the soldiers, drove to the front, got myself scared to hell, and was getting ready for the work ahead. I toured a day or two with Joe E. Brown and his troupe, tried to draw, but wasn't able to succeed. I found old battlegrounds, snipers' dens, shell-holes, ruins, and I painted them all. I've always had an urge to do something, keep busy, produce. My work wasn't very meaningful in those days, but I would learn fast. Two of the other artists were older and more experienced artists than I was and I would learn much from them. Von Ripper [Rudolph Von Ripper] was incredible as a soldier and artist, and Siporin [Mitchell Siporin] was a sensitive, distinguished painter. Rip, as he was called, had been in more wars than a typical professional soldier (both world wars, foreign legion, Spanish Civil War), and his exploits actually filled two pages of Ernie Pyle's *Brave Men*. He had drawn the Pope, DeGaulle, etc. He could draw! I learned! He was injured, had one eye, spoke six languages, often decorated—it goes on and on. Siporin on the other hand could not go to the front, was scared out of his britches and so I assigned him to the rear areas essentially. At least I ultimately did this. At first I couldn't understand his attitude, since I too was always scared, but there was a job to do!



Burial on the Road to Kokumbona by Howard Brodie
1943

Conte crayon on paper

Artist's notes on drawing:

Burial on the spot—

On the road to "Kokumbona."

*(This soldier moving up with 2
rifles happened on grave of GI
buried on side of road.)*



Dead Soldier by Howard Brodie
Germany, 1945
Pencil on paper

Brodie captured this scene upon leaving the town of Tetz, Germany.

Artist's notes on the drawing:
I saw a dead GI in his hole slumped in his last living position. . . . The hole was too deep and narrow to allow his body to settle.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

A partially smoked cigarette lay inches from his mouth, and a dollar-sized circle of blood on the earth offered the only evidence of violent death.

—HOWARD BRODIE
*Yank: The GI Story of the War*⁴²



Medical Corps Enlisted Man and Litter, Italy (alternate title *Non-Combatant*) by Joseph Hirsch
Italy, 1944
Charcoal on paper

Hirsch found this dead Medical Corps enlisted man and his stretcher on the Italian front. The large red cross on his helmet did not guarantee him safety.



Soldier Helping Wounded Buddy by Paul Rickert
1966
Pencil on paper



Squad near Kum Tum by Ronald E. Pepin
Vietnam, 1966
Watercolor on paper

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

From Viet Nam

I heard a psalm

Of the days when there'll be no more war

No more warships off the shore

When the monsoon of man

Reaches its calm

When men can stand

And sing of the Lord Buddha's

Peaceful and protective palm

I look forward to that day

When man will no longer be asked to pay

For his own foolishness, as he has for so long

Then we can all sing

The Buddha song

—RONALD E. PEPIN

Medical Treatment

Medical personnel, such as chaplains, are noncombatants. They risk their lives saving lives. The doctors, medics, nurses, and orderlies are there for the soldier, rushing through the thick of battle to rescue an injured person, standing for hours at operating tables under sometimes less-than-perfect conditions, and assisting both on the field and off.

These are the individuals who treat the physical and emotional aftermath of war. Combat artists have captured them in their service, be it in the height of battle or in the quiet of a hospital tent. The Abbott Laboratories artists made their images in World War II, but the combat artists of all periods have seen the quiet and gentle concern that these medical professionals give soldiers.



To the Aid Station by Phillip W. Jones
November 1967
Acrylic on masonite



3d Field Hospital by Paul Rickert
25 August 1966
Acrylic on board

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Usually viewing the medical evacuations from the action of a chopper, this day we visited the hospital inside to see the quality of the services provided to save the lives of many. Being trained as a medic at Fort Sam Houston (Texas), I was interested in this unseen side of the war in which doctors worked under less than ideal situations.

—PAUL RICKERT



Night Vigil by Robert Benney
ca. 1944
Oil on canvas

While the Hospital Train rolls through the lonely night, the Army nurse checks the patients' charts. Some of the wounded men sleep soundly—others fitfully. To some the rhythmic clickety-clack of the speeding wheels is a sweet lullaby to their hardened, shell-blasted ears—to others a relentless reminder of barking machine guns. At the far end of the car, the medical aidman keeps an alert eye on his precious cargo.

—*Men Without Guns*⁴³

Night Duty by Franklin Boggs
1944
Oil on canvasboard

An Army nurse, somewhere in the sweltering South Pacific, quietly checks on one of her patients in the still of the night. The artist, who slept in just such a ward, was struck by the eerie effect of the flashlight's beam on the green mosquito nets which shroud the sleeping wounded.

—*Men Without Guns*⁴³



ARTIST'S STATEMENT

From a letter to Reeves Lowenthal, Associated American Artists:

Much has happened since my last letter to you. I was in on the Admiralty Island Campaign, both on Los Negros and Manus. To follow these courageous medics means that you get the works. I have seen fighting on four places, once on a patrol with Jap snipers popping about. Artillery and mortar fire are not conducive to sleeping in a jungle hammock nor the stench of dead Japs to eating your favorite K. rations.

. . . I doubt if the other fellows have seen anything more dramatic than this hell of warfare in this steaming dense jungle. . . .



Climatic Casualty by Robert Benney
1943
Pastel on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Through the narrow doorway of an isolated compartment aboard the hospital train, I saw this GI victim of a respiratory disease, one of many who are unable to withstand drastic changes in climate and living conditions. He is a casualty not of the enemy's making in the strictest sense.

—ROBERT BENNEY
*Men Without Guns*⁴³



Taking Temperatures by Warren Leopold
1943
Watercolor on paper



Purple Heart by John O. Wehrle
29 November 1966
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

We had traveled to a field hospital (near Saigon?). After seeing some medevac choppers come in, we were given a tour of the hospital ward. I remember sketching this soldier, whose name I don't know, lying there trancelike, bandaged, in traction with clasped hands. He was dazed and didn't notice me. As I was making the sketch, a Colonel, leading an aide with a tray of purple hearts, came through the ward attaching a ribboned medal to every patient. When he came to my soldier he had a lot of trouble sticking the pin to the bandages. I remember the poignancy of the moment and some annoyance on my part at what seemed to

me inappropriate timing of the presentation. The soldier never moved or blinked. I completed the sketch with Purple Heart included and used this drawing for the sole reference of the larger painting. The painting retains the sketch-like quality of the original. The baseball stitch scar on his shaved scalp and the royal purple splash against the overwhelming white of hospital linen was a powerful image to me and I wanted to portray the conflicted emotions I felt witnessing this scene. Although his hands were clasped, I didn't get the sense he was praying. Rather it was the only position available to him swathed in casts and bandages.

—JOHN O. WEHRLE

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

One of the questions we were often asked during our Vietnam tour was why artists rather than photographers. It is a question I have contemplated throughout my career. Like many artists, I have used photography for reference and I have also made photographs that are intended to be the finished product. They are more composed and thought out than the quick snapshots I use to record information. To make paintings I rely on multiple sources: in addition to photographs, drawing and memory play an important part. Looking back at the sketches from Vietnam, I marvel at my ability to capture a scene with only lines on paper. Since the Army got those sketchbooks, I have not seen these drawings in 44 years. It occurs to me that even the fastest drawing requires far more time than the slowest shutter speed and the result is a unique record of the subject. You can clarify time and detail. The direct connection between eye and hand, the inevitable distortion and conscious choice of what to include or eliminate are all part of what make the image recognizable as being done by a particular artist. One can differentiate a drawing by Tiepolo, Edward Hopper, Roger Blum. A photographer can have a distinctive eye, but the actual depth of the image is measured with a micrometer. A painting has a physical third dimension and you can see the buildup of brushstrokes, pentimento, a history of its making by hand.

—JOHN O. WEHRLE



Intensive Care Ward by John O. Wehrle
Vietnam, 25 September 1966
Pencil on paper



Fracture Ward by Peter Blume
New York, 1944
Oil on canvas

Halloran General Hospital, Staten Island

In a research paper, Marian R. McNaughton, former Army Art curator, wrote,

The subject Blume chose to paint for the Army, *Fracture Ward*, was a hospital room with four wounded patients. One feels, upon entering the picture, as if he were intruding upon a private and rather unpleasant dream. . . .

