**Gough\_Falklands chapter in Palgrave Handbook, 2029**

Paul Gough *‘*Re-membering the Past’; eye-witness and post-battle artistic accounts of the Falklands War’, in Martin Kerby, Margaret Baguley, Janet McDonald (eds.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Artistic and Cultural Responses to War since 1914: the British Isles, the United States and Australasia, Sydney:* Palgrave 2019, pp. 371-390.

Paul Gough

**The Tyranny of Seeing; eye-witness and post-battle artistic accounts of the Falklands War**

The war to recover the Falkland Islands from invasion in 1982 has been described as the last eruption of colonial warfare to be fought by the British Empire. The short, scrappy conflict was conducted under draconian restrictions that controlled the transmission of images, texts and first-hand frontline narratives. Despite an imaginative record of commissioning war art in the 20th century, the British government, through its Artistic Records Committee, chose to send a single artist to accompany troops in the latter part of the war. Her background as a nationally recognised illustrator prepared her to depict the scenery of war, its idiosyncrasies and informal incidents. Her portfolio of line drawings reinforced positive notions of the authority of the eye-witness. First-hand visual testimony effectively trumped all. Newspaper photographers and those working on syndication to agencies produced an equally spontaneous body of raw material. This paper explores the front-line work produced at the time and the body of creative material that later emerged, as artists, art therapists and other visual commentators started to reflect, critique and celebrate the British Empire’s ‘last colonial war’.

This handbook explores a diverse range of artistic and cultural responses to modern conflict, from Mons in the First World War to Kabul in the twenty-first century. With over thirty chapters from an international range of contributors, ranging from the UK to the US and Australia, and working across history, art, literature, and media, it offers a significant interdisciplinary contribution to the study of modern war, and our artistic and cultural responses to it. The handbook is divided into three parts. The first part explores how communities and individuals responded to loss and grief by using art and culture to assimilate the experience as an act of survival and resilience. The second part explores how conflict exerts a powerful influence on the expression and formation of both individual, group, racial, cultural and national identities and the role played by art, literature, and education in this process. The third part moves beyond the actual experience of conflict and its connection with issues of identity to explore how individuals and society have made use of art and culture to commemorate the war. In this way, it offers a unique breadth of vision and perspective, to explore how conflicts have been both represented and remembered since the early twentieth century.

<https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9783319969855>

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The Palgrave Handbook of Artistic and Cultural Responses to War since 1914

The British Isles, the United States and Australasia

**Editors**

* Martin Kerby
* Margaret Baguley
* Janet McDonald

2019

**Publisher**

Palgrave Macmillan

**eBook ISBN**

978-3-319-96986-2

**DOI**

10.1007/978-3-319-96986-2

**Hardcover ISBN**

978-3-319-96985-5

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