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Art and the Second World War is the first book in English to provide a comprehensive and detailed international overview of the complex and often disturbing relationship between war and the fine arts during this crucial period of modern history. This generously illustrated volume starts by examining the art produced in reaction to the Spanish Civil War (often viewed as "the first battle of World War II"), and then looks at painting, sculpture, prints, and drawing in each of the major combatant nations, including Japan and China. Breathtaking in scope, this scholarly yet accessible publication places wartime art within its broader cultural, political, and military contexts while never losing sight of the power and significance of the individual image and the individual artist.

Monica Bohm-Duchen's thought-provoking analysis ranges from iconic paintings such as Picasso's Guernica to unfamiliar works by little-known artists. She reinstates war art by major artists as an integral part of their oeuvres and examines neglected topics such as the art produced in the Japanese-American and British internment camps, by victims of the Holocaust, and in response to the dropping of the atom bomb in 1945. In so doing, Bohm-Duchen addresses a host of fundamental issues, including the relationship between art and propaganda and between art and atrocity, and the role of gender, religion, and censorship, both external and internal.

Art and the Second World War offers an unparalleled comparative perspective that will appeal to anyone interested in art history, military history, or political and cultural studies.