On the left, two patients, each with an injured arm, sit on a hospital bed. The figure closest to the foreground is a youth whose wide brow and bangs seem to characterize him as a boy-away-from-home-for-the-first-time. Curiously enough, he also has a monk-like demeanor as he studiously bends over a print. Behind him sits the most commanding figure of the group, a man somewhat older, whose burr haircut, furrowed brow, and tight mouth immediately describe him as a noncommissioned officer. He sits upright in a frontal position, one arm swathed in bandages and splint; his eyes, almost closed, appear to be looking at the print in an abstracted way as he is locked in his own thoughts. On the right are two more patients in bed, each with one leg supported by a complicated scaffolding. One of these patients, in the middle-ground is intent on weaving on a small hand loom; the other, a Negro, reaches for a missing leg and quietly gazes at the ceiling.

At a glance one knows that the painting is well-planned and that nothing is accidental, that everything has a reason for being and is arranged to present the artist's viewpoint—which is, in this case a comment on the inhumanity of war. The dark-haired man reduced to weaving potholders perhaps speaks to us of the futility of human experience. The black man presents us with the most profound social message of all. The only amputee, the only Negro, his isolation is more complete. In 1943 Army integration extended only to hospital wards and a few cemeteries.



Peter Blume sketching patients at Halloran General Hospital, 19 February 1944, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution



Patient in Orthopedic Ward by Lawrence Beall Smith
United Kingdom, 1944
Pastel/watercolor on illustration board

Artist's notes on reverse of drawing: This youthful patient in the Orthopedic Ward of a station hospital in England was an air casualty and as such had lots of company. He was somewhat unique in that he was an amateur ventriloquist, and as such kept the whole ward amused by putting words into the mouth of the tiny doll suspended over his bed. Here he is playing "bingo" with the other men in the ward in a game directed by a Red Cross girl.



The Skin Graft by Allen Johnson
Colorado, 1970
Watercolor on paper

Drawn at Fitzsimons Army Medical Center in Denver, the artist has captured an operation on a wounded soldier from Vietnam. The soldier, covered by a white sheet, is visible only by his heavily bandaged right hand and red-stained arm. In that brief exposure, the horrific results of battle are visible.



Operation by Franklin Boggs
1944
Ink lithograph on paper

Typical primitive conditions at field hospitals



Patient Ward 5th Mash by Sieger Hartgers
Saudi Arabia, 29 November 1990
Ink on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

I drew this also after I visited the Medical 5th MASH, 18th [XVIII] Airborne Corps, in Ad-Dammam [Saudi Arabia]. I observed the nurses with patients in the patient ward, it was like a regular hospital, and everyone including the patients was doing their thing.

—SIEGER HARTGERS



Waiting to Lift Off by James Pollock
Vietnam, October 1967
Watercolor/ink on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This was inspired by a trip fellow artist Sam Alexander and I made to the 93d Evacuation Hospital at Long Binh. Typically, air ambulances would lift wounded soldiers to a hospital setting in less than an hour after being wounded. "Dust Off" was the tactical call sign used by air ambulances. Flying into an active landing zone to pick up wounded was a dangerous job. We know now that pilots, crew chiefs and accompanying medical corpsmen stood a one in three chance of being injured, wounded or killed in their line of work. I didn't fly on a "Dust Off" but did at least two related paintings out of respect for these brave soldiers who put their lives at risk daily for others.

—JAMES POLLOCK

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

In a 1982 letter to former Army Art Curator Mary Lou Gjernes, Pollock commented on the artistic freedom granted to the soldier-artists:

There were no restrictions whatsoever as to choice of subject, style or method of presentation. For the most part, art produced was not political in nature. I felt that our job was not to pass judgment, but to sense the emotional content of the war and soldiers and express visually what was happening at that particular point in time.



Ambulance at Tan Son Nhut by John O. Wehrle

Vietnam, 25 August 1966

Watercolor on paper

The 58th Medical Battalion soldiers in Saigon tend to the wounded.



Traffic Watcher by Theodore J. Abraham
Vietnam, 10 July 1967
Ink/marker on paper



Dustoff at Tan Son Nhut by John O. Wehrle
Vietnam, 25 August 1966
Ink/watercolor/wash/crayon on paper

Medical personnel off-load wounded soldiers to a hospital at Tan Son Nhut Air Base near Saigon.



First Aid Station in an Abandoned Gun-Pit by Lester G. Hornby
1918
Ink lithograph on paper

Medics established aid stations wherever shelter could be found.



Ready Pad by Stephen Matthias
Vietnam, December 1967
Watercolor on paper



The American Soldier

Combat artists have captured soldiers in every facet of their military experience. They have shown soldiers defending their country, performing everyday chores, training, enjoying themselves, recuperating from wounds, and dying. The men and women depicted on the following pages are only a few of the millions of individuals who have served their country. However, they represent their comrades who have not been immortalized by the artist's brush but have, nonetheless, sworn to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.



Don't Mess with the 101st

by Peter G. Varisano

March 1991

Watercolor/pencil on paper

***Artist's notes on reverse of painting:
The ultimate weapon and the one that
no technology can replace.***

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

This soldier's look moved me because of the confrontational stare and the amount of equipment he was carrying. I just thought I would get in there and play with the watercolor a bit creating the head and shadows. I love color, so I used lots of cobalt blue and violet in the face to give the illusion of darker skin pigments and shadows. He was "rucking up" to go forward and I thought, when I saw this image, that there is no way we are going to lose this war if we have soldiers like this.

—PETER G. VARISANO

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

It seems strange to assign a role to an artist. It has been my experience that the combat artist will naturally see and record a variety of subjects in various media and techniques recording the history unfolding before his or her eyes. One need not be told what to do and never is. There is no censorship, no requests, no demands, but that of the demands imposed by the artists themselves.

The task is varied. Today's battlefield is one in which almost every soldier has some sort of a camera adding to the confusion or question, why combat artists?

Art is vast and mysterious and one of the answers to the above question may be that the artist can go where the camera cannot go. An artist can paint a soldier violet from head to toe with three-inch thick impasto and still be able to be descriptive, narrative, and expressive.

Another reason and perhaps even more important as to why there is validity in the continuation of the utilization of artists in war is the following: A photograph captures a split second in most cases. But a drawing or a painting captures time . . . the time taken to render the art. To observe, think, judge, analyze, measure, compare and record, simultaneously, through a block of time. This time-consuming effort is sensed by the viewer although sometimes not on a conscious level.

The role of the artist as an historian happens as the work emerges and the artist ends up with work that carries a unique feel describing geographic location and the nature of the operation.

—PETER G. VARISANO



Combat Artist at Work
(alternate title *Roger Blum Sketching*)
by Paul Rickert
Vietnam, 18 August 1966
Pencil on paper

Roger Blum sketches at Duc An as
Vietnamese children look on.

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Roger Blum Sketching depicts a gentler side to the war. The kids were friendly and very gregarious. Even at a young age they would speak broken English to us and were very excited to be sketched. They were anxious to see the finished drawing and would run off with the drawing, if they could.

—PAUL RICKERT



Convoy by Roger Blum
Vietnam, 1966
Watercolor on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

With a compassion to care and save, the medics and Doctors served with great valor knowing they often did so behind the “big red target” of the cross.

—ROGER BLUM



Nurses in Operating Tent by John A. Groth
Korea, 1950
Watercolor on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

The tent in which they worked was hardly the operating theatre of a modern American hospital. Instead of sterile white, the doctors wore khaki fatigues and black rubber aprons. The only white was that of face masks (a nurse had tied one over my mouth) and the sheets that covered tables and draped the tent's walls. They worked under bare light bulbs, as, with a minimum of instruments, they performed intricate operations.

—JOHN A. GROTH
*Studio: Asia*⁴⁴



Recondo by Elzie Golden
Fort Lewis, Washington, 15 September 1990
Oil on canvas

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

Recondo was a piece I did while on the artist team in 1990 covering ROTC [Reserve Officers' Training Corps] training. I guess I was trying to show that males and females were doing the same training, and this is the image I came up with. I don't know the woman's name, but she did rappel from a 40-foot tower without any problems. This piece appeared in *Soldiers* magazine and the woman called me after seeing it and asked a couple of questions about why I chose her as the model. Just a random choice that had good compositional potential.

—ELZIE GOLDEN



SGT Vickie Hodge, 3d ID Baghdad Airport by Elzie Golden
December 2005
Watercolor/ink on paper

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

The earliest drawings I did when I was three or four years old were of experiences I wanted to relive of an event or thing that struck my fascination. At the time, I was very impressed by stage coaches and skyscrapers. I projected my memories onto a blank surface, and the image I created, projected my memory back to me, giving me something of the experience to relive again. I don't think I ever lost this impetus for creating a work of art. . . .

The main thing I tried to convey in the paintings I did of Iraq is the spirit of the times and the mood of the soldiers who firmly believed they were liberating a country and deposing a dangerous autocrat and his regime.

—ELZIE GOLDEN

In 2010, the painting's subject, S. Sgt. Vicki Ervin, wrote about the event depicted:

I remember that day clearly. We were already living in the Green Zone but our topographical company lived on BIAP [Baghdad International Airport]. We would travel down "RPG Alley" every other day for mail and supplies. The engineer brigade chaplain went with us that day (his vehicle is behind me). Since the topo was working out of a tent set up in the parking lot, we would wait outside in the vehicles. I was one of the brigade detachment's M249 (SAW) gunners, so I was security in that vehicle. I would stand in the back tied to a troop strap. It was so different than current deployments. We were all so lucky during that deployment that nothing major happened. We were mortared once, but that was on a trip to Fallujah and there were no injuries. Thank God.



Fuel Handler of the Air Cav by Mario H. Acevedo
Saudi Arabia, July 1991
Watercolor on paper



Patrol Duty in Kuwait City by Mario H. Acevedo
1991
Watercolor on paper

The presence of female soldiers became more prevalent during Operation Desert Storm. With the establishment of an all-volunteer Army in the 1970s, women gradually were allowed participation in most types of duties.



Engineers Preparing Minefields in the Snow by Edward Reep
January 1945
Ink on paper

IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

27 Jan 45—Awoke after a rotten sleep, but without a cold. The sulfa diazene tablets work like a charm! Russia is still moving—and news all around is good. The sun was shining, and I rushed out to begin a drawing of men setting up a mine field. After about 30 minutes, the sun had gone down, a storm was brewing, and I became cold and had to come back. Worked all day on the start. No activity all day until late this afternoon when our big guns opened up. The wind had subsided, but it was and is bitter cold outside. There is much artillery and small arms activity tonight.

—EDWARD REEP

From his diary, Archives of American Art



Sketchbooks

Although many artists travel with a camera, the sketchbook is still used to capture moments of history. A line here, a line there, some shading, a few cross-hatches, and, suddenly, an image appears, and the artist has created a memory. Sketchbooks contain not only pictures but also ideas, notes, and colors. We can look at sketchbooks and see what artists have visualized, fragments that may or may not be reflected in finished work. These are windows into the world of creation—the power of the artist to contemplate something and evolve that thought into art.

Sketchbooks can be large or so small as to fit into one's pocket. Depending on the artist's preference, they can have a hard or soft cover. The defining feature of the sketchbook is that what is recorded on its pages gives us insight into the creative process. We can look at Heather Englehart's sketches and see the evidence of her architectural training. Charles Baskerville was a well-known illustrator for *Scribner's Magazine*. Unsurprisingly, his sketches reveal a talent for facial features and fashion. John Wehrle was able to capture his fellow artist, Robert Knight, in detail, while Knight was working in his own sketchbook. Sketchbooks provide glimpses into the creative process and allow us to better understand not only the moment being captured but get a sense of the emotions and abilities of the creator.

Charles Baskerville, World War I

While convalescing from wounds in an Army hospital at Allerey, France, Baskerville sketched various themes. Some were later published in *Scribner's Magazine*, July 1919.



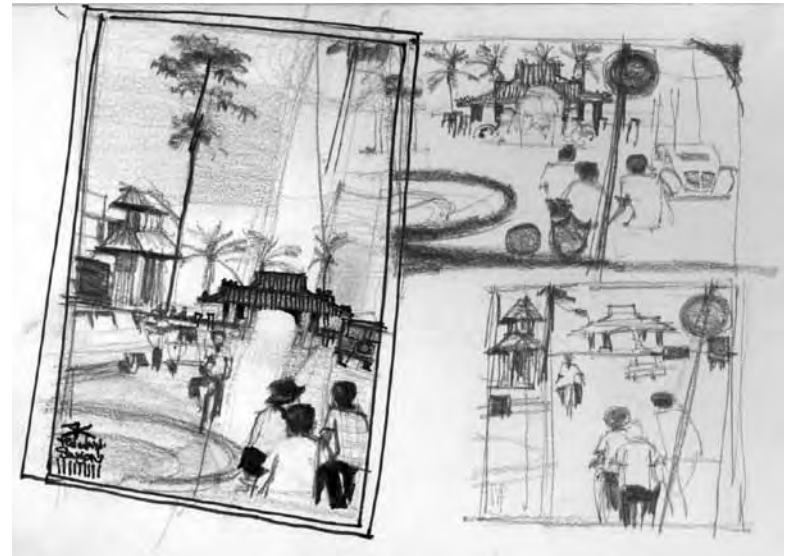
Charles Baskerville, World War I



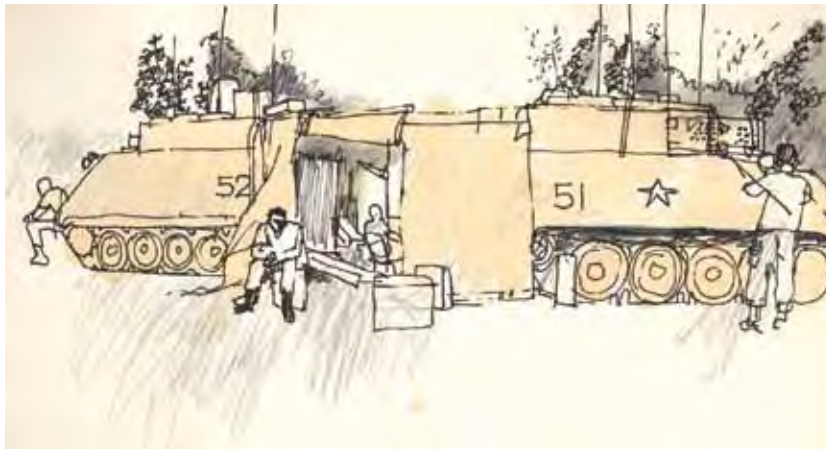
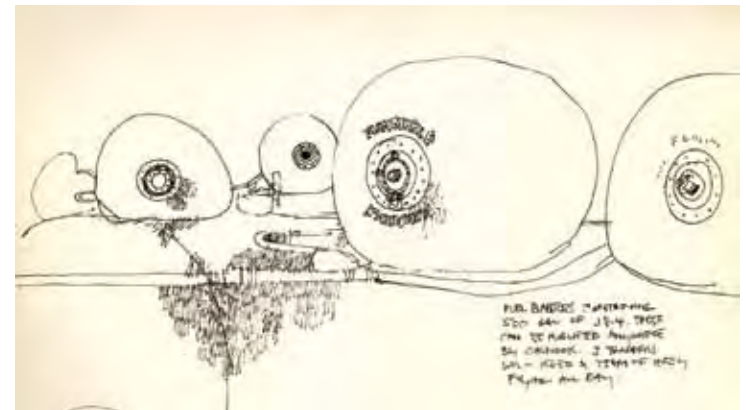
Robert Knight, Vietnam



Robert Knight, Vietnam



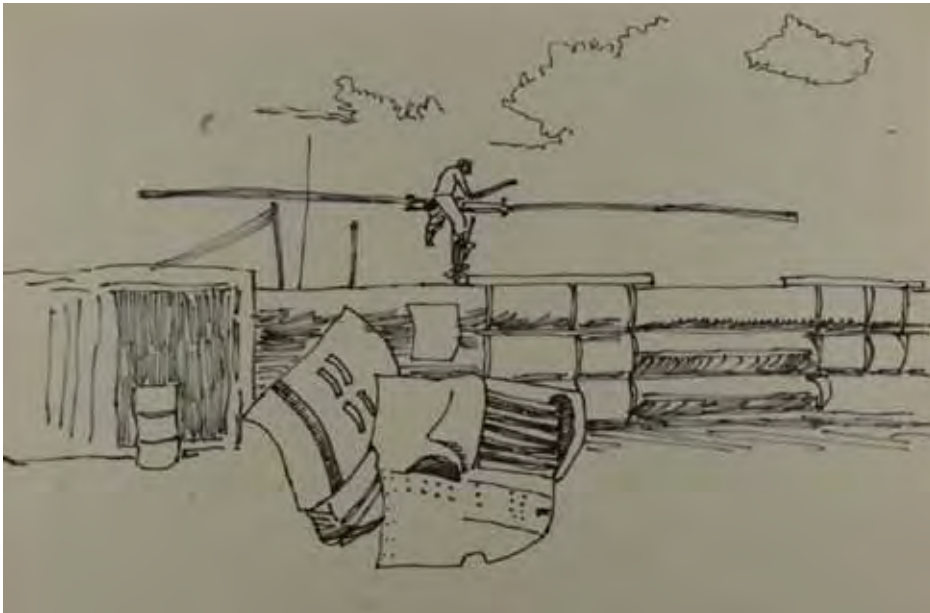
John O. Wehrle, Vietnam



John O. Wehrle, Vietnam



James S. Hardy, Vietnam



James S. Hardy, Vietnam



IN THE ARTIST'S OWN WORDS

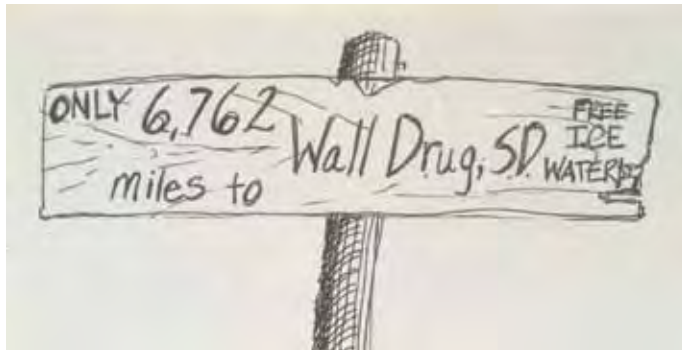
In Viet Nam I carried a sketch book with me everywhere as well as the camera. Of all my work, I personally regard my sketches, which I did on the spot, as my best work. I accompanied several infantry units on field operations and ambushes while over there. Especially interesting to me was the soldiers themselves and I tried to draw the immediate impact they had on me. The portraits and character studies I feel are my strongest works. Never in my life have I been in the companionship of finer people than when I was with those infantry units. For their part, they were always happy to have me along. I sort of added something to their miserable day-to-day routine of life, and they seemed to feel, it seemed, a bit privileged that I would stay out there in the field with them instead of going in at night. Every unit that I was with had told me that they had heard of combat artists but had never seen one until I came. I got to understand how they felt, the kind of miserable conditions they live with by going through it with them. My on-the-spot drawings impart, I believe, something that could not have been captured by copying a photograph.

—JAMES S. HARDY

Heather C. Englehart, Iraq and Kuwait



Heather C. Englehart, Iraq and Kuwait





Epilogue

These visual remembrances of soldiers by artists are a part of this country’s heritage, its historical patrimony. These works are only a few of many.

We are still sending soldier-artists out to cover the Army—to document and interpret every aspect of what the Army does. Art endures and adds to the knowledge of the past.

Morley Safer wrote an article entitled “Prescott’s War” in the February/March 1991 edition of *American Heritage* about civilian artist William Linzee Prescott. In the article he sums up all that has been written about combat artists:

The artist at war is a unique character. Unlike the correspondent, he has no artificial deadline imposed by editors—only the much harsher deadline of movement to be captured, complicated by that dreadful monster that people politely call the muse. Unlike war photographers, he has no technical help, no motor drive to catch images almost faster than they occur; his equipment has not changed much since early man. And yet the artist in war, like the artist anywhere, is forever on the edge of something new. What he sees is only part of it; the agility of hand is only part of it. The main thing is what the muse, the monster in his head, makes happen. When it doesn’t happen, it is just so much paint on paper.⁴⁵



The Artists

Theodore J. Abraham, 1923–1991, was a civilian artist who volunteered his services to document Army activities in Vietnam and Alaska under the auspices of the Copley Society of Boston.

Mario H. Acevedo studied at New Mexico State University. While in the U.S. Army Reserves, he served as a combat artist in Operation DESERT STORM. Acevedo still does art and writes about Felix Gomez, detective-vampire. His Web site is marioacevedo.com.

Augustine G. Acuña, 1941–, was team leader of Combat Art Team II in Vietnam. He studied architecture at the University of Arizona. He still maintains his architectural license but is semiretired.

Robert “Weldy” Baer, 1909–1961, studied at the Art Students League, New York. He taught at an art school in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He was a civilian working in Japan when the Korean War started and volunteered his services as a combat artist.

George Baker, 1915–1975, is primarily known as the creator of *The Sad Sack* for *Yank* magazine. He worked as an animator on the Walt Disney movies *Dumbo*, *Bambi*, and *Fantasia*, before beginning Army service in 1941.

Charles Baskerville, 1896–1994, was best known for portraits of armed forces officers and prominent persons in society. He won the Silver Star for gallantry during World War II. His pseudonym was Top Hat, and his magazine illustration commissions included work for *Scribner’s Magazine*, *Life*, and *Vanity Fair*.

Ludwig Bemelmans, 1898–1962, was primarily a book illustrator, known for his *Madeline* series, which began in 1939 and for which he won the Caldecott Award. He also created cartoons for *New Yorker* magazine.



Augustine G. Acuña

Robert Benney, 1904–2001, studied at the Art Students League in New York and taught at the Pratt Institute. He was primarily known for his artwork dealing with the entertainment industry, sketching the stars of stage and screen. In World War II, he created artwork for Abbott Laboratories.

Roger Blum, 1941–, was a member of Combat Art Team I. After leaving the Army, he received an M.A. in illustration from San Jose State University. He was recruited by Hallmark Cards to be a staff illustrator. He taught art at Atlantic Union College in South Lancaster, Massachusetts. Blum then chaired the art department at Pacific Union College in Angwin, California. After teaching art for thirteen years, he left academia to pursue a successful full-time painting career.

Peter Blume, 1906–1992, studied at the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design and the Art Students League, New York. Noted for his surrealistic style, the popularity of Blume’s dreamlike paintings, filled with obsessive detail, made him one of America’s best-known artists. He created work for Abbott Laboratories during World War II.

Franklin Boggs, 1914–2009, was educated at the Fort Wayne Art School and Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. His art career began as an artist for the Tennessee Valley Authority and as a painter of U.S. Post Office murals. In 1944, he became a war artist-correspondent for Abbott Laboratories. Boggs later became a full professor and artist-in-residence at Beloit College in Wisconsin.



Aaron Bohrod

Aaron Bohrod, 1907–1992, studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Art Students League of New York. Influenced strongly by the “social realism” of John Sloan, Bohrod painted city people, utilizing a wide array of styles that ranged from a tight, detailed manner to one that was more abstract and sketchlike. He taught at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Bohrod abandoned his earlier romantic realism to paint in *trompe l’oeil*.

Dave Breger, 1908–1970, was born in Chicago. In 1937, he received \$30 from the *Saturday Evening Post* for a cartoon. He then became a professional cartoonist. He sold items to the *Post*, *Collier’s*,

Parade, This Week, Esquire, Click, and New Yorker. In World War II, he served as a photographer-artist for the Army's weekly, *Yank*, where he turned out occasional comic strips called *G.I. Joe*. Breger's best-known creation was the daily panel *Private Breger*.

Howard Brodie, 1915–2010, studied at the California School of Fine Arts and at the Art Students League in New York City. He took his first job in the art department of the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1935. During World War II, he became famous for his combat sketches that appeared in *Life, Look*, and other national magazines. Brodie was a sketch artist for CBS News.

Daniel E. Brown Jr. served with the Special Operations Command–Central in Operation DESERT STORM. No further biographical information is available.

Kathleen A. Browning was with the 8th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, in Operation DESERT STORM. No further biographical information is available.

Warren W. Buchanan was a member of Combat Art Team V in Vietnam. He is a graduate of the Layton School of Art in Milwaukee. Buchanan lives in Appleton, Wisconsin.

Jerry D. Burchfield was with the 6th Battalion, 3d Air Defense Artillery, 1st Armored Division, in Operation DESERT STORM. He left the Army in September 1992. Since then he has been a government contractor in logistics and supply. He currently works for ITT as a stock control analyst in Mannheim, Germany, in support of the 5th Signal Command.

Robert C. Burns, 1916–, studied at Yale. He illustrated the comic adaptation of Alexandre Dumas' novel *Twenty Years After* for the legendary Classics Illustrated series in 1947. He was known for his portraits. Burns was a professor of drawing and painting at Trenton State College in the 1970s.



Howard Brodie

Irwin Caplan, 1919–2007, was an American illustrator, painter, designer, and cartoonist, best known as the creator of the *Saturday Evening Post* cartoon series, *Famous Last Words*. He graduated from the University of Washington with a fine arts degree. He served during World War II as an Army illustrator. In 1972, the National Cartoonists Society named him cartoonist of the year in its advertising and illustration division. Caplan taught art at the University of Washington School of Art and at Seattle Central Community College.

Martin Cervantez, 1968–, currently is artist-in-residence at the Center of Military History. His most recent deployments were to Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and to Haiti to cover humanitarian aid after the 2010 earthquake. He led a combat camera team during deployment to Kosovo and again as the Joint Combat Camera Team noncommissioned officer in charge (NCOIC) for RSOI (Reception, Staging, Onward Movement, and Integration)/Fool Eagle, 2002.



Brian H. Clark

Brian H. Clark received his B.F.A. from Wayne State University in Detroit in 1965. He subsequently studied at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière in Paris. Clark served on Combat Artist Team VII in Vietnam in 1968.

H. Lester Cooke, 1916–1973, studied at Oxford University, Art Students League in New York, Yale University School of Fine Art, and Princeton University Graduate School, where he received his Ph.D. Cooke is better known for his work in art history than for his painting, having written several texts, including *Painting Lessons from the Great Masters* in 1967. He was curator of painting at the National Gallery of Art from 1961 to 1973, and before that he was a national gallery aide and acting assistant director, beginning in 1956. He not only was appointed director of the American pavilion at the Venice Biannual International Art Exhibition, but he was also artist-in-residence at Princeton for four years and won the Prix de Rome and a Fulbright fellowship. In 1940, Cooke won the American Beaux Arts prize for murals.

Michael R. Crook, 1941–, is a California artist creating hand-carved, hand-painted wildlife pins and framed art

pieces from hardwoods. He was born in Lincoln, Nebraska, and was raised in Sierra Madre, California. He received his art education at Pasadena City College, Chouinard Art Institute, University of California–Los Angeles, and Cal State–Los Angeles. Crook was a member of Combat Artist Team III in Vietnam. His Web site is www.michaelrcrook.com

Floyd Davis, 1896–1966, was a well-known illustrator especially noted for his depictions of southern rural hill people. He gave much of the credit for the success of his pictures to the critical judgment of his wife, painter Gladys Rockmore Davis. Floyd Davis' point of view, however, was uniquely his own. A gallery of wonderful characters depicted with poetic realism and warm humor peopled his visual world.

Gladys Rockmore Davis, 1901–1967, was an artist who succeeded in both commercial and fine arts. She gave up a career in advertising art to devote herself to creative painting. Her work in pastels ranks with her oils, and her chief subjects are children, nudes, and still-lives. In 1925, she married Floyd Davis and combined painting with caring for her children. The Davises went to Europe in 1932. On her return to the United States in 1933, she found she had completely lost her flair for commercial work. Abandoning her former methods, she studied at the Art Students League in New York and with George Grosz for a year.

Harry A. Davis, 1914–2006, studied art at the Herron School of Art of Indiana University and at the American Academy in Rome, Italy. He was artist-in-residence at Beloit University when he entered the Army in 1942. Davis was a combat artist with the Fifth Army Historical Section in Italy. For thirty-seven years, he taught drawing and painting at the Herron School of Art and was proclaimed professor emeritus.

Robert DeCoste, 1932–, studied at the School of Practical Art, a commercial art school in Boston. After serving in the Army in the 1950s, he reentered art school for a year's refresher course and then embarked on a 42-year career as a freelance illustrator/designer and frequent painter. He joined Boston's Copley Society through which he visited the Republic of Vietnam for the U.S. Army and Air Force as a participant in their civilian combat artist programs. DeCoste currently lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Olin Dows, 1904–1981, was trained at Harvard's Department of Fine Arts and the Art Students League of Yale's School of Fine Arts (New York). He assisted in establishing the Treasury Department's Art Program in 1933. He also worked for the Office of Civilian Defense in Washington,

D.C., overseeing a project to have artists depict the various phases of work in defense plants. In World War II, Dows enlisted and covered the European Theater of Operations as a war artist.

Kerr Eby, 1889–1946, was born in Japan. He studied at the Pratt Institute and the Art Students League in New York. In World War I, he joined the Ambulance Corps. After the war, he concentrated on his art, and, in World War II, he accompanied the marines in the Pacific as an artist–war correspondent.

Heather C. Englehart, 1978–, attended North Dakota State University and graduated with a degree in architecture. She serves with the Louisiana National Guard, having been deployed to Iraq and most recently to Haiti. She is a military construction project officer in New Orleans.

Brian D. Fairchild, 1961–, was sent to Korea in 1992 to document the Army activities there. Upon leaving the Army, he operated a freelance commercial design company, then switched to a different field. He currently works at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, Colorado, monitoring bioaccumulation of harmful chemicals. He still enjoys creating art.

Elzie Golden, 1953–, studied fine art at the School of Visual Arts in New York and the University of Arizona. He was an Army staff artist deployed to Iraq to cover military actions. His artwork has won numerous first-place awards in the Military Graphic Artist of the Year competitions. Currently, Golden is a senior graphic designer for the U.S. Census Bureau.

David E. Graves, 1945–, attended the University of Kansas where he received a B.F.A. in commercial art. He attended the University of Kansas graduate school with an emphasis on illustration. Graves was a member of Combat Art Team IX in Vietnam. He currently is a freelance illustrative designer working out of Gloucester, Massachusetts. His Web site is www.davidgraves.cc.

John A. Groth, 1902–1988, studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Art Students League in New York. He made a career as a painter and illustrator, focusing on sports and war. He captured the action-packed scenes, witnessing the events firsthand and sketching his experiences. He was an artist-correspondent during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Groth was also the art director for *Esquire* magazine.

George Harding, 1882–1959, studied illustration with Howard Pyle. He was one of eight official artists sent overseas with the American Expeditionary

Forces during World War I. He subsequently taught illustration at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

James S. Hardy, 1944–, studied art at San Diego State College, the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and at the Sorbonne. He attended graduate school at the San Francisco Art Institute. Hardy was a member of Combat Art Team IX in Vietnam. He is a seismic retrofit steel inspector on the Golden Gate Bridge. Hardy no longer produces art, preferring instead to collect it.

Sieger Hartgers, 1949–, heads the University of Northern Colorado School of Art and Design printmaking area, teaching printmaking, foundations, and drawing studio. He has a fine arts degree in drawing and printmaking from the Akademie Voor Beeldende Kunsten in Arnhem, Netherlands; a B.F.A. in painting from the University of Colorado in Denver; and an M.A. in painting and drawing from the University of Northern Colorado. Hartgers was the former chief Army artist for combat art and head of the Army Graphics School.

Horatio A. Hawks, 1930–1996, was a civilian artist from Massachusetts who volunteered his services in Vietnam in 1969 through the Copley Society of Boston. Hawks studied at the Wentworth Institute in Boston and Worcester Junior College in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Joseph S. Hindley, 1949–, attended the Newark School of Fine and Industrial Art in New Jersey. He served as an Army photographer and then studied at Kansas State University and the University of Kansas. Hindley moved to Chicago in 1980 to establish his career as an imagist artist. He had great success with that work, including numerous works collected by the state of Illinois. He now resides in Sawyer, Michigan, creating art and murals.

Joseph Hirsch, 1910–1981, studied at the Pennsylvania Museum School of Industrial Art and Art Students League in New York. As a social realist and humanist, Hirsch frequently portrayed heroic images of ordinary people doing everyday tasks. He produced art for Abbott Laboratories in World War II. In 1949, he received a Fulbright fellowship.

Lester G. Hornby, 1882–1956, studied at the Rhode Island School of Design, and, in Paris, at the Pape School, Académie Julien, Academy Colarossi, Academy Delacluse, Académie de la Grande Chaumière, and the Sorbonne. He was known predominantly for his etchings, many of which he created after serving as a war artist in World War I.

Peter Hurd, 1904–1984, enrolled in the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and also took private lessons from well-known illustrator N. C. Wyeth, whose daughter, Henriette, he married. Hurd became an accomplished portrait painter and book illustrator and was a widely recognized artist by the late 1930s. He was commissioned to do several public building murals as well as the official portrait of Lyndon B. Johnson. In World War II, he created artwork for *Life* magazine.

Steven M. Hyatt was a member of the team that covered Army operations in Panama. He observed the Jungle Operations Training Center, the Tropical Test Center, and the Panama Canal Company.

Allen Johnson, 1926–2009, was a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design in illustration. He worked at Studio Four, an art service, where he did many forms of artwork, including advertising. He was an editorial cartoonist for the *Providence Journal*. Later, Johnson worked as an illustrator and art director of Federated Lithographers in Providence. He was one of the civilians who was sent out to create art during the Vietnam era through the Copley Society of Boston.



Robert Knight

Phillip W. Jones was a member of Combat Art Team V in Vietnam. He studied at the Ringling School of Art in Sarasota, Florida. No longer in the art field, Jones lives in Florence, South Carolina.

Bil Keane, 1922–, taught himself to draw by mimicking the style of the cartoons published in the *New Yorker*. His first cartoon was published in 1936 on the amateur page of the *Philadelphia Daily News*. Keane served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1945, drawing for *Yank* magazine and creating the “At Ease with the Japanese” feature for the Pacific edition of *Star and Stripes*. While stationed in Australia, he met his wife Thelma who was the inspiration for the “Mommy” character in his long-running strip, *The Family Circus*. Keane is a four-time recipient of the National Cartoonists Society’s Award for Best Syndicated Panel.

Robert Knight, 1944–, was a member of Combat Art Team I in Vietnam. He holds a B.F.A. from the Cooper Union. His work has been exhibited at the Newark Museum.

John D. Kurtz, 1945–, studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the Accademia Di Belle Arti in Florence,

Italy. He served on Combat Art Team VI in Vietnam. Kurtz is an artist and renowned rug historian. He hosted a popular PBS series *Art Underfoot*, which ran from 1988 to 1992 and then again on Home and Garden TV. He creates original rug designs under the New Moon label. Kurtz can be reached at his Web site, www.newmoonrugs.com.

Edward Laning, 1906–1981, studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and then at the University of Chicago. He received further art instruction at the Art Students League in New York. He won travel grants (Guggenheim and Fulbright), exhibited widely, and took part in Works Progress Administration (WPA) mural projects. Laning became an instructor at the Art Students League, at the Cooper Union, and headed the department of painting at the Kansas City Art Institute. He was injured in Italy in World War II while serving as a war artist.

John Lavallo, 1896–1971, received a bachelor of arts degree from Harvard University, studied art at the Boston Museum School, and at the Académie Julien in Paris. Lavallo served in World War I with the U.S. Army Air Service with the rank of first lieutenant as a bombing pilot, and in World War II he served with the Army Air Forces from 1942 to 1943.

David M. Lavender attended the Ringling School of Art. He served on Combat Art Team II in Vietnam from 1966 to 1967. Lavender worked as a commercial artist.

Tom Lea, 1907–2001, was a painter, illustrator, muralist, teacher, writer, and commercial artist. He studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and returned to El Paso, Texas, where he opened a studio and worked as an illustrator and as a Works Progress Administration library and U.S. Post Office muralist. During World War II, *Life* magazine hired Lea as a combat artist, and he recorded battles in Italy, the South Pacific, the China-Burma-India Theater, North Atlantic, and the Arctic.



David M. Lavender

Warren Leopold, 1920–1998, studied at the California College of Arts and Crafts before joining the infantry in World War II. After the war, he lived in California, where he designed and built houses.

Jeffrey T. Manuszak, 1968–, has a B.F.A. from the Ray College of Design and an M.S. in instructional design and technology from Purdue University. He taught at the Defense Information School and Westwood College and currently serves as a visual information specialist for the National Park Service, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

Reginald Marsh, 1898–1954, studied art at Yale University and the Art Students League in New York, during which time he worked primarily as an illustrator for New York newspapers and magazines. After studying in Paris in 1925 and 1926, he turned to painting. He spent most of his time producing aspects of city themes such as subways, burlesque halls, Bowery bums, amusement parks, and shapely women. Many of his pictures, executed in watercolor and egg tempera or brush and ink, consist of crowds or people taking part in rowdy, yet exuberant, social rituals.

Fletcher Martin, 1904–1979, was a self-taught artist, best known for his painting of Western subjects. He worked as a painter, muralist, and illustrator. In 1938, he began a thirty-year career as a visiting teacher in art schools in California, including Mills College, Otis Art Institute, and Claremont College. He was a *Life* artist in northern Africa in World War II.

Stephen J. Matthias, 1935–, studied at Brown University, the Rhode Island School of Design, American University, and École des Beaux-Arts. He was a civilian artist sent to Vietnam in 1967. He owns an architectural firm in Seattle, Washington. Matthias' present work is in watercolor.

Bill Mauldin, 1921–2003, studied at the Academy of Fine Art in Chicago. World War II interrupted his studies, and in 1940 he joined the 45th Division. He created *Willie & Joe* in 1940 for the *45th Division News*. In 1943, Mauldin participated in the invasions of Sicily and Italy. In 1944, he accepted a full-time cartoonist position at *Stars and Stripes*, winning his first Pulitzer Prize for newspaper cartooning in 1945, the youngest to ever claim the Pulitzer. In 1958, Mauldin joined the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, winning his second Pulitzer Prize. In 1961, he was awarded the National Cartoonist's Society's Reuben Award as cartoonist of the year.

James Mazzu, 1929–1950, of Buffalo, New York, was a drummer in the 2d Infantry Division Band when the division was alerted and sent to Korea. He

was transferred to the 38th Infantry where he fought in frontline platoons and then was assigned as a map maker. In his spare time, he started drawing cartoons for the division paper, *The Warrior*, and later the cartoons were printed by the *Pacific Stars and Stripes*. When the Chinese Communists joined the battle near the Yalu River, he was killed in action.

Frank Mechau, 1904–1946, studied at the University of Denver and the Chicago Art Institute. He became an associate member of the National Academy of Design. From 1934 to 1936, he held a Guggenheim Foundation fellowship and then taught for two years at the Colorado Fine Arts Center and four years at Columbia University where he was director of art classes. Murals by Mechau can be found at the Denver Public Library; United States Post Office Building in Washington, D.C.; Colorado Springs and Glenwood Springs, Colorado, Post Offices; and the Colorado Fine Arts Center.

Barse Miller, 1904–1973, began studies at the age of eleven at the National Academy of Design in New York and at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. He also studied in Paris and then in 1924 taught drawing at Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles and did murals for the Works Progress Administration. In the 1920s, Miller joined the California Watercolor Society and became known for Los Angeles area scenes. During World War II, he was an artist-correspondent for *Life*.

Frank Miller, 1925–1983, worked for the *Des Moines Register*, winning a Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Cartooning in 1963. He studied at the University of Kansas and the Kansas City Art Institute. During World War II, he served with the Third Army in Europe. After returning home, he was a staff artist at the *Kansas City Star*. In 1951, *Des Moines Register* editor Kenneth MacDonald offered Miller the position of cartoonist. He was unable to accept for nearly eighteen months because he was recalled to active duty with the 7th Infantry Division Artillery in the Korean War.

Burdell Moody, 1940–, is a freelance studio painter represented by the Belleza Gallery in Bisbee, Arizona. He received a B.A. in art education and an M.F.A. in painting at Arizona State University. He subsequently taught painting at the high school and college levels in Mesa, Arizona, for thirty years.

Stephen E. Moss, 1956–, served with the 44th Signal Battalion in Operation DESERT STORM. He currently serves as the staff operations and training specialist and chemical, biological, radiation, and nuclear noncommissioned officer in the U.S. Army Reserves' 377th Sustainment Command, Belle Chasse, Louisiana.



Thomas J. O'Hara

Thomas J. O'Hara attended the Rhode Island School of Design. He taught art at the Massachusetts College of Art, serving four years as chairman of the illustration department. As a civilian artist working through the Copley Society of Boston, he documented Army activities in Grafenwöhr, Germany; amphibious training at Fort Story, Virginia; and training at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, and Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He is well known for his National Aeronautics and Space Administration art.

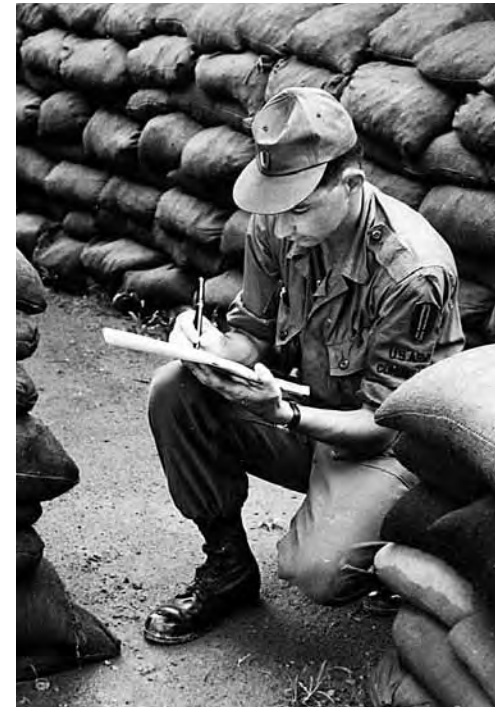
Ronald E. Pepin, 1943–2008, was a member of Combat Art Team I in Vietnam. Prior to entering the Army, he was an electronic draftsman, a technical illustrator, and a freelance artist.

Ogden Pleissner, 1905–1983, studied at the Art Students League in New York and then headed west, where he painted the Teton Mountains in Wyoming. He became a painter, in realist style, of hunting and field and stream scenes and also urban

scapes of Europe. During World War II, he painted Aleutian bases and also illustrated the Normandy invasion for *Life* magazine.

James Pollock, 1943–, studied at South Dakota State University. He was a member of Combat Art Team IV in Vietnam. Pollock has exhibited art in many shows. His work can be found in many private and corporate collections throughout the United States. Pollock designed the first-issue South Dakota Bison gold and silver pieces that were sold in the national and international gold and silver marketplace. Pollock has served on the South Dakota Arts Council and was named South Dakota Artist of the Year.

William Linzee Prescott, 1917–1981, studied art at the Chouinard School in Los Angeles and then moved to Mexico to study fresco. On 6 June 1944,



Ronald E. Pepin

Private Prescott jumped with the 82d Airborne Division onto Normandy beach. He served as the first civilian artist to document Vietnam in 1967.

Edward R. Quay was with the 2d Armored Division in Operation DESERT STORM. No further biographical information is available.

Edward Reep, 1918–, studied at the Art Center School in Los Angeles (1936 to 1941) under Barse Miller. During World War II, he rose to the rank of captain as an artist-correspondent in Africa and Italy. As a result of his war paintings, after his discharge he was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship. He was an instructor at the Art Center School of Los Angeles, the Bistram School of Art, the Chouinard Art School (1950 to 1970), and East Carolina University. Reep is the author of *A Combat Artist in World War II* and *The Content of Watercolor*.

Victory Von Reynolds, 1942–, received his B.A. and M.F.A. from the University of Idaho and taught at the University of Nevada, the University of Alabama, and Wayne State College in Nebraska. Reynolds continues to work in his studio in Wayne. While serving a tour in Vietnam (U.S. Army's 116th Engineer Battalion), Reynolds was selected to be part of the Combat Art Team VIII.

Paul Rickert is a nationally recognized award-winning artist. He studied with his father, illustrator William Rickert. He graduated from the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California. Rickert served on Combat Art Team I in Vietnam. His work can be seen at the Web sites: www.paulrickertart.com and www.fischbachgallery.com.

Bruce N. Rigby, 1946–, is a professor of art at the College of New Jersey. He received a B.S. in art at the University of Bridgeport and an M.F.A. from Northern Illinois University. His work is displayed in many public and private collections and has been included in 185 exhibitions. Rigby's Web site is www.bruce Rigby.com.



Paul Rickert

Edward A. Sallenbach, 1918–2002, graduated from the Yale School of Fine Arts. He joined the Visual Documentary Section of Armed Forces, Middle Pacific (AFMIDPAC), in Hawaii in 1945. Sallenbach did set design for the Sutton Theater in New York in 1950.

Paul Sample, 1896–1974, attended Dartmouth College. He served in World War I in the Navy and returned to graduate from Dartmouth, and shortly afterward got tuberculosis. During his hospitalization and recuperation, he began to study art. He moved to California and enrolled at the Otis Art Institute. Sample chaired the art department at the University of Southern California and later became artist-in-residence at Dartmouth College. During World War II, he did illustrations of naval activities for *Life* magazine.

Roderick Schenken, 1953–, began his design career producing displays for companies such as Pepsi and Toyota. While in the Army, he served on Combat Art Team XVI in Vietnam. During his design career, his educational focus extended from art to architecture and he graduated with honors with a B.A. in marketing management from California Polytechnic University at Pomona. He is currently the creative director at Exhibitgroup/Giltspur, Los Angeles.

Gary Sheahan, 1893–1978, studied at the University of Notre Dame and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He was a staff artist for the *Chicago Tribune*, where he worked for thirty-three years until his retirement in 1958.

Sidney Simon, 1917–1997, studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts receiving his B.F.A., at the Barnes Foundation, and at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière in Paris. He was a founder and member of the faculty of the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. During the course of his career, Simon was also on the faculty of the Parsons School of Design, the Art Students League, the Brooklyn Museum School, Columbia University, Cooper Union, the New York Studio School, Sarah Lawrence College, and the Castle Truro Center for the Arts. In World War II, he was an official



Sidney Simon sketching, ca. 1940, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

combat artist in the Southwest Pacific, painting, drawing, and doing field reconnaissance intelligence.



J. André Smith, courtesy of Maitland Art and Historical Association

J. André Smith, 1880–1959, received his formal training in architecture at Cornell University. During World War I, he was in an Army camouflage section and became one of only eight artists commissioned to document the activities of the American Expeditionary Forces. Smith was director of the Research Studio in Maitland, Florida, which encourages artists to break out into new directions.

Lawrence Beall Smith, 1909–1995, was a painter, lithographer, illustrator, and stone sculptor. He studied at the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois, and at the University of Chicago, receiving a Ph.D. in 1931. His reputation as an artist was secured by a one-man show in 1941 at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. Smith had begun to exhibit his work in 1935. He was commissioned by Abbott Laboratories in 1944 to cover the Medical Corps in Europe during World War II. He served as an artist at the D-Day landings of Allied troops on the Normandy beaches and painted posters supporting the sale of war bonds.

After the war, he founded the Katonah Gallery in Westchester County, New York.

Henrietta Snowden was a soldier-artist on staff at the U.S. Army Center of Military History. While living in England, Snowden was deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina in support of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. Deployed to Kosovo, she was inspired to photograph and sketch day-to-day Army events.

Carl E. “Gene” Snyder, 1968–, began his art career by tracing *Snoopy* comics. He attended the Maryland Art Institute and graduated from Norwich University. Snyder served as an instructor of the multimedia illustration course for the Defense Information School at Fort Meade, Maryland. He currently is a



Carl E. “Gene” Snyder

visual information specialist in the U.S. Army Center of Military History's Publishing Division. His work can be seen at www.snyderart.com

Al Sprague, 1938–, was born and raised in the Republic of Panama. After receiving a master's degree at American University in Washington, D.C., he returned home to paint the culture of Panama. His work, depicting the everyday life of native fishermen, market vendors, and dancers, made him one of the most recognized artists in Panama. He divides his time between Panama and Newport News, Virginia.

Harrison Standley, 1916–1997, studied at Stanford University and the Art Center School in Los Angeles. After being drafted in World War II, he served as a combat artist in Ireland, England, and France, documenting the First Army from Normandy to the Rhine. Following the war, Standley did advertising art work in Paris, New York, and Connecticut. He was on the staff of the Famous Artists School.

Ralph Stein, 1909–1994, was a writer, cartoonist, and illustrator, whose works appeared in dozens of publications. During World War II, he was the staff cartoon editor for *Yank*, where he also wrote and did photography. He was coauthor of *It's a Cinch, Private Finch*, a humorous book about Army life, and many of his cartoons from *Yank* were compiled into the book, *What Am I Laughing At?* After the war, he drew and wrote the *Popeye* comic strip for five years and illustrated *Here's How* for King Features. An authority on cars, Stein authored *Treasury of the Automobile* and *Sports Cars of the World*.

Wayne Thiebaud, 1920–, earned a bachelor's degree from Sacramento State College. He worked as a cartoonist and designer in California and New York and served as an artist in the United States Army. In 1950, he enrolled in Sacramento State College earning a master's degree in 1952, and then began teaching at Sacramento City College. In 1960, he became assistant professor at the University of California, Davis, where he remained through the 1970s and influenced numerous art students. His work recently was featured in an exhibition at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

Peter G. Varisano, 1956–, holds a B.A. from Norwich University and an M.F.A. from the Vermont College of Fine Arts. He currently teaches art in North Carolina. Varisano was the only artist allowed into the security perimeter of the World Trade Center in New York after 11 September 2001 to paint search-and-rescue efforts.

John O. Wehrle, 1941–, currently specializes in creating custom murals in California. He received his B.A. at Texas Tech in 1964 and his M.F.A. in painting and printmaking from the Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York, in 1969. He was the leader of Combat Artist Team I in Vietnam.

John Potter Wheat, 1920–1980, studied at the Art Students League at the Yale School of Fine Arts and graduated with an M.F.A. His works are in the New Britain Museum of American Art in New Britain, Connecticut; the Springfield Museum of Fine Arts in Springfield, Massachusetts; and the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown, Ohio. He was a civilian artist in Vietnam through the Copley Society of Boston.



John O. Wehrle



Further Readings

The following are a sampling of books written about combat art or written by former combat artists.

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Endnotes

Unless otherwise cited, photographs and other information are located in the Center of Military History's Collection Branch files.

¹ *American Magazine of Art* 10 (October 1919).

² John A. Groth, *Studio: Asia* (Cleveland, Ohio: World Publishing Company, 1952), p. 54.

³ *Life* magazine caption, 29 Oct 1951, p. 79.

⁴ *Life* magazine, 22 May 1944, p. 56.

⁵ Edward Reep, *A Combat Artist in World War II* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987), p. 94.

⁶ *Life* magazine, 26 Jun 1944, p. 60.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 3 Apr 1944, p. 68.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 16 Jul 1945, p. 52.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 26 Jun 1944, p. 62.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 7 Jul 1941, p. 62.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 11 May 1942, p. 72.

¹² Loramy Gerstbauer and Don Myers, "Peace Profile: Kerr Eby," *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice* 18, no. 2 (July 2006): 290.

¹³ DeWitt Mackenzie, *Men Without Guns: Catalogue of the Abbott Laboratories Collection of Paintings of Army Medicine* (Philadelphia: Blakiston Company, 1945).

¹⁴ *Life* magazine, 6 Jul 1942, p. 31.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 26 Jul 1943, p. 62.

¹⁶ Notes by F. Mechau, 26 August 1943, Time Inc. archives.

¹⁷ Spec. C. Eric Farris, "Army Art," *Soldiers* magazine (May 1996).

¹⁸ Frank Getlein, art critic for the *Washington Star News*, at Cooke's memorial service, Washington Cathedral, 10 Oct 1973.

¹⁹ *Life* magazine, 30 Apr 1945, p. 65.

²⁰ Jan Horning, *Training Times*, 21 Sep 1995.

²¹ *Life* magazine, 7 Dec 1943, p. 73.

²² Aaron Bohrod, *A Decade of Still Life* (Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966).

²³ Letter with additional notes, Martin to Daniel Longwell, 7 Jun 1943, Time Inc. archives.

²⁴ *Life* magazine, 27 Dec 1943, pp. 64–65.

²⁵ Memo, 26 Oct 1943, research on the Christmas issue, Time Inc. archives.

- ²⁶ Letters to the Editor, *Life* magazine, 21 May 1945.
- ²⁷ *Life* magazine, 30 Apr 1945, p. 51.
- ²⁸ *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 13 Feb 1944.
- ²⁹ Debs Myers, Jonathan Kilbourn, and Richard Harrity, eds., and the staff of *Yank*, *Yank: The GI Story of the War* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1947).
- ³⁰ Excerpt from Interview, B. A. Bowser, Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), with Brodie, 24 May 1996.
- ³¹ George Baker biography, 1946, www.sadsack.com.
- ³² *Time* magazine, 5 Apr 1943.
- ³³ Captions from Ralph Stein, *What Am I Laughing At?* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1944).
- ³⁴ Bill Mauldin, *Up Front* (New York: Henry Holt, 1945), p. 162.
- ³⁵ *Life* magazine, 8 Jan 1945, p. 49.
- ³⁶ J. André Smith, *In France with the American Expeditionary Forces* (New York: Arthur H. Hahlo, 1919).
- ³⁷ Letter, 1918, in Louis A. Holman, *Hornby's Etchings of the Great War: With a Complete Authoritative List of All His Plates (1906–1920)* (Boston: Charles E. Goodspeed, 1921).
- ³⁸ Tom Lea, *Battle Stations: A Grizzly from the Coral Sea, Peleliu Landing* (Dallas, Tex.: Still Point Press, 1988).
- ³⁹ DeWitt Mackenzie, *Men Without Guns: Catalogue of the Abbott Laboratories Collection of Paintings of Army Medicine* (Philadelphia: Blakiston Company, 1945).
- ⁴⁰ *Life* magazine, 13 May 1946, p. 66.
- ⁴¹ DeWitt Mackenzie, *Men Without Guns: Catalogue of the Abbott Laboratories Collection of Paintings of Army Medicine* (Philadelphia: Blakiston Company, 1945).
- ⁴² Debs Myers, Jonathan Kilbourn, and Richard Harrity, eds., and the staff of *Yank*, *Yank: The GI Story of the War* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1947).
- ⁴³ DeWitt Mackenzie, *Men Without Guns: Catalogue of the Abbott Laboratories Collection of Paintings of Army Medicine* (Philadelphia: Blakiston Company, 1945).
- ⁴⁴ John Groth, *Studio: Asia* (Cleveland, Ohio: World Publishing Company, 1952), p. 59.
- ⁴⁵ Morley Safer, "Prescott's War," *American Heritage* (February/March 1991).